

Revision of ISO/IEC 17025

Background

The ISO/IEC 17025:2005 *General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories* Standard is currently under review.

CASCO is the ISO technical committee responsible for the standards applicable to conformity assessment.

CASCO membership is open to ISO member bodies (i.e. national standards bodies) and liaison organisations such as ILAC, BIPM etc. Australia's ISO member body is Standards Australia.

Following a New Work Item Proposal (NWIP) submitted jointly by ILAC and the South African Bureau of Standards, ISO approved the review of ISO/IEC 17025 in October 2014. Revision of the Standard is a three year process which commenced in October 2014.

Working Group 44 (WG44) was established and tasked to review the Standard. Mr John Styzinski, NATA's General Manager Operations and Technical, is one of two Standards Australia representatives on WG44.

The standards review process includes:

- Committee Draft (CD) which can include successive versions, e.g. CD1, CD2, etc.);
- Draft International Standard (DIS);
- Final Draft International Standard (FDIS) which is an optional stage; and
- Publication.

Each stage includes a commenting and voting process prior to progressing to the next stage. Further information on the standards review process can be found at:

http://www.iso.org/iso/home/standards_development/resources-for-technical-work/support-for-developing-standards.htm

Status of review

The Standard is currently at the DIS stage. NATA invited comments on the DIS via its website. The period of comment has now closed. This feedback has been collated and forwarded to Standards Australia and the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) for consideration.

A subgroup of Working Group 44 will meet in May 2017 to collate the comments and feedback on the DIS from ISO/CASCO members, with these collated comments being considered by Working Group 44 in July 2017. It is hoped that, following the meeting of WG44 in July 2017, the standard may move to a vote for publishing, with publication by the end of this year. This however will not be

known until the meeting has taken place. When further information comes to light, it will be shared with all relevant parties.

What changes can be expected in the published version?

Given that the review of the Standard is currently at the DIS stage, there is still the possibility of changes between the DIS and FDIS or a published version. Laboratories can, however, expect the requirements to be structured as per the following format mandated by ISO/CASCO:

- General requirements;
- Structural requirements;
- Resource requirements;
- Process requirements; and
- Management requirements.

This is the same format to that seen in ISO/IEC 17020 *Conformity assessment – Requirements for the operation of various types of bodies performing inspection*.

There will be two options available to fulfil the Management requirements – **Option A** and **Option B**. This will not change as again, it is mandated by ISO/CASCO.

Option A will require the laboratory to address the requirements of:

- Management system documentation;
- Control of management system documents;
- Control of records;
- Actions to address risks and opportunities;
- Improvement;
- Corrective action;
- Internal audits; and
- Management reviews.

Alternatively, **Option B** allows a laboratory that has established and maintains a management system in accordance with ISO 9001 (which is capable of supporting and demonstrating the consistent fulfilment of the General, Structural, Resource and Process requirements) to be recognised as fulfilling the intent of the management system requirements as outlined in Option A.

What now?

At this stage, it is difficult to provide further details on potential changes to the Standard given all the comments on the DIS from ISO/CASCO members are yet to be considered. As mentioned previously when further information comes to light it will be shared. In the meantime, NATA will continue to provide updates in NATA News and through our website.

Work has also commenced on a transition policy and the development of a gap analysis checklist between the 2005 version of the Standard and the new version.

Information sessions for Members and Technical Assessors are being planned with announcements to be made in the second half of the calendar year.

NATA's Training Services Group have also given due consideration to a number of courses based on ISO/IEC 17025:2005 and some courses have been suspended from May 2017. Content of relevant courses will be revised based on the gap analysis checklist.

Enquiries

Enquiries on the revision of ISO/IEC 17025 can be directed to your Client Coordinator in the first instance.