

EURAMET TC-Quality

Chairman's Annual Report 2011-2012

Status of quality systems and review process

In 2011 a thorough analysis of the situation of EURAMET institutes under CIPM MRA was made from the viewpoint of their coverage by external auditing. Currently, EURAMET maintains its quite flexible approach to on-site external auditing in the EURAMET institutes - the existing options are:

- accreditation (by an ILAC MRA signatory)
- on-site visit by peers (inclusive an internal audit with external auditors)
- an audit made by the corresponding NMI (applicable only to A-DIs).

The conclusion is (the details will be given at the GA in the TC-Q presentation): all the EURAMET NMIs are covered (or are being covered in 2012) by either accreditation by an ILAC MRA signatory or by on-site visits by peers. All the A-DIs with CMCs are either accredited, peer reviewed or audited by their respective NMI inclusive the international organization IAEA Vienna.

The seventh TC-Q meeting was held in Warsaw (Poland) on March 7-9, 2012. It was attended by 60 experts from 33 countries or international organisations together with invited observers: from EURAMET - Wolfgang Schmid, from IAEA - Joanna Izewska, from COOMET - Pavlo Neyezhnikov, from EA Laboratory Committee – Trevor Thompson.

The TC-Q plenary was preceded by a meeting of the Steering Committee on March 7, 2012 at the headquarters of GUM. The Steering Committee, the plenary meeting, and the visit of the laboratories were hosted by the Polish national metrology institute GUM.

The main outcomes of the meeting were:

- Approval of up-dated TC-Q documents – “Annual report template” and “Guideline for QMS Annual report”. The main idea behind that has been to simplify the amount of data to be supplied here to a reasonable minimum, as requested mainly by accredited institutes. After a discussion at the meeting the guideline document was completely re-written just after the meeting and finally approved in April 2012. A limited number of changes were agreed in the meeting to be made in the document on the QMS review procedure.
- The remaining two TC-Q guidelines dealing with Initial presentation and Re-evaluation presentations will be updated by the end of June 2012 and will be sent to TC-Q contact persons for their comments – no major changes are expected, it should only be an alignment with the existing state of affairs. The idea is to completely overhaul all TC-Q documents by the end summer 2012 to be used for the reporting at the next meeting.

- Initial QMS presentation by:
 - BoM, FYR Macedonia: full confidence given;
 - DPM, Albania: full confidence given
 - IAEA: full confidence given – it is an international organization assigned to EURAMET for the sole purpose of a QMS review: IAEA therefore expects some formal reaction to their QMS approval by BIPM;

- QMS periodical re-evaluation by:
 - VSL, The Netherlands: DI, full confidence given ,
 - PTB, Germany: NMI, full confidence given,
 - BAM, Germany: DI, full confidence given,
 - BVL, Germany: DI, full confidence given,
 - UBA, Germany: DI, full confidence given,
 - LNE, France: NMI, pending confidence given by next year, LNE representative was asked to repeat the presentation at 8th TC-Q meeting
 - LNE-INM, France: NMI, pending confidence given by next year, LNE-INM representative was asked to repeat the presentation at 8th TC-Q meeting
 - LNE-LNHB, France: NMI, pending confidence given by next year, LNE-LNHB representative was asked to repeat the presentation at 8th TC-Q meeting,
 - LNE-SYRTE, France: NMI, pending confidence given by next year, LNE-SYRTE representative was asked to repeat the presentation at 8th TC-Q meeting,
 - LNE-IRSN, France: DI, pending confidence given and major complementary information requested,
 - LNE-CETIAT, France: DI, pending confidence given and major complementary information requested,
 - LNE-LTFB, France: DI, pending confidence given and major complementary information requested,
 - LNE-LADG, France: DI, pending confidence given and major complementary information requested,
 - LNE-TRAPIL, France: DI, pending confidence given and major complementary information requested
 - NPL, United Kingdom: NMI, full confidence given
 - LGC, United Kingdom: DI, full confidence given
 - TUV NEL, United Kingdom: DI, full confidence given
 - NMO, United Kingdom: DI, full confidence given

- Review of 95 annual reports from 31 countries or organisations including those which QMS was re-evaluated during the meeting, full confidence given to 27 laboratories on spot, minor complementary information requested from 63 laboratories and major complementary information requested from 5 laboratories; the complementary information is to be delivered within eight weeks after the meeting. ENSAM (France) decided not to continue as a DI under CIPM MRA and their CMCs to be deleted (for the second time in two years they have not submitted the annual report).

- Four original EURAMET projects aimed at mutual on-site peer reviews are ongoing. Following the BoD decision in August 2010 strongly recommending an involvement

of self-declared institutes in on-site peer reviews a number of additional projects of this type has been added. Their main objective is the realisation of joint/unilateral peer review audits of quality management systems in the following laboratories:

EURAMET Project No. 1083 BEV (Austria), METAS (Switzerland) and PTB (Germany).

EURAMET Project No. 1123 CEM (Spain), INRIM (Italy), IPQ (Portugal).

EURAMET Project No. 1109 MIKES (Finland), CMI (Czech Republic), SMU (Slovakia), GUM (Poland).

EURAMET Project No. 1208 DMDM (Serbia) and BIM (Bulgaria)

EURAMET Project No. 1219 IAEA and BEV (Austria)

EURAMET Project No. 1119 BoM (FYR Macedonia) and UME (Turkey)

EURAMET project no. 1199 Ireland + Czech Republic

The corresponding presentations of these projects were given at 7th TC-Q plenary meeting. The corresponding TC-Q documents underpinning on-site peer reviews were finalized in mid 2011 and placed at the public part of the TC-Q web-site on request from a number of interested parties.

- New EURAMET TC-Q projects of this type were announced:
Following EURAMET projects aimed at mutual on-site peer reviews will probably be registered in near future - EIM (Greece) and UME (Turkey); VMT/FTMC Lithuania with CMI.
- As mentioned above the French presentation at the meeting covering all the French NMIs and DIs has not been accepted by TC-Q – as a consequence, new peer review project has been registered by France aimed at peer reviews at LNE-CNAM, the only self-declared French NMI outside time/frequency area – EURAMET Project no. 1227 (May 2012).

All the relevant documents, including the presentations, are available on the EURAMET TC-Q web site. From these documents, both the EURAMET Chair and the TC Chairs have the base information for any further actions. In particular, TC Chairs are asked to use the Annual Reports as a source of information as to the current status of QMS implementation and to look after the status of coverage of relevant CMCs.

The laboratories or countries involved in the next QMS periodical re-evaluation are the following: Spain, Switzerland, Turkey, Austria, Belgium, Egypt, Portugal; possible initial presentation: EXHM/GSCL-EIM, Greece.

The next plenary meeting will take place at IMBIH, Bosnia and Herzegovina, on March 13th - 15th, 2013. The Steering Committee will meet at the same date and place. Albania and Croatia are both considering to invite TC-Q for the meetings in 2014.

Several other points were also discussed by TC-Q:

In cooperation with the EURAMET Secretariat a decision has been made to prepare a dedicated TC-Q database to facilitate the handling of TC-Q documents (currently over 800 in number). The new developments concerning the TC-Q database were presented at the meeting. TC-Q database will enable to store all the TC-Q documents in more structured way and to simplify the work of reviewers during the evaluation process. BoD has already

approved of the funds necessary to develop the corresponding SW application – the idea is to complete the process by the end of the year.

TC-Q Chair has also pursued the development by ILAC of important documents touching on NMI community – especially document P 10 on traceability arrangements in accredited labs. An attempt was originally made by accreditors to give accredited labs a more superior position over NMIs: unlike for institutes under CIPM MRA calibrations made by accredited labs would be recognized even when being outside their accreditation scope. These matters have also been extensively discussed at JCRB meetings. The details will be given in the TC-Q presentation at the GA.