

DEMAND FOR ACCREDITATION CONTINUES TO GROW

INAB continues to experience significant growth in demand for its accreditation services. This growth in demand for accreditation is arising from two distinct sources. On the one hand there is a steady growth in the number of organisations seeking accreditation in what might be termed the more traditional areas of accreditation such as laboratory accreditation to ISO 17025 and certification body accreditation for Quality Management System certification, Product certification, Environmental Management system certification etc. On the other hand INAB is also experiencing a significant increase in demand for the application of accreditation to what might be termed new areas in specific sectors such as the food, health and environment sectors. You will find several examples of the application of accreditation to these new areas throughout this newsletter – e.g. articles on EU Emissions Trading Directive (Directive 2003/87/EC), Solvents Directive, ISO 15189 medical laboratory accreditation, engineering inspection and the British Retail Consortium Food product quality scheme.

It is evident that this growth in demand for accreditation is originating from market demands in both the voluntary and regulated fields. Regulators are relying more and more on accreditation as the mechanism for assuring the competence of the organisations providing services required for the implementation of regulations and directives such as the EU Emissions Trading and Solvents Directives. This reliance on accreditation by regulators is fully consistent with the European Commission approach which recognises accreditation as the preferred mechanism for assuring the competence of organisations servicing such Directives and it is anticipated from current initiatives within the Commission (e.g. future Food Directive) that reliance on accreditation will increase in future. While the growth in demand for accreditation in the voluntary market is occurring in several areas such as Communications (Bluetooth technology) Information Security Management, Motor industry, Aerospace industry etc it is perhaps especially evident in the food sector. Several market forces in the food sector concerned with assuring the safety and quality of food products are driving demand for accreditation in the food sector. The large food retail organisations are requiring producers to demonstrate through accredited product certification schemes that their products meet specific quality and safety requirements. The British Retail Consortium food quality assurance scheme which is operational in several countries in Europe is one example of this. Other food retail quality assurance schemes include the EUREGAP scheme, and the Global Food Safety Initiative and national schemes developed by national bodies responsible for promoting and marketing quality food products.

I hope that this newsletter provides the reader with a snapshot of some of the recent developments involving the application of accreditation which INAB and every other national accreditation body in Europe is experiencing.

A SERIES OF FIRSTS!!!

FIRST ENGINEERING INSPECTION BODY ACCREDITED

INAB recently awarded accreditation to ISO 17020 (EN 45004) to Hibernian Insurance for its Engineering Inspection Services.

This is the first Inspection Body accreditation of this type to be awarded by INAB. INAB would like to congratulate Hibernian Insurance on its achievement.



Pictured above is the Manager of INAB, Tom Dempsey, presenting the INAB Accreditation Certificate to Mr Stephen O'Neill, Manager of Hibernian Engineering Services.

FIRST ACCREDITATION OF A CERTIFICATION BODY FOR BRC CERTIFICATION

IFQC Ltd. (Reg.No. 6002) was granted an extension to its scope of accreditation to include BRC certification at the meeting of the INAB Board on 6 September 2004. Additional information on BRC is on page 3 of this newsletter.

FIRST ISO/IEC 15189 ACCREDITED LABORATORY IN IRELAND

INAB would like to congratulate The Bon Secours Hospital, Cork, Pathology Department (Reg.No.153MT), on being the first Laboratory in Ireland and one of the first laboratories in Europe to be awarded accreditation to the new international medical standard ISO/IEC 15189.

Continued on page 2

Continued from page 1

This standard is based on ISO 17025 and ISO 9001 and provides requirements for competence and quality that are particular to medical laboratories. The Laboratory's scope of accreditation covers a broad range of testing activities including clinical chemistry, microbiology, haematology/blood transfusion and immunology.



The Bon Secours Hospital, "Pathology Department", Cork.

SOLVENTS REGULATIONS

Council Directive 1999/13/EC is being implemented in Ireland per Statutory Instrument No. 543 of 2002 "Emissions of Volatile Organic Compounds from Organic Solvents Regulations 2002", which came into force on 30th November 2002.

The Regulations provide the means for regulating the emissions of solvent vapours from 20 specified activities when they exceed the relevant solvent consumption thresholds. The thresholds in some instances are lower than the 10 tonnes/annum level at which an Integrated Pollution Control (IPC) licence from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is required, so the effect of the Regulations is to extend the control of solvent emissions to much smaller SME activities. In the case of activities using more than 10 tonnes/annum solvents, the IPC licence from the EPA remains the appropriate means of control and will incorporate the requirements of the Directive.

The Solvents Regulations require that specified activities not requiring an IPC licence, be registered and operate in accordance with a certificate of compliance issued by the competent authority. The competent authority is the local authority (County Council or City Council) in whose functional area the specified installation is located. A certificate of

compliance will be issued on the basis of an annual inspection and report by an Accredited Inspection Contractor (AIC) confirming that the installation is in compliance with the Regulations. The inspection and report by an AIC will be at cost to the operator.

The AIC must be selected from a panel of such contractors established by the Irish National Accreditation Board (INAB). Following a pilot programme earlier in 2004 this scheme is now in operation and interested AICs may apply to the INAB for accreditation to ISO 17020 (EN 45004) as an accredited inspection body. In the meantime if you are an installation requiring an inspection to demonstrate compliance with the Directive please contact Catherine McEnri (Catherine.mcEnri@inab.ie) for the names of those organisations whose inspection reports will be accepted by the competent authorities.

EU EMISSIONS TRADING DIRECTIVE (DIRECTIVE 2003/87/EC)

The member states of the European Union (EU) are signatories to the Kyoto Protocol, which requires reductions in emissions of greenhouse gases by specific amounts over a period from 2008 to 2012 and beyond. The EU committed to an average reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 8% below 1990 levels. The EU Emissions Trading Directive is being implemented to achieve this target. The Directive establishes an allowance-trading scheme for emissions to promote reductions of greenhouse gases, in particular carbon dioxide.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has been appointed by the Government as the competent authority in Ireland with the responsibility to implement this Directive. Each EU member state must submit a national allocation plan (NAP) to the EU commission. This plan details allowances of carbon dioxide for each affected operator in any particular country. The Irish national allocation plan, which has been accepted by the EU Commission, is available from the EPA website, www.epa.ie

The EU Emissions Trading Directive stipulates that emissions from each operator are examined on a yearly basis by an independent verifier. Once this has been completed, the operator must submit the results of this verification to their competent authority.

Most EU member states require these independent verifiers to be accredited. The Irish National Accreditation Board (INAB) has been appointed by the EPA to accredit verifiers for the Emissions Trading Directive in Ireland.

INAB is currently participating in an EA working group to develop and agree a set of accreditation guidelines, which may be used in any country within the EU. These guidelines will ensure a harmonised approach to the accreditation of verifiers within participating EU member states and will allow verifiers to operate in more than one EU country.

For further information on this accreditation scheme, please contact Bríd Burke.



Mr. Tom Dempsey, Manager INAB presenting accreditation certificate to Mr. John Fitzgerald, City Manager, Dublin City Council

NEW ACCREDITATIONS AWARDED IN 2004

- 148T **Dublin City Council Central Laboratory**
68 – 70 Marrowbone Lane, Dublin 8
Microbiological Testing Laboratory
- 149T **Atlantic Industries Ireland (Ballina Beverages Branch)**
Killala Road, Ballina, Co. Mayo
Chemical Testing Laboratory
- 150T **TMS Environment Ltd**
53 Broomhill Drive, Tallaght, Dublin 24
Chemical Testing Laboratory
- 151T **The Irish Equine Centre**
Johnstown, Naas, Co. Kildare
Biological Testing Laboratory
- 152T **Highway Testing Laboratory**
Unit 16 Westlink Commercial Park, Oranmore, Co. Galway
Construction Materials Testing Laboratory
- 153T **Bon Secours Health Systems Ltd**
Pathology Department, College Road, Cork
Medical Testing Laboratory
- 154T **Irish Equine Centre**
Johnstown, Naas, Co. Kildare
Biological Testing Laboratory
- 155T **Cavan County Council**
By-Pass Office, Drumcalpin, Ballyhaise Road, Co. Cavan
Chemical Testing Laboratory
- 9002 **Hibernian Insurance (Hibernian Engineering Services)**
86 West Street, Drogheda, Co. Louth
In-service Engineering Inspection



Safefood will be hosting Accreditation workshops in the coming months the dates & venues are:

- Cork** 22th & 23rd November – safefood, the Food Safety Promotion Board, 7 Eastgate Avenue, Eastgate, Little Island BT8 7XP, Co. Cork
- Galway** 25th & 26th November – Ardilaun House Hotel, Taylors Hill, Galway
- Dublin** 6th & 7th December – Clarion Hotel, International Financial Services Centre, Dublin 1, Republic of Ireland.
- Belfast** 9th & 10th December – Ramada Hotel, 117 Milltown Rd, Shaws Bridge, Belfast, Northern Ireland.

The workshops are designed for established laboratory personnel experienced and familiar with Accreditation. The workshops will be highly practical and finely tuned through practical application and case studies.

The topics covered by the workshop will be validation (of analytical methods) effective investigation of non-conforming work, quality control/quality assurance and proficiency testing and training – a competent system.

For more information please contact Elizabeth Stack at 021 2304142 or by email estack@safefoodonline.com

NEW STANDARD FOR ACCREDITATION BODIES

Under the European Multilateral agreement INAB is required to comply with ISO Guide 58 and ISO Guide 61 for the provision of its accreditation services.

These guides are now being replaced by the recently approved ISO standard ISO 17011 "General requirements for Bodies providing assessment and accreditation of conformity Assessment Bodies".

SCHEDULE OF FEES – 2005

The INAB Schedule of Fees applicable for INAB accreditation is available from the INAB Website (www.inab.ie).

For 2005, INAB has successfully limited the increase to 2.25% in accordance with the national annual rate of inflation for 2004 as provided by the Central Bank of Ireland. Please note that these schedules apply only to work carried out in Ireland. Please feel free to contact the INAB officer responsible for dealing with your organisation should you have any queries.

INAB STAFF NEWS – NEW FACES

ORLA DOYLE



GILLIAN LAWLESS



INAB POINTS OF CONTACT

Manager

Tom Dempsey

tom.dempsey@inab.ie

Administration

Mary Horne

mary.horne@inab.ie

Gillian Lawless

gillian.lawless@inab.ie

Laboratory Accreditation

Adrienne Duff

adrienne.duff@inab.ie

Catherine McEnri

catherine.mcenri@inab.ie

Marie O'Mahony

marie.omahony@inab.ie

Brid Burke

brid.burke@inab.ie

Pat O'Brien

pat.obrien@inab.ie

Certification Body Accreditation

Catherine McEnri

catherine.mcenri@inab.ie

Brid Burke

brid.burke@inab.ie

Inspection Body Accreditation

Catherine McEnri

catherine.mcenri@inab.ie

Good Laboratory Practice (GLP)

Marie O'Mahony

marie.omahony@inab.ie

Adrienne Duff

adrienne.duff@inab.ie

Project Work

Orla Doyle

orla.doyle@inab.ie



BRC RECOGNISES INAB ACCREDITATION

The BRC (British Retail Consortium), an organisation that includes all of the major retail distributors, has developed its own scheme based on the certification of accredited products. This scheme demands that suppliers of foodstuffs to British supermarkets certify that they have fulfilled the documentation standards drawn up by the BRC. This verification must be undertaken by a certification body accredited by an accreditation body recognised by the BRC.

INAB worked with the BRC during 2003 so that the Irish accreditation process would meet their requirements, in order to facilitate the recognition of our accreditations. The process was successfully completed with the formal recognition of INAB accreditations by BRC. This should now ease the way for the products of Irish manufacturers, certified by INAB accredited bodies, to be accepted by the United Kingdom.

BRC publishes a list of accredited certification bodies recognised by them on their website. All BRC members have access to this information. The BRC also recommends that suppliers check whether a certification body has been recognised by the BRC, and they recommend that their accreditation status is checked before their services are contracted.

(For further information, please e-mail Catherine.mcenri@inab.ie)



MEET OUR INAB OFFICERS – MARIE O'MAHONY

I joined INAB in November 1997 having previously worked in both the pharmaceutical and critical medical device sectors. Initially I was responsible for a portfolio of applicant and accredited laboratories. Now my main responsibilities also include quality manager and manager of INAB's EU/OECD GLP compliance monitoring programme.

A key benefit for INAB accredited organisations is that their accreditation is internationally recognised due to INAB's membership of both European and International Multilateral Recognition Agreements (MLA). As quality manager in INAB one of my main roles is to ensure INAB's continued compliance with these MLA requirements. INAB's next EA Peer Review is scheduled for February 2006 and this will determine INAB's continued membership of both the European and International MLAs.

At European level, in servicing INAB's MLA requirements I participate in EA peer reviews on other MLA accreditation bodies and MJVs (mutual joint visits) of overseas GLP Compliance Monitoring Authorities.

In laboratory accreditation ISO 17025 has now been joined by the new standard ISO 15189 "Specific Requirements for Medical Laboratories". I worked closely with SWEDAC, the Swedish Accreditation Body, in this area and in 2004 The Bon Secours Hospital in Cork (Reg.No. 153MT) was awarded accreditation, making it one of the first laboratories in Europe to be accredited to this new standard.

In the GLP compliance monitoring programme I am responsible for the GLP inspections and study audits of test facilities in the National GLP programme. I also represent INAB on both the OECD and the EU GLP expert working groups to ensure that Irish interests are highlighted in the development of GLP-related policy issues.

So overall a very busy but interesting work schedule.

INAB WEBSITE DEVELOPMENTS

The INAB are delighted to announce the development of an Extranet for Staff, Assessors and Board Members.

Initial development will concentrate on making available in downloadable format all relevant assessment forms for Assessors and Staff. Other functions that will be incorporated down the line will be Alerts, Announcements, Document collaboration and much more.

INAB can facilitate a more efficient progression for managing the Assessment Process, by resourcefully connecting with assessors and staff, through a secure network accessed from almost anywhere.

Further details on the launch and access details to the Extranet will be furnished to all assessors shortly.



The Irish Equine Centre Reg.No. 151T, was presented with its INAB Accreditation Certificate on the 2nd July 2004.

From L to R, Mr Tom Dempsey Manager INAB, Mr Tom Buckley IEC, Dr Ray McSharry IEC and Mr Charlie McCreevy Minister for Finance

