
International Accreditation Forum, Inc.



IAF Governance Document

Structure of the International Accreditation Forum, Inc.

**Issue 1, version 3
2002**

Accreditation reduces risk for business and its customers by assuring them that accredited bodies are competent to carry out the work they undertake. Accreditation bodies which are members of the International Accreditation Forum, Inc. (IAF) are required to operate at the highest standard and to require the bodies they accredit to comply with appropriate international standards and IAF Guidance to the application of those standards.

Accreditations granted by accreditation body members of the IAF Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MLA), based on regular surveillance to assure the equivalence of their accreditation programmes, allows companies with an accredited conformity assessment certificate in one part of the world to have that certificate recognised everywhere else in the world.

Therefore certificates in the fields of management systems, products, services, personnel and other similar programs of conformity assessment issued by bodies accredited by members of the IAF MLA are relied upon in international trade.

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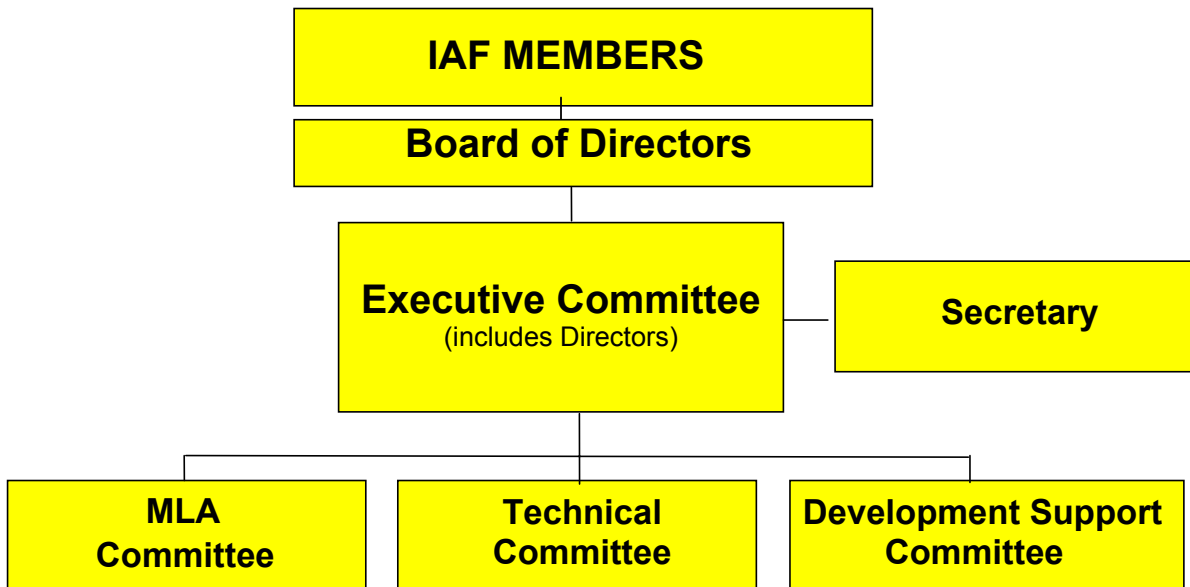
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Structure of the- International Accreditation Forum, Inc. (IAF)

1. Preamble

The organisational structure of IAF shall be as outlined below:



The highest level of authority in IAF is the Members in a General Meeting. General Meetings make decisions and lay down policy in the name of the members. The Board is responsible for legal actions to be carried out on behalf of the members, for developing broad policy directions for IAF and for ensuring that the day-to-day work of IAF is carried out in accordance with policies approved by members.

The terms of reference, tasks and duties as defined by the Bylaws and the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) remain unchanged for the members at a General Meeting, the Board of Directors and the Secretary.

The Executive Committee is responsible to the Board of Directors for the day-to-day work of IAF on the basis of decisions made by the Members and directions by the Board of Directors.

The operations of all IAF Committees and Subordinate Groups, including the Executive Committee, are subject to the IAF General Procedures (ref no IAF-PL-01-018).

2. Terms of Reference, Responsibilities and duties

2.1. IAF Members and General Meetings

The Members of the Corporation are organisations or bodies meeting the classification requirements defined in SECTION 3.01 of the Bylaws, that are invited to become Members of the Corporation by an affirmative vote of the members. Membership of the Corporation is formalised by the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding to signify the commitment of the member to support the Objectives of IAF and to abide by the Obligations of members and the requirements of the IAF Bylaws. .

At each Annual Meeting, the Members entitled to vote elect Directors, endorse the audited financial accounts for the previous year, approve the budget for the following financial year, and transact such other corporate business as stated in the notice of the meeting.

The rights of Members of IAF are defined in Sections 3, 4.03, and 5.01 of the IAF Bylaws.

Members at a General Meeting may authorise the establishment of a Committee or Subordinate Group responsible directly to the Members, with specified tasks and responsibilities. The General Meeting may define the membership and appoint the Chairman of such a Committee or Subordinate Group (but not of Committees or Subordinate Groups responsible to the Board or Executive Committee) (see Annex 1).

2.2. The Board of Directors

The powers and responsibilities of the Board of Directors are set out in Sections 3.02, 3.07, 4.01, 4.08, 4.18, 5.01, 5.02 and 5.06 of the Bylaws

The affairs of the Corporation are managed by the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors is elected by members to manage the day-to-day operations of the Corporation in accordance with the policies laid down by the members. The Board exercises its full authority as granted by the Certificate of Incorporation, by the Bylaws and by law in establishing and maintaining such policies as are consistent with the purposes of IAF.

The Board of Directors is the primary authority responsible for the implementation of policy in IAF, subject only to the members. The Board takes all legal actions necessary for the continued operation of IAF, recommends the budget to members for approval each year, makes recommendations to the members on the admission of new members, and approves programs for subordinate Committees.

The Board of Directors may authorise the establishment of a Committee or Subordinate Group responsible direct to the Board with specified tasks and responsibilities. The Board may define the membership and appoint the Chairman of such a Committee or Subordinate Group.

The Board of Directors shall appoint the Chairman of the Technical Committee, the MLA Committee and the Development Support Committee.

2.3. The Executive Committee

2.3.1. *Membership*

The Executive Committee is composed of all members of the Board of Directors, the Committee chairmen (who are appointed by the Board) and three representatives selected for a two year term from among the chairmen of those regional accreditation groups which have been granted Special Recognition status, observing regional balance, and ensuring that all three do not complete their terms at the same time. Guests may be invited to attend meetings of the Executive Committee, as observers, on a case by case basis as needed. A representative of the IAF member hosting an Executive Committee meeting may be invited to attend that meeting as an observer.

The Chairman of IAF is the Chairman of the Executive Committee.

2.3.2. *Responsibilities*

Members of the Executive Committee shall not be involved in decision making of the Board in pursuance of its legal responsibilities. The Executive Committee is an operational not policy making element in IAF. The Board is responsible for recommending policy to the members for approval.

The Executive Committee is responsible for the day to day operational work of IAF in accordance with the policies defined by the members at a General Meeting, subject to the directions of the Board, as necessary to meet the needs of members in the operation of their conformity assessment programs. The Executive Committee is supported by the IAF Secretary.

2.3.3. *Quorum*

The presence, in person or by proxy, at a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Member Representatives of a majority of Accreditation Body Members of the Executive Committee shall constitute a quorum for a meeting.

2.3.4. **Voting**

The Executive Committee shall seek to make all decisions by consensus. If a vote is necessary, the votes of the majority of members present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall determine the decision.

2.3.5. **Terms of Reference**

1. Responsible for communication, media relations and relationships with related bodies and other organisations. To ensure that IAF maintains a proactive and positive stance in respect of promoting the name, objectives and activities of IAF.
2. Manage, in co-operation with the IAF Secretary, the IAF Web Site
3. Monitor new developments in fields of activity directly or indirectly related to the objectives of IAF, propose the corresponding policy for consideration by the Board and the members at a General Meeting and to recommend the development of detailed IAF Guidance as necessary.
4. Responsible for maintaining IAF liaison with those organisations responsible for developing "sector/specialist certification schemes"
5. Responsible for relations between IAF and industry, and to promote the acceptance by industry of the IAF MLA and the IAF Sector Scheme Policy.
6. Subordinate committees may be established under the Executive Committee as it is seen necessary, subject to endorsement by the members in a General Meeting (see Annex 2). The Executive Committee may determine the membership and mandate of such Subordinate committees.
7. The Executive Committee shall appoint the Chairmen of subordinate committees, other than the Technical Committee, the MLA Committee and the Development Support Committee, and shall oversight the work of those subordinate committees.

2.4. **The IAF Secretary**

The Secretary is responsible, under the direction of the President, to carry out the legal responsibilities of the Secretary of IAF, as defined in the Bylaws (notably Section 5.05) and the Certificate of Incorporation of IAF, and to provide secretarial services to the Board, Executive Committee and members.

2.5. **The MLA Committee**

2.5.1. **Membership**

Each Member of IAF is entitled to nominate one representative to be a member of the MLA Committee. The Chairman of the MLA Committee is appointed by the Board.

2.5.2. **Quorum**

The presence, in person or by proxy, at a meeting of the MLA Committee of the member representatives of a majority of the nominated representatives of the MLA Accreditation Body Members shall constitute a quorum for a meeting.

2.5.3. **Voting**

The MLA Committee shall seek to make all decisions by consensus. If a vote is necessary the votes of the majority of Member Representatives present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall determine the decision, except in matters relating to membership of the MLA, in which case a majority of members of the MLA shall determine the decision. Note that each member is entitled to one vote.

2.5.4. **Terms of reference**

1. Decision on acceptance, withdrawal, retention or suspension of membership to the IAF MLA;
2. Investigate all complaints received relating to a participating body or certificates of conformity issued by bodies it has accredited;
3. Review the procedures and policies of the MLA peer evaluation process;
4. Provide evaluators for the evaluation and re-evaluation to the accreditation programs of the MLA Group members and applicants;
5. Use all information in a confidential and professional manner;
6. To identify specific needs for development and continual refinement of IAF and other documents related to the IAF MLA process and to the accreditation of conformity assessment bodies;
7. To develop closer relationships with regulators with the intention of encouraging regulators to accept the IAF MLA as demonstrating the credibility of accredited certificates.

2.5.5. **Subordinate committees of the MLA Committee**

The MLA Committee may establish subordinate committees as it is seen necessary, subject to endorsement by the members at a General Meeting (see Annex 3). Such committees may, with the agreement of ILAC, operate in co-operation with a mirror Committee in ILAC as a joint committee with the same responsibilities, however the IAF Committee will report to the IAF MLA Committee. The MLA Committee shall oversee the work of its subordinate committees.

2.6. The Technical Committee

2.6.1. Membership

Each Member of IAF is entitled to nominate one representative to be a member of the Technical Committee. The Chairman of the Technical Committee is appointed by the Board.

2.6.2. Quorum

The presence, in person or by proxy, at a meeting of the Technical Committee of the Member Representatives of a majority of the nominated Accreditation Body Member representatives of the Technical Committee shall constitute a quorum for a meeting.

2.6.3. Voting

The Technical Committee shall seek to make all decisions by consensus. If a vote is necessary the votes of the majority of Member Representatives present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall determine the decision. Note that each member is entitled to one vote.

2.6.4. Terms of reference

In pursuance of IAF's objective that accredited certificates in the fields of IAF's activities be universally acceptable, the Technical Committee will, subject to the IAF General Procedures and the directions of the Board of Directors, -

1. Develop, maintain and revise as appropriate IAF Guidance documents on the application of standards and guides and similar to ensure the consistent application of conformity assessment standards, submitting documents to the members for approval as required;
2. Establish groups of relevant interested parties to develop the required guidance documents;
3. Ensure consistency among the various guidance documents prior to recommending them to the Members for approval;
4. Monitor the development of accreditation standards and similar material outside IAF and determine where IAF should take account of and/or participate in such work;
5. Make recommendations concerning the practical application of IAF Guidance documents, including issues arising from the implementation of the IAF MLA.

2.6.5. Subordinate committees of the Technical Committee

The Technical Committee may establish subordinate committees as it is seen necessary, subject to endorsement by the members at a General Meeting (see Annex 4). Such committees may, with the agreement of ILAC, operate in co-operation with a mirror Committee in ILAC as a joint committee with the same responsibilities, however the IAF Committee will report to the IAF Technical Committee. The Technical Committee shall oversee the work of its subordinate committees.

2.7. The Development Support Committee

2.7.1. Membership

Each Member of IAF is entitled to nominate one representative to be a member of the Development Support Committee. The Chairman of the Development Support Committee is appointed by the Board.

2.7.2. Quorum

The presence, in person or by proxy, at a meeting of the Development Support Committee of the Member Representatives of a majority of the nominated Accreditation Body Member representatives of the Development Support Committee shall constitute a quorum for a meeting.

2.7.3. Voting

The Development Support Committee shall seek to make all decisions by consensus. If a vote is necessary the votes of the majority of Member Representatives present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall determine the decision. Note that each member is entitled to one vote.

2.7.4. Co-operation

The Development Support Committee may, with the agreement of ILAC, operate in co-operation with a mirror Committee in ILAC with the same responsibilities, however the IAF Development Support Committee will report to the IAF Executive Committee.

2.7.5. Terms of Reference

- 1 To identify specific needs of emerging accreditation bodies and those from emerging and developing economies and develop strategies in line with IAF and ILAC policies and where possible using IAF and ILAC functions to address such needs.

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- 2 To develop, implement and promote mechanisms to improve the exchange of information and experience amongst developing accreditation bodies and with those of more experienced accreditation bodies.
 - 3 To develop strategies to promote and facilitate developing accreditation bodies becoming members of the IAF and/or ILAC MLA using the following mechanisms:
 - 3.1 Development of accreditation body documentation.
 - 3.2 Training of assessors and peer evaluators.
 - 3.3 Observation of peer evaluations of established accreditation bodies.
 - 3.4 Participation in pre-evaluations.
 - 3.5 Providing opportunity for management training.
 - 3.6 Promoting and encouraging Joint accreditations between experienced and new accreditation bodies.
 4. To promote the adoption and the clear understanding by developing accreditation bodies of relevant IAF endorsed Guides and Standards and IAF guidance documents.
 5. To develop, organise and present workshops and/or training courses in co-operation with the IAF Secretary and other organisations (UNIDO, ISO) related to the administration of accreditation programs.
 6. To co-operate with UNIDO and other international bodies in the operation of programs for the assistance of emerging and developing accreditation bodies.
 7. To make co-ordinated recommendations to IAF and/or ILAC on all issues directly related to emerging or developing accreditation bodies and those from emerging economies.
 8. To develop future joint projects in order to ensure that the on going needs of developing accreditation bodies and those from emerging economies are met. Such projects would encompass but not be limited to:
 - 8.1. Assisting with wider infrastructure development
 - 8.2. Providing consulting on a non-commercial and commercial basis
 - 8.3. Obtaining resources for pre-peer evaluations
 - 8.4. Developing capacity building opportunities for personnel and infrastructure
 - 8.5. Ensuring opportunities for recognition and acceptance.
 9. To identify and liaise with potential sources of funding for assisting the development of conformity assessment in low and middle income economies.

10. To develop strategies to allow for full participation by accreditation bodies in low and middle income economies in both IAF and ILAC activities.
11. The Committee may appoint subordinate committees where special expertise is needed for an extended period to meet specific needs of members of IAF and/or ILAC. Such committees may, with the agreement of ILAC, be joint committees with equal representation from ILAC.

2.7.6. IAF Development Support Committee - Mission Statement

- To encourage participation of all developing accreditation bodies in the activities and processes of IAF with the objective of becoming members of the IAF Multilateral Recognition Arrangement (MLA).
- To ensure that the needs of developing accreditation bodies are addressed by IAF in a manner that satisfies members of IAF.
- The Committee will actively seek to fulfil the above in the interests of industry, commerce and IAF.
- The Committee will seek and mobilise assistance from other world bodies where such assistance will benefit developing accreditation bodies in low and middle-income economies.

2.7.7. Subordinate committees of the Development Support Committee

The Development Support Committee may establish subordinate committees as it is seen necessary, subject to endorsement by the members at a General Meeting. Such committees may, with the agreement of ILAC, operate in co-operation with a mirror Committee in ILAC as a joint committee with the same responsibilities, however the IAF Committee will report to the IAF Development Support Committee. The Development Support Committee shall oversee the work of its subordinate committees.

End of Structure of the- International Accreditation Forum, Inc. (IAF)



Annex 1

3. Subordinate Committees of the General Meeting

3.1. Financial Oversight Committee

Membership – Appointed by the Members

The membership of the Financial Oversight Committee (maximal 3 persons) shall consist of persons nominated by the Members at an Annual Meeting to represent members of IAF, subject to the following -

- no member may nominate more than one person to serve on the committee;
- no person serving on the committee shall be a Director of IAF.
- rotation of membership every 2 years

Mandate -

The Committee may meet as it sees fit, or conduct its deliberations by electronic means.

The Committee member shall have free access to all relevant information by the Board.

The Committee may meet with the members of the Board of Directors in the days prior to the Plenary Meeting at the same location.

Terms of Reference –

The Committee shall, at least one month prior to each Plenary Meeting, review the financial activities of IAF since the previous Plenary Meeting.

The Committee shall report to the Plenary Meeting each year, and may make such recommendations to the Plenary Meeting as it sees fit.

The Committee shall recommend to the IAF Plenary to approve formally IAF's financial performance in the last financial year.

End of Structure of IAF – Annex 1 – Subordinate Groups of the General Meetings



Annex 2

4. Subordinate Groups of the Executive Committee

4.1. The Joint Committee on Closer Co-operation of ILAC and IAF (JCCC)

Membership –

Co-Chairmen – the Chairmen of IAF and ILAC (or their nominees)

Members – three members nominated by the ILAC Executive Committee and three members nominated by the IAF Board.

Mandate -

The JCCC shall be the steward for co-operation between IAF and ILAC.

Terms of Reference –

The JCCC is responsible to the ILAC Executive Committee and the IAF Executive Committee.

The JCCC shall, after each of its meetings, submit a report in writing to each of the ILAC Executive Committee and the IAF Board. The report shall include summaries of all activities and recommendations for action by ILAC and IAF. The report shall include summaries of all activities for action or agreement by ILAC and IAF and where necessary through joint meetings of the ILAC and IAF Executives.

The JCCC shall –

- draft policy proposals for joint activities for endorsement by the Joint Executives or by the General Assemblies where appropriate;
- evaluate and refine proposals for joint activities and for closer co-operation between the two organisations and make recommendations;
- monitor and review all joint and common activities against agreed strategic objectives to ensure effective co-operation;
- recommend the work programs for all other Joint ILAC and IAF Committees;
- oversight of the activities of all other Joint ILAC and IAF Committees, and report on their activities to the ILAC Executive Committee and the IAF Board.

Approved by Joint Executives 13 July 2001



Annex 3

5. Subordinate Committee of the MLA Committee

5.1. The MLA Management Committee

Terms of Reference

- To plan and manage the implementation and maintenance of the Multilateral Recognition Arrangement (MLA) among IAF Accreditation Body Members, based on peer evaluation demonstrating the equivalence of the operations of their Accreditation Systems.
- To verify the proper conformance of Accreditation Systems of Regional MLA Groups and non-affiliated Signatories to the MLA.
- To manage the evaluation and re-evaluation program based on periodic visits to Signatories to the MLA.
- To make recommendations to the MLA Committee for acceptance, withdrawal, retention or suspension of membership to the MLA.
- To keep a current list of MLA team leaders and team members for the MLA peer evaluation process.
- To evaluate nominated team leaders and team members and submit their names to the MLA Committee for their approval to use them as assessors for the peer review process.
- To maintain and publish the list MLA Committee members.

Membership:

Chairperson: The chairperson of the MLA Committee is the chairperson of the MLA MC

Secretary: Appointed by the members of the MLA Management Committee (this is not an additional committee membership).

Additional Members

Note - All members of the MLA MC are required to sign a confidentiality agreement.

- Members are to be nominated by each established Regional MLA Group, which is a member of the MLA Group, and which is a Signatory to the IAF Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). The person(s) nominated must be from a body which has signed the MLA and the MoU. There will be one (1) member nominated for each four (4) Signatories to the Regional MLA, with a minimum of one (1) member nominated to represent each established Regional MLA Group.



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- Other members are to be nominated from amongst the Signatories of the IAF MLA, who are not members of an established regional group, who are geographically dispersed, and who are Signatories to the MoU. There will be one (1) member nominated for each four (4) Signatories to the MLA, who are not included in a Regional Group, with a minimum of one (1) member to be nominated to represent this group.
- One (1) observer nominated from amongst the IAF Accreditation Body members that have not signed the MLA, and who are signatories to the IAF/MoU.
- One (1) observer nominated to represent the Accredited Certification / Registration Body Members.
- One (1) observer to be nominated to represent the Industry/User Members.
- One (1) observer to be nominated to represent the ILAC MLA MC.

NOTE - If the number of Regional MLA Groups exceeds six (6), then one (1) additional membership on the committee shall be provided so that at least one (1) membership is always maintained for the at-large representation of all accreditation bodies who are not members of a Regional MLA Group.

Voting Rights and Terms of Service:

- Each member of the MLA Management Committee has one (1) vote. Observers do not have voting rights.
- Terms of service are for two (2) years with the initial nominations staggered two years and three years. Upon expiration of term, members shall continue to serve until a replacement is appointed. A maximum of two (2) consecutive terms may be served with a break required before additional reappointment

5.2. Training Sub-Committee

Terms of Reference:

- analyse the demand for evaluator training among the IAF members and coordinate all peer evaluation workshops;
- coordinate participation in workshops by trainee and existing peer evaluators;
- monitor that appropriate actions are taken, including those resulting from the training workshops;
- ensure that the training is appropriate and in line with the IAF requirements (includes preparation of Agendas);
- analyse IAF and customers' needs for enhancing the Arrangement and propose adequate measures;



Annex 3

- coordinate joint workshops with other international organisations, e.g. ILAC and regional groups of IAF, as appropriate.

Membership:

Members are nominated by the MLA Committee

5.3. MLA Procedure Sub-Committee

Terms of Reference :

- To develop and maintain procedures for the implementation of arrangements between the group of Signatories to the MLA, for review by the MLA Committee, and approval by the members at a General Meeting;
- To develop and maintain the contents of the MLA documents.

Membership

Members of the MLA Procedure Group are nominated by the MLA Committee

End of Structure of IAF – Annex 3 – Subordinate Groups of the MLA Committee



Annex 4

6. Subordinate Groups of the Technical Committee

6.1. The Joint Working Group on Inspection.

Terms of Reference of the Joint Working Group on Inspection

The Joint Working Group on Inspection (TC-WG-I) is the forum for discussion of all questions related to accreditation of inspection bodies. The Working Group on Inspection may, with the agreement of ILAC, operate in co-operation with a mirror Working Group in ILAC as a joint Working Group with the same responsibilities however the IAF Working Group will report to the IAF Technical Committee and to the mirror ILAC Working Group reports to the ILAC Executive Committee. In particular, it is its responsibility -

- To collect information on current activities in the area of Inspection and to report to the JCCC on the current situation.
- to draft IAF/ILAC guidance for the application of ISO/IEC 17010 and ISO/IEC TR 17020.
- to co-ordinate and promote the co-operation between the communities of accredited inspection bodies and accreditors; problem analysis and proposals.
- to exchange experience on the application of IAF/ILAC documentation in the field of inspection.
- to identify, within the field of inspection, project proposals on aspects of quality and of accreditation and allocate them, where appropriate, to new or existing task forces with the agreement of the IAF and ILAC.
- to harmonise the work of working groups and task forces reporting to it and to secure a proper flow of information between these and ILAC and IAF and other participating organisations.
- to monitor the activities of working groups and task forces in the field of inspection that are of interest for IAF and ILAC and its stakeholders but that do not form part of it.
- to perform any other tasks as specified by the members of IAF.

Membership of IAF Working Group on Inspection:

The IAF Chairmen is appointed by the IAF Board and the ILAC Co-Chairman by the ILAC Executive Committee

Members are nominated in equal numbers by the IAF Board and the ILAC Executive Committee



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Annex 4

End of Structure of IAF – Annex 4 – Subordinate Groups of the Technical Committee