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**EA-2/01-S1**

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# **Supplement 1 to EA-2/01, EA Rules of Procedures Criteria for Membership**

## **PURPOSE**

This document has been produced by the EA Executive Committee, accepted by the EA Advisory Board and approved by the General Assembly. It describes the criteria for membership in EA.

### *Authorship*

The publication has been written by EA Executive Committee.

### *Official language*

The text may be translated into other languages as required. The English language version remains the definitive version.

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### *Further information*

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Please check our website for up-to-date information

<http://www.european-accreditation.org/>

Date of endorsement: 8<sup>th</sup> June 2005

Date of implementation: immediate

*Note: Change in the document in June 2005*

#### *Introduction*

~~The date of implementation is immediate except for the “No competition” issue for which EA will wait for the green light from the European Commission (DG Competition)~~

#### *Paragraph 1.4 Accreditation last level*

EA members commit themselves not to offer any ~~kind of conformity assessment~~ activity which is subject to accreditation.

#### *New Paragraph 1.5 non-competition issue,*

In view of the nature of accreditation as an activity operated by the members of EA under the responsibility of and with the authority derived from their national public authorities, and in order to ensure the proper protection of its mission as a service of general interest, competition between the EA members and unnecessary duplication of accreditation services shall be avoided, since this can lead to undermining the independence and credibility of the members.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

After consultation with the European Commission and the EA Advisory Board the EA plenary meeting held in Vedback, Denmark, 27-28 November 2002 have agreed on the following membership criteria. The following criteria apply for every member of the European co-operation of Accreditation (EA). The fulfilment of the criteria will be regularly assessed by EA and will be a mandatory requirement for all new applicants.

### **1. ORGANISATION AND OPERATION AT NATIONAL LEVEL**

#### **1.1 National recognition**

Membership of EA is restricted to nationally recognised accreditation bodies as described in the Articles of the Association.

#### **1.2 Non profit distributing**

In order to protect independence and impartiality, accreditation carried out by EA members shall be operated as a non profit distributing activity.

NOTE: An accreditation body is non-profit distributing if it does not deliver surplus to its owners, whether public or private.

#### **1.3 Customer orientation**

The EA members shall organise their accreditation activities in such a manner as to provide an efficient and quality driven service that meets the needs of the conformity assessment market (i.e. industry, conformity assessment bodies, public authorities, consumers etc.). The members shall, on a national level, also closely co-operate with all interested parties and be accountable to their stakeholders.

NOTE: Conformity assessment body in this context refers to bodies dealing with calibration, testing, inspection and certification.

#### **1.4 Accreditation last level**

Furthermore EA and its members commit themselves to perform their activities in such a manner that accreditation remains as the last level of control of conformity assessment activities from the point of view of technical competence, impartiality and integrity.

EA members commit themselves not to offer any activity which is subject to accreditation.

#### **1.5 Non competition**

In view of the nature of accreditation as an activity operated by the members of EA under the responsibility of and with the authority derived from their national public authorities, and in order to ensure the proper protection of its mission as a service of general interest, competition between the EA members and unnecessary duplication of accreditation services shall be avoided, since this can lead to undermining the independence and credibility of the members.

## **2 ORGANISATION AND OPERATION AT EUROPEAN LEVEL**

The members must commit themselves to respect the Articles of Association and the Rules of Procedures of EA. The same shall apply to the Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) concerning co-operation between the Commission of the European Communities or EFTA and EA in the field of conformity assessment.

Besides paying its membership fee, each EA member is obliged to actively contribute in order to enable the organisation to achieve its goals in accordance with the fundamental documents mentioned above. Such contribution consists of (i) active participation in the internal work of EA, (ii) provision of expertise and other resources to help fulfil EA's commitments in the MoU with the European Commission and (iii) provision of expertise and other resources for evaluation work to enlarge maintain and monitor EA's MLA agreements and other international agreements on mutual recognition to which EA is signatory.

The contributions from a member organisation shall be proportionate to the size and scope of its activities and competence. Each member shall, on a regular basis, be able to demonstrate that it has met its financial and other engagements towards EA.