



February 2006

# APLAC NEWS NOTES

Issue No. 084

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## About APLAC

APLAC is an organisation of laboratory accreditation bodies in the Asia Pacific area that have expressed a desire to cooperate in fostering the development of competent laboratories in member economies.

Cooperation is to include:

- Exchange of information
- Joint training programs
- Proficiency testing
- Harmonisation of requirements
- Mutual recognition of systems meeting harmonised requirements

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APLAC also maintains an Internet site at:

[www.aplac.org](http://www.aplac.org)

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*Looking back on 2005, I believe that the APLAC community should be pleased with the progress made during the year*

*Major issues for 2006:*

- *Incorporation*
- *Compliance with 17011*
- *Liaisons with ILAC, APEC and other SRBs*
- *Strong technical basis*
- *Initiatives for technical development*
- *Training*
- *Website enhancement*

## Challenges for APLAC in 2006

As APLAC Chair I am grateful for the support and assistance given to me during the first year in my term as Chair. Looking back on 2005, I believe that the APLAC community should be pleased with the progress made during the year. The success of APLAC depends on the willingness of its members to actively participate in the work of its Committees; in providing peer evaluators for expansion and maintenance of the APLAC MRA; in organising APLAC proficiency testing programs; in training and development of accreditation body personnel and evaluators; in representing APLAC in other organisations such as ILAC, ISO, APEC, APMP, BIPM, PAC, PASC, APLMF etc.; and, also, in promoting the value of our work to potential users in our own economies and more broadly.

Of course our success, or otherwise, depends on the support we receive from the APLAC Secretariat, and I would acknowledge that I have received very professional and timely support from the Secretariat over the past year. I believe other APLAC members will share this view of support for their various APLAC activities. I would also acknowledge the success and efficiency of our hosts in Thailand for their arrangement of the 2005 APLAC General Assembly in Chiang Mai. The General Assembly and its associated meetings are the main opportunity each year for APLAC to progress its objectives, and the smooth functioning of these meetings assists our productivity significantly. From my perspective, also, the social interactions at these meetings are an important tool for building relationships and teamwork amongst the APLAC members and thus also facilitating the progress of APLAC's objectives.

As I look ahead to the remainder of my term as Chair, some of the major issues facing APLAC in 2006 are, in my view, the following:

- Completion of the incorporation of APLAC – This should place APLAC in a stronger position to represent APLAC in other forums and provide the necessary transparency to the wider community that APLAC is a solidly based organization.
- Review of the compliance of APLAC MRA signatories with ISO/IEC 17011 – This will be largely conducted at the planned three day meeting of the APLAC MRA Council in Singapore in May. This a big and critical job for the MRA Council and the various peer evaluation team leaders, but essential for APLAC to maintain its own MRA and continue to support the global ILAC Arrangement.
- Liaisons with ILAC, APEC and the other APEC Specialist Regional Bodies (SRBs) - APLAC has recently increased its contacts with SRBs and is close to completing MOUs with both APMP and PAC. In 2005, APLAC's Board of Management reviewed APLAC's level of support for the various Action Items in the ILAC Business Plan, and agreed that APLAC was comprehensively covering the relevant issue in that Business Plan and particularly at the regional level. During 2006 it is essential that APLAC maintain its support for the work of ILAC and in the year ahead this will include some joint work between ILAC and its regional cooperations (APLAC, EA, IAAC, SADCA and CAC-MAS-Q), such as work with BIPM on cooperation between ILAC Members and National Measurement Institutes.

*continued...*

## Challenges for APLAC in 2006 *continued*

- Continuation of a strong technical basis for APLAC's activities - Apart from the continuation of the general technical development within APLAC's Technical Committee, 2006 should also see continuing APLAC initiatives for technical development and support of its work, including the very active program of regional proficiency testing conducted by APLAC Members and further development of the program to expand the APLAC MRA to cover accreditation of reference material producers. Both of these latter areas are important underpinning activities for APLAC's traditional role in laboratory accreditation.
- Continuing training initiatives-Planned workshops for topics such as reference materials and inspection bodies, along with additional training of peer evaluators will again be key APLAC activities during 2006.
- Proposals to enhance the APLAC website – It is critical that APLAC present a professional message to the world and I am hopeful that 2006 should see improvements in the utility and image of the APLAC website.

For all of the work that needs to be started or continued in by APLAC in 2006, I seek the continuing high level of commitment shown in the past by APLAC members and I look forward to working with all my APLAC colleagues and friends to advance our objectives.

Tony Russell  
APLAC Chair  
24 January 2006

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with all my APLAC  
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advance our objectives.*



*The Secretariat would like to say thank you to everyone who contributed their time and expertise to the smooth running and further development of APLAC during 2005.*

## From the APLAC Secretariat

Best wishes to all for the coming year. The Secretariat would like to say thank you to everyone who contributed their time and expertise to the smooth running and further development of APLAC during 2005. We are looking forward to another busy year in 2006. Some of the activities already on the agenda are:

- A Reference Material Producers Workshop on 10-12 April 2006 in Beijing. The course presenters will be Dr E W B de Leer of the Nederlands Meetinstituut, Mr W W Wong of HKAS and Ms R Robinson of A2LA. Each accreditation body will have the opportunity for one representative to attend with a maximum of 25 participants for the workshop. It is designed for experienced accreditation body staff who will be responsible for RMP accreditations, and for technical assessors who will be involved in the assessment of RMPs. Selection will be strictly on the basis of the first 25 to send in their registration form. Accreditation bodies will be responsible for the attendee's costs and APLAC will cover venue hire and lunches. Invitations will be sent in February 2006.
- A course for new evaluators is planned for May 29-31 2006 in Bangkok. The course is for evaluators who have not yet participated in an evaluator training course. Invitations will be sent to the individual evaluators in February 2006. There will be some partial funding support for attendees and details will be included with the invitation. It is most unlikely that there will be any places available on the course for other evaluators who have already done a course.
- The next MRA Council Meeting will be held in Singapore from 22-24 May 2006. More information will follow ahead of the meeting.

Please take the opportunity to visit the APLAC website at [www.aplac.org](http://www.aplac.org) as a number of documents have been updated recently. The documents are:

MR 001, issue 9  
 MR 002, November 2005  
 MR 003, issue 10  
 MR 007, issue 1  
 NC 001, issue 6  
 PT 001, issue 4  
 PT 002, issue 5  
 PT 004, issue 5  
 SEC 043, issue 3  
 SEC 009, issue 76  
 SEC 020, issue 53  
 SEC 021, issue 21

Helen Liddy, Jane King and Janet Clark  
 APLAC Secretariat

## Update from the APLAC PT Committee

Following our 11th meeting in Chiang Mai, Thailand, the Committee has been busy with a number of draft final report reviews and consideration for program proposals. At this stage the programs planned to commence in 2006:

- M011 Thermocouples (SAC/TISI)
- M012 Screw Thread Gauges (NATA)
- T046 Food Microbiological (CNAL)
- T049 Organochlorine Pesticide Residues in Herbal Medicine (HKAS)
- T050 Prawn Nitrofurans Metabolites (CNAL)
- T051 Heavy Metal Elements in Plastic (TAF)
- T052 Mechanical Properties of Metal (TAF)

The Committee would like to congratulate Mr. Ahmad Razif Abd Rahim (DSM) on his appointment as Secretary.

The Committee Chairman, Philip Briggs commenced on 1 January 2006 as General Manager of Proficiency Testing Australia (PTA). PTA is a wholly owned subsidiary company of NATA and was set up to separate its delivery of its proficiency testing activities to satisfy the requirements of ISO/IEC 17011:2004.

As part of the review of the APLAC proficiency testing requirements a survey was conducted in 2004 on member proficiency testing frequency requirements for accredited sectors. At the time not all members completed and returned the survey. APLAC is encouraging all members to complete the survey which will provide additional information from our region. This information will also assist ILAC in their concurrent review of their proficiency testing requirements. For a copy of the survey please contact [razif@dsm.gov.my](mailto:razif@dsm.gov.my)

*As part of the review of the APLAC proficiency testing requirements a survey was conducted in 2004 on member proficiency testing frequency requirements for accredited sectors. All members are encouraged to complete the survey.*

The Committee also reminds members to make use of the APLAC Measurement Audits. For further information please refer to the following documents on the APLAC website:

- PT004 Measurement Audits
- PT005 Artefacts for Measurement Audits

For further information, APLAC members are advised that the minutes of the 11th APLAC Proficiency Testing Committee held on 14-15 November 2005 are available on the members only section of the APLAC website.

Philip Briggs  
Chairman, APLAC Proficiency Testing Committee



*Anthony Russell (Chair of APLAC), Rick Wilson and Ned Gravel (CAEAL), and Terence Chan (Chair of the APLAC MRA Council) at CAEAL's signing of the APLAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement, November 17, 2005.*

*Our world is shrinking and our MRA has greater influence on events and decisions around the Asia-Pacific.*



## APLAC Recognition of CAEAL – 15 Years in the Making

On 17 November 2005, CAEAL received the recognition of its APLAC peers during a signing ceremony in Chiang Mai, Thailand that was the culmination of 15 years of work. Regardless of the joy and relief we all felt, getting there is a story well known to all recognised accreditation bodies. However CAEAL's walk down this road started long before there was even an APLAC MOU and it ended with CAEAL achieving the first APLAC recognition of an accreditation body to the new ISO/IEC 17011.

In the early 1990's CAEAL created an accreditation program based on the stated needs of environmental laboratories in Canada. In 1994, the accreditation program entered a new phase in a partnership with the Standards Council of Canada (SCC). The SCC granted accreditations upon the recommendation of CAEAL. Thus began an annual review of the CAEAL quality system against ISO/IEC Guide 58 that continues to this day. It is the practice of this annual review that was the single biggest factor in facilitating CAEAL's ease of response to the new requirements of ISO/IEC 17011, including changing requirements from external bodies such as APLAC.

Whether it was the SCC, A2LA, state/provincial regulatory agencies or members from APLAC, CAEAL was able to glean from the experiences of a wide range of bodies on the most appropriate methods of conducting accreditations to Guide 25, CAN/CSA Z-753, and ISO/IEC 17025. We were enriched by this transfer of knowledge and in July 2005 we were able to demonstrate conformance to the new ISO/IEC 17011 within four months of achieving Full Member status in APLAC. CAEAL could not have achieved that, nor the subsequent recognition as a signatory of the APLAC MRA, without the assistance of several existing signatory members of APLAC during the past 15 years. CAEAL owes them all a debt of gratitude.

But recognition is not an end in itself. Within our MRA, continuing to develop best practices, working together on common solutions, and assisting where we can, are real and meaningful goals. Our world is shrinking and our MRA has greater influence on events and decisions around the Asia-Pacific. From CAEAL's perspective, the formula that led to our success is one that we hope CAEAL can help continue within the MRA – for the benefit of our members, our regulatory agencies, our nation and our MRA partnership.

Ned Gravel  
 Manager, Training and Quality  
 CAEAL

## NACLA Elects Four New Board Members

The membership of the National Cooperation for Laboratory Accreditation (NACLA) has elected four new members to the NACLA Board of Directors/Operations Council: Joan Cassedy, Keith Greenaway, Carl Sciacchitano and Steven Stahley.

Ms. Cassedy will represent ACIL (the American Council of Independent Laboratories), where she serves as Executive Director. Mr. Greenaway is President of ACLASS (Assured Calibration and Laboratory Accreditation Select Services) and Chairman of the NACLA Training Subcommittee.

*continued....*

## NACLA Elects Four New Board Members *continued*

Mr. Sciacchitano is Director, Division of Field Science, Office of Regulatory Affairs, U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Mr. Stahley is Manager of the Central Measurement Services group of Cummins, Inc.

These four individuals have joined 18 others whose service on the Board will continue in 2006. The 22-member Board of Directors/Operations Council has overall responsibility for NACLA operations and policies. It has balanced representation from NACLA's four stakeholder groups: Industry, Government, Laboratories and Accreditation Bodies.

## SADCA Report

### 1. SADCA PROJECT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE [PMC] MEETINGS

A PMC meeting took place from 01 to 08 November 2005 in Zanzibar. A large portion of the time was devoted to the Southern African Development Community Accreditation Service [SADCAS] Board of Directors [BoD].

The next PMC meeting is now scheduled to take place from 06 to 09 February 2006 in Botswana. The BoD and National Accreditation Focal Points [NAFPs] will also be attending these meetings.

The PMC will also use the opportunity to commence with preparations for the annual SADCA meeting, to be held in Namibia in April 2006.

### 2. SADCAS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

As previously mentioned, the inaugural SADCAS BoD meeting was held in November 2005 in conjunction with the SADCA PMC meeting. Prior to the BoD meeting, the newly appointed Directors received corporate governance training from the South African Institute of Directors.

The training was followed by the BoD members scrutinising the SADCAS Articles of Association and the Memorandum of Association, with the assistance of both the PMC and the international expert.

### 3. NAFP ACTIVITIES

To date National Accreditation Focal Points [NAFPs] from 6 SADC countries have been launched namely Malawi, Tanzania, Zambia, DRC, Mauritius and Zimbabwe.

### 4. INCORPORATION OF SADCAS

The firm of corporate lawyers in Gaborone, Botswana have now submitted the SADCAS application to the Registrar of Companies in Botswana for registration. We now await news of the registration as well as supporting documents from the lawyers.

### 5. MEETINGS WITH DONORS

SADCA continues to meet with NORAD, SIDA and the EU on a regular basis.

### 6. IMMEDIATE FUTURE PLANS

- Implementation and monitoring of the SADCAS project plan.
- Integration of SADCAS and SADCA project plans with those of the regional SQAM organisation.
- Assist in the integration of the technical infrastructure being created within SADC into the regional strategies to manage TBT and SPS related activity.





Ms Maribel López (centre), the ema delegate to APLAC, signs the APLAC Mutual Recognition Agreement, with Anthony Russell (left), Chair of APLAC, and Terence Chan (right), Chair of the APLAC MRA Council.

November 17, 2005.

## JLAC Technical Seminar in Tokoyo

The 4th technical seminar on laboratory accreditation was held on 17th January 2006, in Tokyo. This seminar was organized by Japan laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (JLAC), which is a cooperative network of Japanese laboratory accreditation bodies, IAJapan, JAB, JCLA, and VLAC. More than two hundred fifty participants from concerned laboratories were participating in the seminar to study technical matters for testing and calibration. The following topics were presented by experts from Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) and JLAC member accreditation bodies.

- Governmental Policy on Conformity Assessment,
- Revision of ISO/IEC 17025,
- Proficiency Testing Program on Chemical Analysis,
- Proficiency Testing Program on Electromagnetic Compatibility(EMC),
- Proficiency Testing on various testing fields.
- Proficiency Testing Program on Calibration for APLAC.

This seminar is held annually in major cities in Japan. It keeps all interested parties informed of the latest technical issues relevant to laboratory accreditation.

by IAJapan

## New Success in ema

ema has demonstrated the fulfillment of the international standards and guidance, and also its daily work is done through values, performance principles and commitments. This way of implementation of an organizational culture was recognized last November 25, 2005 with a Mexican Prize called “PREMIO DE ÉTICA Y VALORES” (Ethics and Values Prize), which is granted by the Mexican Chamber of Industries and was given by the Mexican President Vicente Fox Quesada.

This prize is obtained by Mexican companies that demonstrate their industrial civism and that their social responsibility is for benefit of their sphere of influence.

To confirm the commitment, ema has decided to join “The Global Compact” network of the United Nations. The Global Compact asks companies to embrace, support and enact, within their sphere of influence, a set of core values in the areas of human rights, labor standards, the environment and anti-corruption.

ema started as a dream seven years ago and today is a reality. It was started a project for Mexico, and since its creation there has been a continual improvement. Day after day this effort is crystallized by each institution and person that works or is involved with ema activities.

CONGRATULATIONS to ema staff!

Picture at right: Mr. Guillermo Schiefer (ema’s President) receiving a handshake from Mr. Leon Halkin (President of the Mexican Industry and Commerce Chamber), and witnessed by Mr. Vicente Fox (Mexico’s President),



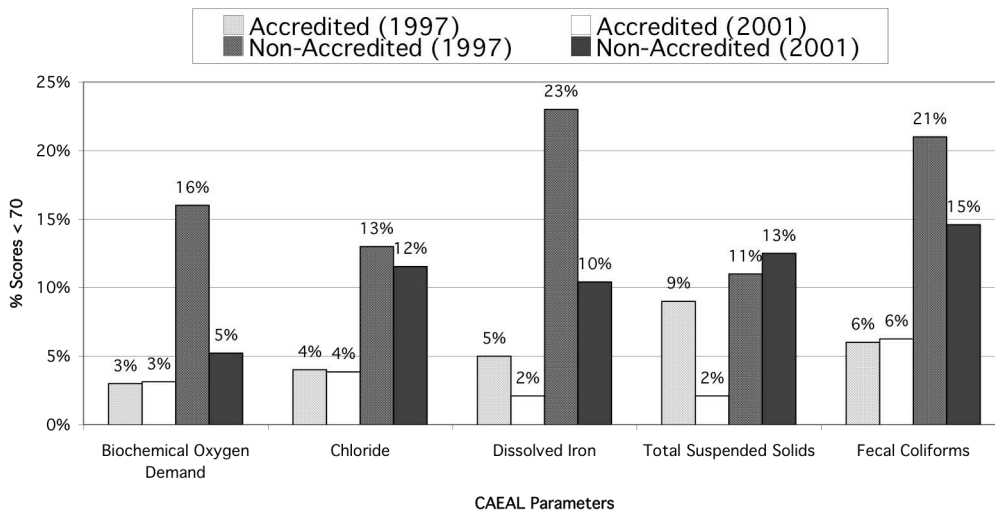
## PT Performance Comparisons

Research undertaken by the Canadian Association For Environmental Analytical Laboratories (CAEAL) has found that accredited laboratories consistently out-perform non-accredited laboratories in the CAEAL proficiency testing program. The research findings clearly show that test results from accredited laboratories are more precise than results from non-accredited laboratories, and therefore are more reliable than results originating from non-accredited laboratories. The benefits of using an accredited laboratory in terms of precision, reliability and confidence in the results are clearly demonstrated by the research findings.

The performance of accredited and non-accredited environmental laboratories was compared in two carefully designed studies that have been published and are also available on the CAEAL web site (see "1997 Performance Comparison" and "2001 Performance Comparison" at <http://www.caeal.ca/aboutus.html>).

At the same web site, CAEAL has continued to illustrate the advantage of accredited laboratories by posting (at the same web site) comparative success rates for all laboratories participating in about 35 test groups two times each year. More than 350 laboratories participate in CAEAL's program, 72% of which are private sector laboratories, and 28% are public sector laboratories which are associated with local, provincial and federal levels of government in Canada.

Comparison of Unsatisfactory Scores, 1997 & 2001.



The figure at left is taken from the paper "2001 Performance Comparison" available at <http://www.caeal.ca/aboutus.html>

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***World-class  
laboratory  
accreditations***

We're on the Web!

See us at:

[www.caeal.ca](http://www.caeal.ca)

## About Our Organization...

We are the Canadian Association for Environmental Analytical Laboratories (CAEAL), a non-profit organization established in 1989 as a partnership amongst laboratories from the government and private sectors. CAEAL's mission: to help laboratories achieve and demonstrate the highest levels of scientific and management excellence through the combined principles of Competence, Consistency, Credibility and Communication.

Our laboratories voluntarily participate in rigorous programs of proficiency testing and accreditation, demonstrating their commitment to generate high quality data. CAEAL has accredited 160 of the 400 laboratories that participate in its programs, and it also delivers a special program for 245 water treatment facilities in Alberta.

CAEAL also offers a training program that is delivered through both workshops and Internet based courses.

CAEAL achieved APLAC and ILAC recognition on November 17, 2005. A team of four scientists from various APLAC countries conducted an evaluation of CAEAL's laboratory accreditation operations in July 2005, including observation of CAEAL teams conducting assessments of six Canadian laboratories. CAEAL grants accreditations based on the international standard ISO/IEC 17025, which provides assurance that the laboratory is competent to carry out specific tests covered in its accredited scope of testing.



CAEAL Staff

## APLAC PUBLICATIONS LIST

### APLAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement Advisory Committee

<u>APLAC MR001 #</u>	Issue No.9 01 /06	Procedures for Establishing and Maintaining Mutual Recognition Agreements Between Accreditation Bodies
<u>APLAC MR002 (Rev 2) #</u>	Issues No 11/05	Asia Pacific Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation Mutual Recognition Arrangement
<u>APLAC MR003</u>	Issue No. 10 01/06	Application for Signatory Status in the APLAC Multilateral Mutual Recognition Arrangement (APLAC MRA)
<u>APLAC MR004</u>	Issue No.4 09 /05	APLAC Evaluators - Qualificatons and Monitoring Performance.
<u>APLAC MR005</u>	Issue No.1 09/03	Procedure for Training MRA Evaluators
<u>APLAC MR006</u>	Issue No.1 07/04	Procedure for conduct of joint evaluation for another region.
<u>APLAC MR007</u>	Issue No.1 01 /06	APLAC Evaluation Checklist

### APLAC Nominations Committee

<u>APLAC NC001</u>	Issue No.6 01 /06	APLAC Nominations Committee and the APLAC Nomination Process
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### APLAC Proficiency Testing Committee

<u>APLAC PT001</u>	Issue No.4 01 /06	APLAC Calibration Inter laboratory Comparisons
<u>APLAC PT002</u>	Issue No.5 01 /06	APLAC Testing Interlaboratory Comparisons
<u>APLAC PT003</u>	Issue No.5 03 /05	APLAC Proficiency Testing Directory
<u>APLAC PT004</u>	Issue No.5 01 /06	APLAC Measurement Audits
<u>APLAC PT005</u>	Issue No.1 06 /04	Artefacts for Measurement Audits

### APLAC Public Information Committee

<u>APLAC PR001</u>	Issue No.2 02 /05	APLAC Publications Numbering Policy
<u>APLAC PR003</u>	Issue No.3 02 /05	Procedure for Adoption of APLAC Documents
<u>APLAC PR007</u>	Issue No.17 12 /05	Power Point Presentation - APLAC Its Role And Structure
<u>APLAC PR008</u>	Issue No.18 10 /05	International Recognition of Accredited Test, Calibration and Inspection Reports
<u>APLAC PR009</u>	Issue No.5	APLAC Procedures for Editors of APLAC News Notes

07 /04

APLAC  
Presentationweb\_docs/APLACPR007.ppt

Power Point Slide Template

### APLAC Secretariat

<u>APLAC SEC001*</u>	Issue No.3 12 /03	APLAC Memorandum of Understanding, second edition
<u>APLAC SEC004*</u>	Issue No.6 07 /05	APLAC Rules of Procedure
<u>APLAC SEC009</u>	Issue No.76 01 /06	APLAC Publications List
<u>APLAC SEC017</u>	Issue No.10 05 /05	APLAC Application for Membership
<u>APLAC SEC020</u>	Issue No.53 01 /06	APLAC General Assembly and MRA Council Delegates List
<u>APLAC SEC021</u>	Issue No.21 01 /06	APLAC Board of Management Membership List
<u>APLAC SEC022</u>	Issue No.15 12 /05	Committee Chairs and Secretaries
<u>APLAC SEC023</u>	Deleted	APLAC MRA Council Membership List (see SEC 020 above)
<u>APLAC SEC036</u>	Issue No.2 08 /03	APLAC Complaints Handling Procedures
<u>APLAC SEC037</u>	Issue No.2 02 /05	APLAC Document Control and Document Format
<u>APLAC SEC038</u>	Issue No.25 12 /05	APLAC Membership Summary List
<u>APLAC SEC039</u>	Issue No.14 12 /05	APLAC MRA Signatories Summary List
<u>APLAC SEC040</u>	Issue No.4 07 /04	APLAC Procedure for Issuing Invoices for Annual Fees
<u>APLAC SEC041</u>	Issue No. 3 08/04	APLAC Guidelines for Hosts of the APLAC General Assembly and Associated Meetings (only available from the Secretariat)
<u>APLAC SEC042*</u>	Issue No.2 07/03	Code of Ethics
<u>APLAC SEC043</u>	Issue No.3 01 /06	Requirements for APLAC Funding Requests
<u>APLAC SEC044</u>	Issue No.2 08 /03	Procedure for Appeals and Alternative Dispute Resolution Process.
<u>APLAC SEC045</u>	Issue No.3 06/05	APLAC Procedure for Management Review and Internal Audits
<u>APLAC SEC046</u>	Issue No. 1 12 /03	Guidelines for use of the APLAC Logo
<u>APLAC SEC047</u>	Issue No. 1 12/03	Processing Notification of Changes within an APLAC MRA Signatory Organisation

<u>APLAC SEC048</u>	Issue No. 1 12/03	APLAC Register of Delegated Responsibilities
<u>APLAC SEC049</u>	Issue No.7 10 /05	Maintenance and Archiving of APLAC files
<u>APLAC SEC050</u>	Issue No. 1 08/04	Guidelines for APLAC MRA signatories when accrediting laboratories or inspection bodies within the economy of another APLAC MRA signatory
<u>APLAC SEC051</u>	Issue No. 1 12/04	Overview of APLAC management system documentation

#### APLAC Technical Committee

<u>APLAC TC002</u>	Issue No.2 2 /04	APLAC Internal Audits for Laboratories and Inspection Bodies
<u>APLAC TC003</u>	Issue No.2 2 /04	APLAC Management Review for Laboratories and Inspection Bodies
<u>APLAC TC004</u>	Issue No.2 03/04	APLAC Method of Stating Test and Calibration Results and Compliance with Specification
<u>APLAC TC005</u>	Issue No.2 03 /04	Interpretation and Guidance on the Estimation of Uncertainty of Measurement in Testing
<u>APLAC TC006</u>	Issue No.1 07 /04	APLAC Guidance notes on ISO/IEC 17020
<u>APLAC TC007</u>	Issue No.1 10/05	APLAC Guidelines for Food Testing Laboratories.

#### APLAC Training Committee

<u>APLAC TR001</u>	Issue No.1 12 /01	Guidelines on Training course for Assessors
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\* Adherence to these APLAC documents is mandatory for all APLAC members (Full and Associate)

# Adherence to these APLAC documents is mandatory for all signatories to the APLAC mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA)