

HKAS



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Experience Sharing Seminar for Microbiological Testing Laboratories Accredited to ISO/IEC 17025:2017 under HOKLAS

On 7 August 2024, HKAS organised a seminar titled "Experience Sharing Seminar for Microbiological Testing Laboratories Accredited to ISO/IEC 17025: 2017 under HOKLAS." The previous seminar on microbiological testing was held about two years ago. It is the right time for experience sharing on the same topic. The seminar attracted a total of 56 laboratory staff members from 25 accredited laboratories, along with 6 technical assessors.

We were pleased to welcome Mr. Danny CHEUNG Tze-leung, an experienced HOKLAS technical assessor, and Mr. TSE Siu-chuen, Accreditation Officer of HKAS, as speakers. They shared their knowledge and experience on ensuring the validity of microbiological test results, investigating nonconforming work, and evaluating measurement uncertainty (MU) for microbiological tests.

Review and Ensuring Validity of Microbiological Test Results

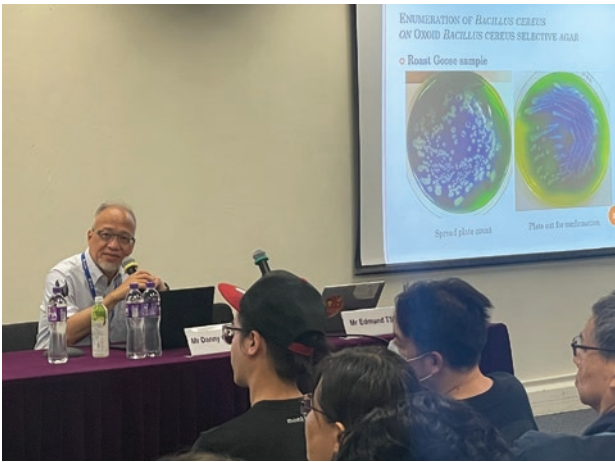
Mr. CHEUNG was the first speaker. He presented three scenarios related to test result interpretation, including the enumeration of *Listeria monocytogenes*, in-situ urease tests for *Klebsiella pneumoniae*, and the use of Perifilm® Aerobic Count Plates for dairy products which were ambiguous in nature. He emphasised the importance of being vigilant in checking ambiguous results to avoid misreporting. In cases of doubt, a thorough investigation should be conducted to identify the cause of ambiguity. Mr. CHEUNG further discussed measures to ensure the validity of test results, stressing that operators should correlate test results with the characteristics of the items being tested (ISO/IEC 17025:2017 Cl. 7.7) to ensure consistency. For example, during a food incident investigation, operators must verify that the final result (i.e. the presence and quantity of a specific pathogen) aligns with the entire incident. He illustrated these principles with case studies involving *Bacillus cereus* in turnip pudding, goose, and Swiss roll samples, as well as *Clostridium perfringens* in a penne carbonara sample.



Welcoming remarks for the Experience Sharing Seminar for Microbiological Testing Laboratories accredited to ISO/IEC 17025: 2017 under HOKLAS

Investigation of Nonconforming Work Related to Microbiological Testing

In the second part of his presentation, Mr. CHEUNG provided case studies on investigating and troubleshooting unsatisfactory proficiency testing (PT) results. He covered PT schemes for tablet medicine plate counts, Chinese medicine yeast counts, water legionella counts, water heterotrophic plate counts, and food yeast and mould counts. Mr. CHEUNG suggested that investigations of unsatisfactory PT results should begin with a review of the PT report, considering factors such as the number of participants, percentage of unsatisfactory results, composition of the PT sample, distribution of test results, and the test methods used. Key factors such as the growth properties of microorganisms, composition of culture media, potential laboratory contamination, and method misconceptions should also be examined. Investigations should determine whether issues are systematic, by reviewing results for different sample types, or isolated incidents, by assessing analyst competence, equipment performance, method characteristics, and the storage conditions of media and reagents. Mr. CHEUNG concluded his presentation with several key takeaways for participants as follows:



Mr Danny CHEUNG, Speaker of the Workshop

- Appreciate the various requirements of ISO/IEC 17025:2017 and test standards
- Recognise that these requirements are essential and beneficial to our work
- Investigate and record every instance of nonconformity to achieve improvement

Examples on Measurement Uncertainty Evaluation for Microbiological Enumeration Methods

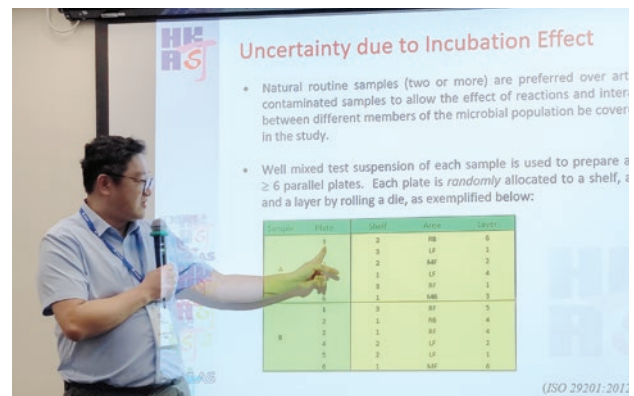
Mr. TSE Siu-chuen was the second speaker for the seminar. It marked the third occasion that HKAS shared information with accredited microbiology testing laboratories regarding protocols for evaluating measurement uncertainty (MU) for microbiological tests, following similar ones in 2017 and 2022.

It is well-established that the measurement uncertainty associated with microbiological culture methods is unique. In addition to the common Gaussian-distributed random errors existing in microbiological enumeration methods, other intrinsic variations, such as Poisson scatter, binomial probability, and most probable number (MPN) uncertainties, also have a significant impact on the dispersion of microbial measurement results.

To clarify the complex concept presented in the seminar, Mr. TSE provided three real-life examples for discussion during the seminar, with technical support from Mr. CHEUNG. These examples include calculation of Poisson uncertainty, MPN uncertainty, and partial confirmation uncertainty. The commonly adopted top-down global approach was applied to determine Gaussian operational uncertainty in the first two examples. Additionally, a new bottom-up component approach was introduced to address the complexity of evaluating operational uncertainty in the microbiological method for detecting *Legionella spp.* in cooling tower water, as outlined in AS 3896:2017, in the last example. Mr. TSE went into details of the experimental design and step-by-step calculations for the necessary illustrations.

He explained the correct procedure for combining operational uncertainty components from the steps with Poisson and partial confirmation uncertainties to derive an overall measurement uncertainty for the test. Mr. TSE also demonstrated how to evaluate the lower and upper bounds of the 95% coverage interval for the total *Legionella* count based on a lognormal distribution model.

Participants and speakers had positive and fruitful interactions throughout the seminar. According to feedback questionnaires, participants found the seminar practical and informative. In light of this positive feedback, HKAS plans to continue organising similar seminars in the future.



Mr TSE Siu-chuen, Speaker of the Workshop

IAF CertSearch Certificate Database

IAF has implemented a set of amended principles for the IAF CertSearch Certificate Database following a ballot conducted in August 2022. In October 2023, IAF issued a new Mandatory Document (MD) outlining the process for managing data uploads and maintenance of the database. This document includes provisions for exemptions and sanctions if requirements are not met, with a one-year implementation period ending on 26 October 2024.

Accredited management system certification bodies are required to upload their accredited certification data by the application deadline of 26 October 2024. After this date, these bodies will need to upload data to the IAF CertSearch Database at least once a month. This ensures that the uploaded information reflects the most current version of all data in the possession or control of the certification bodies.

SHARING SESSIONS IN CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

In November 2024, HKAS organised three sharing sessions in the construction industry. The purpose of these sharing sessions was to provide a platform to enhance communication between HKAS and the accredited organisations on specific topics relating to foundation testing, welding inspection, nondestructive testing (NDT) of welds and metallic materials.

Sharing Session for Foundation Testing

HKAS organised a sharing session for foundation testing on 22 November 2024. Representatives of all HOKLAS accredited laboratories concerned joined this session with a coverage of the following discussion aspects:

- Transition arrangement for an ultrasonic echo sounder test in accordance with the new publication of HKCI: TM3 Issue 2
- Transition arrangement for a borehole video inspection test in accordance with the updated version of the Hong Kong Housing Authority Specification
- Arrangement of on-site demonstrations for foundation testing during HKAS assessments
- Obsolete test standards/methods in the scope of HOKLAS accreditation



Sharing Session for Welding Inspection

HKAS organised a sharing session for welding inspection on the morning of 29 November 2024. Representatives of all HKIAS accredited inspection bodies under the construction products inspection field joined the session. Following the consensus reached in the previous sharing

sessions regarding the inspection report format, a new issue of HKIAS Supplementary Criteria No. 3 (HKIAS SC-03) was issued on 9 September 2024 with an implementation date of 1 January 2025 addressing the consensus in clauses 7.4.2 and 7.4.3 of HKIAS SC-03. The comments of HKAS technical assessors on the functional knowledge test in accordance with BS EN ISO 14732 were shared with the participants. The presentation of scope of HKIAS accreditation for BS EN ISO 14732 together with different welding types, the arrangement of on-site demonstrations for welding inspection, and adoption of obsolete inspection standards/methods were also discussed in the sharing session.

Sharing Session for Nondestructive Testing of Welds (NDT) and Metallic Materials

HKAS has accredited a number of laboratories for performing NDT of welds and/or metallic materials. A hybrid sharing session was conducted in the afternoon of 29 November 2024 for NDT laboratories to update them on the latest development in the field.

In the session, the following technical aspects were covered:

- Presentation of the scope of HOKLAS accreditation for visual examination and bend test on stud connectors
- Proposed changes in HOKLAS Supplementary Criteria No. 15 and No. 36
- Obsolete test standards/methods in the scope of HOKLAS accreditation

83 participants from 34 accredited laboratories joined this sharing session.

All the sharing sessions were well received by the participants. The participants were engaged in very interactive and fruitful discussions. In view of the positive responses, HKAS will continue to organise similar sharing sessions in different test areas in the future.

For more information about accreditation services related to construction, please contact our Senior Accreditation Officers, Ir Dr Fiona CHAN Wan-yin (tel: 2829 4870 / email: wychan@itc.gov.hk) or Mr Jeffrey LEUNG Tsz-tao (tel: 2829 4806 / email: jttleung@itc.gov.hk).

The Accreditation Advisory Board

The Accreditation Advisory Board (AAB) serves as the primary advisory body for the Hong Kong Accreditation Service (HKAS). Its Chairman and members are appointed by the Secretary for Innovation, Technology, and Industry, under delegated authority from the Chief Executive, as announced in the Gazette, for a term of two years. The AAB provides advice to HKAS on its development and accreditation policies, including regulations and criteria. It also reviews assessment reports and makes recommendations regarding the granting of accreditation and the appointment of assessors.



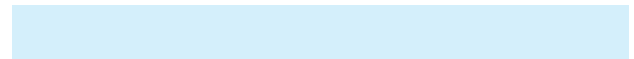
Chairman:
Professor CHUNG Shu-hung, Henry

Members of the AAB are drawn from various stakeholders in the accreditation field to ensure a balanced representation of interests and maintain impartiality. They include representatives from conformity assessment bodies, relevant government departments, technical experts, and users of accredited services.

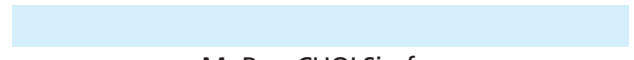
The AAB typically meets twice a year to discuss HKAS progress reports and deliberate on policy issues and proposals for future development. Most of the daily work is conducted through correspondence. The AAB also establishes Working Parties to address specific issues or technical disciplines. They may also form Task Forces to focus on particular technical tasks. Currently, there are 13 Working Parties and 17 Task Forces.

The Chairman and members of the AAB for the term from 1 November 2024 to 31 October 2026 have

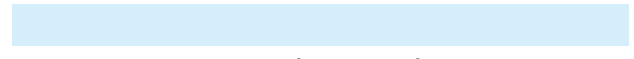
been appointed. During this term, Professor Henry CHUNG Shu-hung has been newly appointed as Chairman. Professor CHUNG is the Chair Professor in the Department of Electrical Engineering and Dean of Students at the City University of Hong Kong. The AAB now consists of 17 members, including seven new members. The membership is as follows:



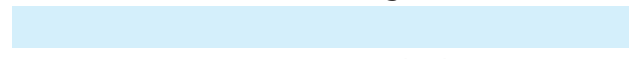
Vice-chairman Head of Hong Kong Accreditation Service or his representative



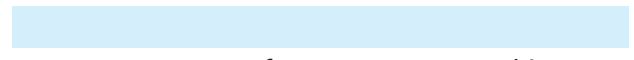
Ms Bess CHOI Siu-fong



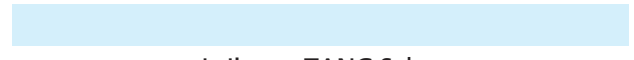
Dr Emmie HO Ngai-man



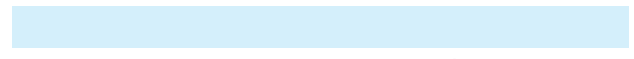
Mr Norman LEE Shu-leung



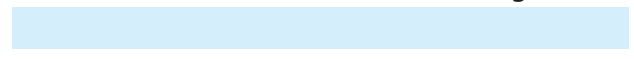
Ir Professor Irene LO Man-chi, J.P.



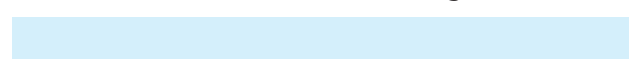
Ir Jimmy TANG Sek-man



Mr Bernie TING Wai-cheung



Ms Nina YIU Shui-sang



Deputy Director of Housing (Development & Construction) or his representative



Head of Laboratory of Standards and Calibration Laboratory of Innovation and Technology Commission or his representative



Updates from ILAC / IAF / APAC

International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) and International Accreditation Forum (IAF) Annual Meetings 2024 Update

The ILAC-IAF Annual Meetings 2024 were jointly organized in Berlin, Germany, from October 1 to 10, 2024. Below are the key updates in the Meetings:

ILAC

1. Revision of ISO/IEC 17020:2012

The revision of ISO/IEC 17020:2012, which sets requirements for various bodies performing inspections, is currently underway in Working Group 31 (WG 31) of the ISO Committee on Conformity Assessment (ISO/CASCO). The Committee Draft (CD) of the standard, ISO/IEC CD 17020, has been distributed for comments by ISO members and stakeholders. According to WG 31's work plan, a Draft International Standard (DIS), ISO/IEC DIS 17020, is expected to be available for comment by the end of 2024, with the revision targeted for completion by the end of 2025.

2. ILAC Inspection Committee Updates

The ILAC Inspection Committee has decided to postpone the revision of ILAC P15 (Application of ISO/IEC 17020:2012 for the Accreditation of Inspection Bodies) and ILAC G27 (Guidance on Measurements in Inspection Processes) until the ISO/IEC 17020 revision is finalized. The revision of ILAC G28 (Guidelines for Formulating Scopes of Accreditation for Inspection Bodies) will commence shortly.

3. Transformation of ISO Guides to Standards

ISO Technical Committee 334 is converting various ISO Guides on reference materials into corresponding ISO standards. The progress is as follows:

ISO Guide No.	ISO Standard	Planned Publication Date
ISO Guide 30	ISO 33400	March 2026
ISO Guide 31	ISO 33401	Published
ISO Guide 33	ISO 33403	Published
ISO Guide 35	ISO 33405	Published
ISO Guide 80	ISO TR 33402	January 2025
WD/ISO Guide 85	ISO 33406	Published
WD/ISO Guide 86	ISO 33407	Published
WD/ISO Guide 87	ISO 33408	May 2025

4. Guidelines for Metrological Traceability

The ILAC Accreditation Committee (AIC) is preparing guidelines to be included as an informative appendix (Appendix B) in ILAC P10 (ILAC Policy on Metrological Traceability of Measurement Results). These guidelines will address the use of certified reference materials (CRMs) not established through the BIPM KCDB, the Joint Committee for Traceability in Laboratory Medicine (JCTLM) nor accredited reference material producers (RMPs). Key aspects will include maintaining evidence of RMP competence and if necessary, assessing RMPs by laboratories.

IAF

1. Stakeholder Submissions to the Technical Committee

IAF has established a mechanism for stakeholders—including accreditation bodies, certification bodies, and users of accredited services—to submit papers for discussion at the Technical Committee (TC) meetings. Recent discussions included a paper regarding the issuance of accredited statements for validation and verification activities. An IAF accreditation body member proposed a resolution requiring IAF accreditation bodies to have legally enforceable arrangements with their accredited validation and verification bodies (VVBs) to prevent them from issuing non-accredited statements in their accredited scopes. This resolution was passed on October 17, 2024 (IAF Resolution 2024-19).

2. Validation and Verification Working Group

The IAF Working Group on Validation and Verification (ISO/IEC 17029) concluded that a mandatory document (MD) is not required for extending the ISO 14067 (carbon footprint of products) MLA extension. The group reviewed the revised draft of MD 14 (Application of ISO/IEC 17011 in Greenhouse Gas Validation and Verification) and decided to change two "shall" clauses to "should" under a new informative document (ID). The sole "shall" clause will remain as a requirement and become an IAF resolution for consistent implementation by IAF members (IAF Resolution 2024-18).

HKAS Assessor Forum 2024

Assessors and technical experts are vital partners of HKAS. Without their valuable contributions and support, our accreditation schemes would not be possible. Each year, HKAS organises the Assessor Forum to share updates on its work and to encourage the exchange of ideas, views, and experiences among HKAS officers and assessors. This year's Forum took place on 14 June 2024, at The Mira Hong Kong, with around 200 participants in attendance.



Mr Wilson SHUM reported the work of HKAS in 2023



Ms. Connie TANG presented on the importance of professional integrity

Assessor Forum

Mr. Wilson SHUM, the late Executive Administrator of HKAS, opened the Forum by presenting HKAS achievements in 2023 and introducing new developments for the coming years. He expressed gratitude to all assessors and technical experts for their support all along. Following his address, Ms. Connie TANG, Senior Community Relations Officer from the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC), provided a refresher on the importance of professional integrity during assessments, which is crucial for maintaining the credibility of the accreditation service by the HKAS.

Certificate Presentation Ceremony

Towards the end of the event, Prof. Paul LAM, SBS, JP, ex-Chairman of the HKAS Accreditation Advisory Board, presented accreditation certificates to newly accredited conformity assessment bodies that were granted accreditation from May 1, 2023, to April 30, 2024. Among them, ten assessors received certificates of appreciation for their significant contributions to HKAS assessments. Following the presentation ceremony, participants were divided into five groups based on their areas of expertise for further discussions specific to their technical fields: Medical, Certification, Construction, Chemical & Biological, and Electrical & Mechanical.

The newly accredited organisations are:

Registration Number	Name of Newly Accredited Organisations
HKCAS 032	The Lab (Asia) Limited
HKIAS 037	Government Laboratory - Forensic Science Division
HKIAS 038	Hong Kong Police Force - Identification Bureau
HKIAS 039	Sky Professional Testing & Consulting Limited
HOKLAS 307	東莞兆閱帷幕牆有限公司
HOKLAS 308	KAS Quality Service (Guangzhou) Co., Ltd
HOKLAS 309	LNE-LP Asia Ltd.
HOKLAS 8695	Codex Genetics Limited
HOKLAS 8705	Bright Growth Medical Laboratory Limited
HOKLAS 871P	Hospital Authority - Hong Kong Children's Hospital, Department of Pathology
HOKLAS 872S	GenieBiome (Diagnostic) Co. Ltd. - G-NiiB Molecular & MicroBiome Laboratory

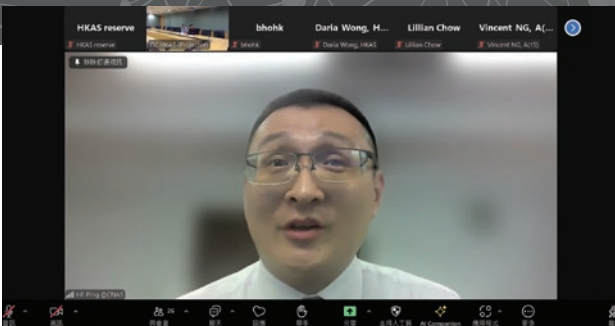


Assessors received the Certificates of Appreciation

The ten assessors who received certificates of appreciation:

For more than 200 assessment days	Mr Danny CHEUNG Tze-leung Mr TAO Tak-fai Mr HAU King-kuen
For more than 150 assessment days	Ir YAM Wing-wa Mr Raymond KWOK Chik-tung
For more than 100 assessment days	Ir CHEUNG Kam-chi Dr Eric LIM Chaw-hyon Mr WAN Kai-fan
For more than 50 assessment days	Ir Samson WONG Kin-yan Ir PANG Chan-fai

Seminar on Proficiency Testing: New Features in ISO/IEC 17043:2023 and ILAC P9:01/2024



Mr He Ping, CNAS, Speaker of the seminar

On August 14 and 16, 2024, HKAS organised a two-half-day online seminar on Proficiency Testing (PT). Mr. He Ping from the China National Accreditation Service for Conformity Assessment (CNAS), who is also the Chairman of the Asia Pacific Accreditation Cooperation Proficiency Testing Subcommittee, served as the sole speaker. He covered three main topics: 1) the current and future accreditation of PT providers, 2) key changes in ISO/IEC 17043:2023, and 3) the ILAC Policy for participation in PT activities (ILAC P9:01/2024). The seminar was attended by HKAS professional staff and external lead assessors.

Mr. He Ping began by discussing the accreditation of PT providers, tracing the concept of proficiency testing back to the mid-20th century as a response to the need for standardised methods to evaluate laboratory performance. He noted that early proficiency testing initiatives focused on inter-laboratory comparison studies to identify discrepancies in test results. Today, proficiency testing is a widely used tool for ensuring the validity of testing and calibration results, as well as for evaluating the performance of conformity assessment bodies (CABs). As of June 2024, there were 136 PT providers in China accredited by CNAS, covering various disciplines, including traditional

chemical, forensic, and medical testing, as well as workmanship, dimensional measurements, elevator inspections, and cyber-security assessments.

The second session of the seminar addressed the major changes in the new edition of ISO/IEC 17043:2023, which include:

- Inclusion of other conformity assessment activities (such as inspection and sampling) alongside testing and calibration, with clarifications for PT in these areas.
- Introduction of risk-based thinking in the revised standard.
- Replacement of the term "subcontractor" with "external service provider," consistent with ISO/IEC 17025, while retaining restrictions on activities for external service providers.
- Simplification and redrafting of general resource requirements in Clause 6, with direct references to ISO/IEC 17025, ISO 15189, and ISO 17034.
- Inclusion of clauses 7.5.2 and 7.5.3 in Clause 7, which address data control and process surveillance.
- Alignment of management system requirements in Clause 8 with those in ISO/IEC 17025:2017 and ISO 15189:2022.

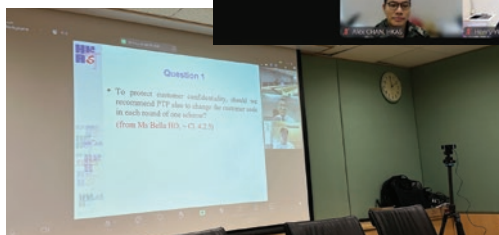
The third session of the seminar focused on the recently revised ILAC Policy for Proficiency Testing and Interlaboratory Comparisons (ILAC-P9:01/2024) which was published in January 2024. Mr. Heping elaborated on the background and revision history of ILAC-P9, emphasising the importance of accredited CABs demonstrating their technical competence in testing or calibration activities and validating their results through comparisons with those of other CABs.

During the Q&A session, participants discussed actions taken by PT providers regarding process surveillance to comply with Clause 7.5.3 of ISO/IEC 17043:2023. They also explored the applicability of metrological traceability requirements in ISO/IEC 17025:2017 for qualitative PT schemes and relevant testing activities.

Participants found the seminar fruitful and valuable, with widespread acclaim for the practices and insights shared by Mr. He Ping.



Participants had a group photo after the seminar



Question raised by the participant

Seminar on Proficiency Testing for Chemical Testing Laboratories



Seminar on Proficiency Testing for Chemical Testing Laboratories

On 30 October 2024, HKAS hosted a Seminar on Proficiency Testing for Chemical Testing Laboratories. We were pleased to have a total of 146 participants joining the event. Among them 122 representatives came from 49 accredited laboratories, 24 technical assessors, and HKAS officers.

The seminar aimed to explain the new proficiency testing (PT) requirements from the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) to our accredited laboratories. We also took the opportunity to introduce common statistical methods used in PT and interlaboratory comparisons (ILCs).

There are two sessions in the seminar. In the first session, Dr. HO Chun-wah, Senior Accreditation Officer of HKAS, provided a review and update on the recently published ILAC policy and guidance documents, which included:

(i) ILAC P9:01/2024 ILAC Policy for Proficiency Testing and/or Interlaboratory Comparisons Other than Proficiency Testing

(ii) ILAC G18:01/2024 Guideline for Describing Scopes of Accreditation

Attention was drawn to the revision of ILAC P9. This document sets out the policy for accreditation bodies (ABs) regarding the use and assessment of PT and/or ILCs in the accreditation process. The new ILAC P9 document (ILAC P9:01/2024) contains a new requirement under Policy No. 8 d), mandating ABs to define a process to ensure that their accredited laboratories have appropriate evidence of the competence of the PT provider or the organisation providing the ILCs they participate in. HKAS issued a new HOKLAS Supplementary Criteria No. 33 (Issue 11) [HOKLAS SC-33 (Issue 11)] on 23 February 2024 to include all the new requirements in ILAC P9:01/2024. The implementation date for the new criteria document is the same as the effective date of ILAC P9:01/2024, i.e., 17 January 2025. Laboratories were reminded to observe this effective date and prepare for the implementation of the new requirements. Dr. HO also reviewed all PT/ILC policies in ILAC P9:01/2024 and the relevant clauses on PT/ILC requirements in HOKLAS SC-33 (Issue 11) with the participants. Some key points from his presentation are summarised below:

- An applicant or accredited laboratory shall participate in PT or ILCs relevant to and representative of its scope of accreditation, considering the laboratory's risk assessment in determining participation. Performance must be acceptable to HKAS before initial accreditation is granted.
- In determining participation, laboratories should refer to EA-4/18 Guidance on the Level and Frequency of Proficiency Testing Participation, which is included as an informative appendix (Appendix C) in ILAC

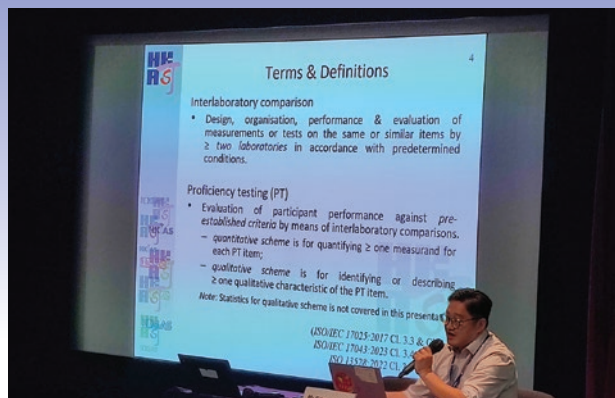
P9:01/2024. This document provides guidelines for identifying areas of technical competence, considering measurement processes (techniques), characteristics (tests), and products (matrices) in PT participation. Laboratories shall also refer to the relevant HOKLAS Supplementary Criteria documents for PT/ILC requirements in different technical disciplines.

- A laboratory shall maintain appropriate evidence of the competence of its PT providers and ILC organisers. Competence of a PT provider can be demonstrated through either accreditation to ISO/IEC 17043 by an ILAC MRA signatory (e.g., HKAS) or by providing appropriate evidence of conformity with ISO/IEC 17043 if not accredited. Competence of an ILC organiser can be demonstrated by providing appropriate evidence of conformity with the relevant requirements of ISO/IEC 17043. Reference should be made to EA-4/21 INF: 2018 Guidelines for the Assessment of the Appropriateness of Small Interlaboratory Comparisons in the Laboratory Accreditation Process. Such evidence should include, but not limited to: personnel competence, proper design and planning of ILCs, actions taken to prevent collusion, measures to ensure homogeneity and stability for quantitative comparisons, and correct statistical design and data analysis.
- The laboratory shall establish a one-year PT participation plan. The coverage of the plan shall be representative and adequate with respect to its scope of accreditation. The plan shall be regularly reviewed and updated as necessary to ensure its continual suitability.

In the second session, Mr. TSE Siu-chuen, Accreditation Officer of HKAS, presented with a focus on small PT or ILC schemes most frequently organised among local accredited laboratories. Mr. TSE illustrated with examples on the use of statistically valid methods for evaluating laboratory performance, considering the relevant requirements in ISO/IEC 17043:2023.

In establishing the statistical design for a PT/ILC scheme (i.e. the process for planning the scheme, collecting, analysing, and reporting the scheme data), the first step is to define the objective of the scheme. Mr. TSE demonstrated through several examples on how the required number of repeated measurements of a test item per participant can be determined, as well as the required number of participants, in planning a PT/ILC scheme that could achieve the desired statistical power ($1 - \beta$ error) while maintaining the α error unchanged.

Additionally, ISO/IEC 17043:2023 requires the organiser to demonstrate that the statistical assumptions underlying



Mr TSE Siu-chuen shared the statistics for evaluation of laboratory performance in proficiency testing

the statistical tests are reasonable. In most quantitative chemical measurements, the statistical assumption is that participants' data are normally distributed. Graphical tools, including box-and-whisker plots, normal Q-Q plots for residuals, and significance tests such as the Shapiro-Wilk test, are applied to validate this assumption. Mr. TSE highlighted the importance of reporting results with an adequate number of significant figures and decimal places, which is crucial for providing a sufficient number of uniquely different values for proper normality assessment.

Mr. TSE explained in Example 2 the statistics required for homogeneity and stability assessments. These include one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) for the homogeneity study and linear regression for the stability study. When instability of PT/ILC test items is found over the study period, applying linear regression can quantify the effect as instability uncertainty for consideration in performance evaluation. However, the best approach would be to improve the preparation procedure and/or storage conditions of PT/ILC test items with respect to stability. In Example 3, a simplified approach for verifying stability based on acceptable differences in analyte content before test item distribution and after result reporting was introduced, though this approach could not generate information on instability uncertainty.

A comparison of the pros and cons of the different evaluation methods applied in each example was also presented. The merits and limitations of various statistical designs among the examples were summarised at the end of the presentation.

We were pleased to see that participants were enthusiastic in interacting with the speakers throughout the seminar. Many assessors and representatives from accredited laboratories took the initiative to raise questions for discussion.

According to the feedback gathered via the questionnaires returned, the seminar was well received by participants. Most found the content useful. Few comments requested more discussion of difficult and challenging situations that PT/ILC organisers might encounter in the future. Given the positive and overwhelming responses, HKAS will continue to organise similar seminars.



Establishment of a Single International Organisation for Accreditation – the Global Accreditation Cooperation

At the 19th IAF/ILAC Joint General Assembly (GA), held on 29 October 2019 in Frankfurt, the IAF/ILAC Joint GA endorsed a recommendation from the IAF/ILAC Joint Executive Committee (JEC) and passed a resolution to establish a single international organisation for accreditation through the merger of IAF and ILAC. A Joint IAF/ILAC Steering Committee (SC) was formed to plan and implement the project, with the assistance of a contractor reporting to the JEC. The contractor, Mr. Thomas Facklam, former Chair of the European Cooperation for Accreditation (EA), has been involved in the project since March 2021.

Since the project's inception, the contractor has worked closely with the SC and JEC. Three large-scale discussions were conducted with IAF and ILAC members: one at an extraordinary GA held virtually in September 2022, one at the 20th IAF/ILAC Joint GA held virtually in November 2022, and another at the 21st IAF/ILAC Joint GA held in Montreal in November 2023. These discussions focused on certain contentious issues such as the committees structure of the new organisation, its registration location, membership criteria, and the voting rights of stakeholders. The contractor also completed a set of Constitution and General Rules for the new organisation, which was subsequently approved by IAF and ILAC members. The JEC had accepted New Zealand as the registration location for the new organisation and confirmed its name as Global Accreditation Cooperation.

The 1st Global Accreditation Cooperation GA took place during the 21st IAF/ILAC Joint GA on 9 October 2024. In this assembly, Global Accreditation Cooperation was recognised as a not-yet-incorporated organisation, with the following bodies corporate: ACCREDITIA, ANAB, ema, and ISRAC, which are the accreditation bodies of the current ILAC and IAF Chairs and Vice-Chairs. The 1st Global Accreditation Cooperation GA approved the application for Global Accreditation Cooperation incorporation under the Incorporated Societies Act 2022 of New Zealand and appointed the ILAC Chair, IAF Chair, IAF Vice Chair, ILAC Vice Chair, IAF Secretary, and IAF Treasurer as the officers of Global Accreditation Cooperation.

Additionally, the GA authorised the SC to continue developing Global Accreditation Cooperation, reporting to the JEC. The IAF and ILAC Vice Chairs were tasked to propose the process for developing the initial Strategic Plan for Global Accreditation Cooperation.

A letter on "Specifying the Use of Global Accreditation Cooperation Incorporated Accreditation," (<https://iaf.nu/en/news/iaf-and-ilac-release-information-on-specifying-use-of-globac-accreditation/>) issued by IAF and ILAC, provides further details on Global Accreditation Cooperation. This letter outlines how the transfer of the IAF Multilateral Recognition Arrangement (MLA) and the ILAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA) will put into practice, ensuring that conformity assessment results provided under the IAF MLA and ILAC MRA remain valid after the transition to Global Accreditation Cooperation. It also clarifies that conformity assessment results under the Global Accreditation Cooperation MRA will be accepted with reference to the IAF MLA and ILAC MRA as specified in relevant legislation.

Further steps for the establishment of Global Accreditation Cooperation include:

- (i) Incorporating Global Accreditation Cooperation in New Zealand
- (ii) Establishing Global Accreditation Cooperation processes and documents according to a plan to be determined by the defined structures of IAF/ILAC and the contractor, with priority given to MRA documents
- (iii) Determining the target date, known as the Transition Date, provisionally scheduled for January 2026, for Global Accreditation Cooperation to become operational and assume the roles of IAF and ILAC
- (iv) Developing the conditions and timeline for IAF and ILAC to wind down operations, ensuring protection of the IAF and ILAC Marks for a defined period during which the Marks will remain valid
- (v) Formulating the strategic directions for Global Accreditation Cooperation

HKAS BIENNIAL Feedback Survey

HKAS Feedback Survey Results

HKAS completed its biennial feedback survey for 2023 to 2024 and found the results encouraging.

Every two years, HKAS invites all accredited organisations to provide feedback on the quality of its services. In July 2024, 260 questionnaires were sent to accredited conformity assessment bodies (CABs) and 66 responses were collected by the end of the one-month survey period, resulting in a response rate of 26.4%.

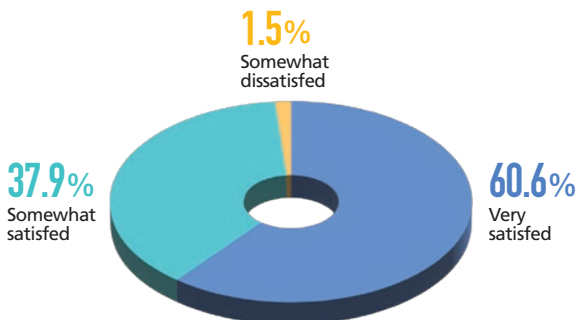
Accreditation Services

Almost all respondents (98.5%) were either very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with the accreditation services provided by HKAS.

Respondents were further asked to rate their satisfaction level in various aspects, including the rigor of assessments, processing time, monitoring frequency, transition arrangements, and charges. Over 95% of them reported being 'very satisfied' or 'somewhat satisfied.'

About half (53.1%) of the CABs planned to extend their scope of accreditation in the next two years. The information provides a good foundation for HKAS to arrange resources and the assessment schedule.

Overall satisfaction with HKAS Services

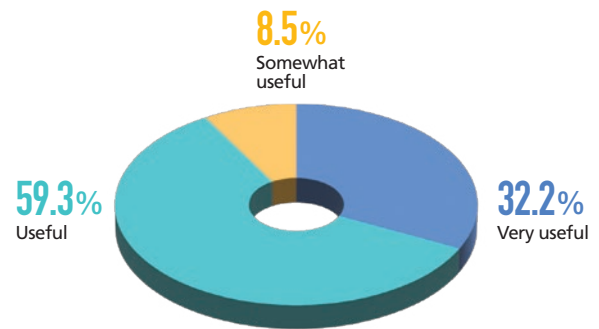


International Recognition

Most respondents (90%) agreed that the mutual recognition arrangements established by HKAS with other accreditation bodies are useful in promoting the acceptance of reports, certificates, or statements from accredited organisations.

However, approximately 70% of the respondents have not applied for or do not plan to apply the Combined IAF MLA/ILAC MRA Marks, as they mainly serve local clients who have no demand for the Mark.

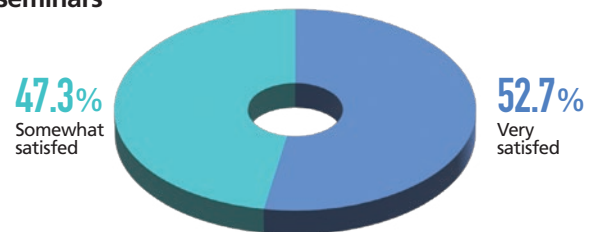
Usefulness of mutual recognition arrangements



Training Courses/Workshops/Seminars

CABs were satisfied with the continuing professional development and enhancement activities organised by HKAS and have suggested topics for future training events.

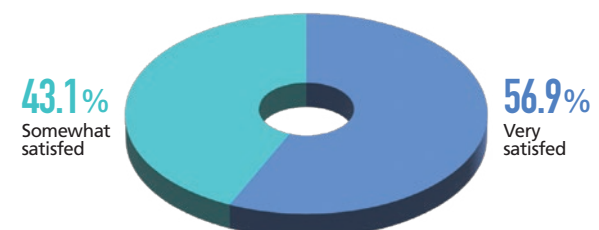
Overall satisfaction with courses/workshops/seminars



HKAS Website

All respondents were satisfied with their experience using the HKAS website. They found the website useful, with adequate content and easy navigation. HKAS will continue to optimise user experience in the future.

Overall satisfaction with HKAS website



HKASSYS

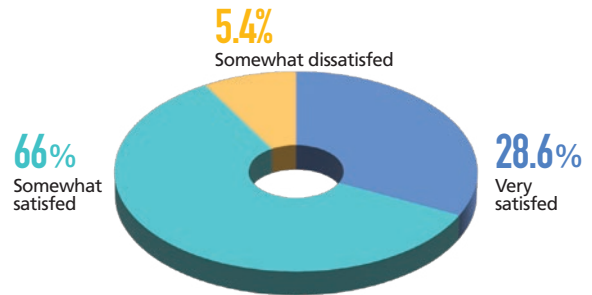
HKASSYS, the online HKAS Accreditation Service System, has been operational since May 2021. More and more accredited organisations are using it.

About 95% of respondents reported a positive experience with HKASSYS. Most of them use the system to upload briefing notes, and more than half submit change requests and action plans through the system.

HKAS sincerely thanks all accredited organisations for their valuable feedback and suggestions. We

are committed to continuously improving our accreditation services to meet the needs of the testing and certification industry.

Overall satisfaction with the HKASSYS



Electronic Payments with HKAS

With immediate effect, HKAS accepts bill payments via Automated Teller Machines (ATM), PPS, e-Cheque, and the Faster Payment System (FPS). We encourage our CABs to utilise these electronic payment options to facilitate streamlined financial transactions. For enquiries, please contact HKAS Registry at 2829 4841.

Online HKAS Accreditation Service System

The Online HKAS Accreditation Service System (HKASSYS) platform, which enables CABs to submit applications and upload necessary documents directly, has significantly enhanced the efficiency of the application process.

We encourage all CABs to change from using paper submissions to the online service system so as to streamline operations and reduce processing time. For further information, please contact our accreditation officers.



New and Revised HKAS Documents

New and revised HKAS, HOKLAS, HKIAS and HKCAS documents are available under “Publications”, “HKAS Recently Revised and New Publications in Previous Six Months” at our website www.hkas.gov.hk.

New Accreditation Granted, Suspended and Terminated

• New Accreditation Granted (1 July 2024 to 31 December 2024)

Seven CABs have been accredited since the last issue of HKAS News. Details are summarised below. HKAS wishes to congratulate the CABs on their success in obtaining accreditation.

HOKLAS

Registration No.	Name of Conformity Assessment Body	Test Category Granted	Clientele
HOKLAS 310	Weldtech Inspection & Testing Limited	Construction Materials	Public
HOKLAS 311	LUX Environmental Service Company Limited - Lux Laboratory	Calibration Services	Public
HOKLAS 312	Viewbond Hong Kong Limited	Construction Materials	Public
HOKLAS 313	AICON Company Limited	Construction Materials	Public
HOKLAS 314	Fugro MaterialLab Services Limited	Construction Materials	Public

HKCAS

Registration No.	Name of Conformity Assessment Body	Certification System Granted	Clientele
HKCAS 033	Certification Tech Company Limited	Quality Management System	Public

HKIAS

Registration No.	Name of Conformity Assessment Body	Inspection Field Granted	Clientele / Type#
HKIAS 041	Quality Pro Test-Consult Limited	Indoor Air Quality Inspection	Public

• Suspended Accreditation

- Voluntary Suspension (as at 31 December 2024)

HOKLAS

Registration No.	Name of Conformity Assessment Body	Test Category Granted and Test Area	Effective Date (dd.mm.yyyy)
006	Sun Creation Engineering Limited - Calibration & Testing Laboratory	Calibration Services – All calibrations Direct current and low frequency measurements Length and Related Measurements Mass and Related Measurements Temperature Measurements	01.11.2024
058	Bureau Veritas Hong Kong Limited - Kowloon Bay Office	Textiles and Garments - All chemical tests	09.04.2024
068	China Dragon Inspection and Certification (H.K.) Ltd.	Chemical Testing - All tests Food - All tests Toys and Children's Products - All chemical tests Testing Required By The China Compulsory Certification System (CCC) - All tests	06.10.2024
105	Linde HKO Limited – Quality Control Laboratory	Chemical Testing Gas Products	30.10.2024
129	Eurofns MTS Consumer Product Testing Hong Kong Limited	Textiles and Garments - Care performance test	21.10.2024
#178	Hong Kong Baptist University – Chemical Testing Services	Food - All tests Pharmaceutical Products - All tests	15.06.2024

Registration No.	Name of Conformity Assessment Body	Test Category Granted and Test Area	Effective Date (dd.mm.yyyy)
#854S	The Hong Kong Polytechnic University – Molecular Diagnostic Laboratory	Medical Testing - All tests	09.05.2024
855S	FZ Public Health Laboratory Company Limited	Medical Testing - All tests	01.12.2024
856S	Medtimes Molecular Laboratory Limited	Medical Testing - All tests	01.08.2024

• Terminated Accreditation

- Voluntary Termination (1 July 2024 to 31 December 2024)

HOKLAS

Registration No.	Name of Conformity Assessment Body	Test Category and Test Area Terminated	Effective Date (dd.mm.yyyy)
050	Intertek Testing Services Shenzhen Ltd.	Construction Materials - Curtain Walls - Windows	10.12.2024
058	Bureau Veritas Hong Kong Limited - Kowloon Bay Office	Textiles and Garments - All chemical tests	21.12.2024
129	Eurofins MTS Consumer Product Testing Hong Kong Limited	Textiles and Garments - Construction test - Strength test	21.10.2024
212	PIT Limited	Environmental Testing - All tests	22.11.2024
226	Vitargent (International) Biotechnology Limited	Environmental Testing - All tests	01.11.2024
232	Wilson Standard Test-Consult Limited	Construction Materials - All tests	10.10.2024
235	TÜV SÜD Hong Kong Limited	Testing Required By The China Compulsory Certification System (CCC) - All tests Chemical Testing - All tests	31.10.2024
827S	Prenetics Limited	Medical Testing - Clinical Microbiology and Infection	02.07.2024
846P	St. Paul's Hospital – Pathology Department	Medical Testing - Clinical Microbiology and Infection	01.08.2024
847S	AceCGT Diagnostic Limited	Medical Testing - All tests	30.11.2024
850S	Xcelcom Limited - Xcelom Microbiology Laboratory	Medical Testing - Clinical Microbiology and Infection	30.10.2024

HKCAS

Registration No.	Name of Conformity Assessment Body	Certification System	Effective Date (dd.mm.yyyy)
027	Green Council – Green Council Certification Scheme	Energy Management System	13.11.2024

HKIAS

Registration No.	Name of Conformity Assessment Body	Inspection Field	Effective Date (dd.mm.yyyy)
025	PIT Limited	Indoor Air Quality Inspection	22.11.2024

Proficiency Testing Updates

Test Category	Programme and Organiser	Status
Chemical Testing	APAC Proficiency Testing Programme – Toxic Elements in Cosmetic Cream (APAC T114) Organised by Chemical Metrology Laboratory (CML) of the Health Sciences Authority (HSA)	One laboratory participated