

DRAFT Minutes of the 45th Meeting of the EA Advisory Board

held online on Thursday 29 April 2021

Participants:

EAAB Chair: Miruna Dobre (NA, Belgium).

EAAB Vice-Chair: Martin Stadler (BUSINESSEUROPE), Bruce McGill (TIC Council).

CAB College: Benny De Blaere (EURO CER Building), Alexander Safarik-Pstrosz (EUROLAB), Manuela Held (IIOC) replacing Ivan Savov (EFAC), Alister Dalrymple (IQNet).

Industry College: Andrew Evans (CAPIEL), Lars Bo Hammer (DI), Jörg Ed. Hartge (ORGALIM).

NA College: Natalia Kolibová (NA, Czech Republic), Michael Nitsche (NA, Germany), Sezen Leventoglu (NA, Turkey).

European Standardisation Organisations: Enda McDonnell (CEN-CENELEC).

Metrology Stakeholders: Maria Luisa Rastello (EURAMET), Tuomo Valkeapää (WELMEC).

EC: Zacharias Bilalis (EC).

EFTA: Gudrun Rognvaldardottir (EFTA).

EA: Maureen Logghe (EA President), Andreas Steinhorst (EA Executive Secretary), Frédérique Laudinet (EAAB Secretariat).

Apologies had been received from Stephen Russel (ANEC).

1. Opening of the meeting

The Chair opened the meeting, welcoming the delegates to this third shortened online meeting owing to the Covid-19 pandemic. She invited EAAB Members to a roll call and addressed a special welcome to Maureen Logghe, the EA President as of January 2021.

2. Approval of agenda

List of conclusions and resolutions and Minutes of 44th Meeting of the EAAB Action list (actions not covered elsewhere)

▪ Approval of agenda

The agenda was adopted as distributed for the meeting.

It was agreed to start with the EC-related agenda items so as to take advantage of Z. Bilalis' attendance of the first part of the meeting only.

▪ Approval of previous Minutes

The Chair asked for any comment on the draft minutes as distributed.

T. Valkeapää requested to change the heading "*National Metrology Institutes*" into "*Metrology College*" in the participants' list at the very beginning of the minutes.

M. Nitsche agreed that the term "college" was related to the EAAB.

A. Safarik-Pstrosz proposed making no change and decision for now.

M. Stadler pointed out that the composition of the Board as set out in the EAAB Terms of Reference should at first be referred to. Besides, it has already been discussed that calibration was covered and included in each college of the Board, and agreed as a good compromise that metrology organisations had two seats apart in the Board, but not the status of a college.

M. Stadler and M. Logghe agreed that only the content of the representation of whatever name is important.

Conclusion

Given that the EAAB Terms of Reference provided for two seats to be assigned to the European metrological organisations which do not have the status of a college in the Board, the latter agreed to change the heading “*National Metrology Institutes*” into “*Metrology Stakeholders*” in the participants’ list at the very beginning of the minutes.

Action Secretariat

There was no other comment on the draft minutes, which were approved with the above amendment.

Action Secretariat to publish the minutes on the relevant EAAB intranet and internet pages

▪ Action List

The Chair went through the action list which raised no comment.

3. Topics for discussion

3.1 Renewal of the Board in November 2021: approval of call of nominations to be launched

Decision

The Board agreed to send the call for the renewal of the Board at the next meeting in November 2021 as distributed among the meeting papers, with a deadline set on **Monday 4 October 2021** for nominations, including those for all three Chair positions, to be sent to the EAAB Secretariat.

Action Secretariat/EAAB Members

3.2 Stakeholders’ representation in EA; interaction between EAAB and EA

M. Stadler reminded that the issue had already been discussed at the last meeting, when the Industry and NA Colleges’ positions had been considered. The CAB College’s contribution which was missing in November 2020 has been distributed and consolidated into Document EAAB(20)18rev on the following questions:

- 1/ How to improve the interaction between EA and the EAAB?
- 2/ What do stakeholders consider to be the EAAB’s role in the future?

Z. Bilalis said that the EC had no further input to the issue.

B. McGill detailed the CAB College’s recommendations as indicated in Document EAAB(20)18rev.

- Recommendation a) for a communication process to serve both CAB regulatory and voluntary sectors in order to benefit from a collaborative feedback for stakeholders from all levels.

M. Stadler asked for clarification on the differentiation made between CABs in regulatory and voluntary sectors because there is no difference in political matters. B. McGill agreed that there was no difference in policy. The recommendation is only to identify both sectors with their own specificities.

- Recommendation b) for EA Technical Management Board (TMB) Chair’ attendance of EAAB meetings.

- Recommendation c) for further improvement with more frequent reporting from EA technical committee.

M. Stadler recalled a similar concern voiced by the CAB College in the past. The Industry College disagreed on these recommendations, arguing that the EAAB should remain a political advisory board and leave technical details to EA technical committees and working groups.

- Recommendation d) for a specific template document for direct feedback from EA on advice provided by the EAAB.

A. Steinhorst replied that EA had a clear process for comments and documents, and had not the capacity to prepare a separate template for specific EAAB comments. He specified that guidance and informative documents were managed at the technical level only by technical committees which included recognised stakeholders, and that mandatory documents were managed at the General Assembly level with recognised stakeholders.

- Recommendation e) for a clear guidance by the EC on stakeholders' expectations on EA.

M. Stadler reported that the Industry College agreed on this recommendation, and reiterated its own recommendation that the EC should clarify, and set down in the form of guidance, their expectations of "effective stakeholder involvement within EA" as referred to in Article 4 (11) of Regulation 765/2008/EU, and how this requirement should be properly implemented.

The Chair suggested to rewrite the consolidated document with a first part setting out a common position and a second part distinguishing the specific views of each college.

B. McGill proposed a joint meeting between the CAB and Industry Colleges to discuss the issue further. M. Stadler agreed to meet after the summer break to find some joint positions.

Decision

With regard to the **updated** written contributions, based on Document "*Interactions between EA and EAAB: potential for improvement*" (EAAB(20)03), sent by the **CAB**, Industry and NA Colleges as well as by the European representation of Metrology Stakeholders (**EAAB(20)18rev**) on the following questions:

1/ How to improve the interaction between EA and the EAAB?

2/ What do stakeholders consider to be the EAAB's role in the future?

The Board:

- acknowledged that the EC had no further input;
- took note of the CAB College's newly added written contribution and of the oral explanation provided by the CAB College chair;
- agreed that the consolidated paper as distributed (EAAB(20)18rev) should be reshuffled, if possible, and structured into a first common part consolidating the common positions of the entire Board, and a second part detailing the specific views of the different Colleges;
- took note of the intention of the CAB and Industry Colleges to have a joint meeting in advance of the Board's November meeting in order to achieve some common positions.

Action CAB & Industry Colleges

Action Secretariat/Chair to plan further discussion at November 2021 meeting

3.3 Brexit and EA: status update [CFTA Annex 5-1, conformity assessment] Report on EA Extraordinary General Assembly meeting on 12 March 2021

A. Steinhorst reported that, further to the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the European Union, EA agreed that membership categories should be modified in order to allow UKAS to remain an EA member after the transition period ending 31 January 2022. For this purpose, new Articles of Association are being prepared by the Executive Board.

M. Logghe added that the new Articles of Association would be discussed during the next General Assembly (GA) meeting in May 2021, after which they would be sent out for comments within EA. They should be finalised and approved by the GA in November 2021 in order to be implemented by January 2022.

As described in Document EAGA(21)03-1rev dated 8 March 2021 which has been distributed among the meeting papers, these Articles of Association define four different member categories called A, B, C and D, instead of Full and Associate Members. Different voting and representation rights are allocated to each membership category.

The Chair called for comments.

A. Evans reported the Industry College's questioning that, if EA was a truly independent body, why UKAS should not be able to contribute to EA's operations by voting on EA's processes. Besides, since the Multilateral Agreement Council is made up of many non-EU NABs, why a UKAS representative could not be the MAC Chair? It is the Council members who actually agree/disagree to any proposed changes in policy. For that matter, A. Evans could not understand why a UKAS representative could not be on the EA Board and why there was no opportunity for a non-EU/EFTA NAB to be on the Board?

The Industry College's other concern is that the non-recognition of the EA MLA signatory status of UKAS and, as a result, of the testing results and certificates accredited by UKAS on the market, would undermine the EA MLA as a whole.

M. Logghe replied that the EC and EA Members agreed that UKAS shall no longer vote on EU matters. For the second point, she asserted that the EA MLA signatory status of UKAS makes EA NABs accept the accreditations delivered by UKAS as equivalent; but there is no more recognition possible according to Regulation 765/2008 as far as regulatory activities are concerned.

M. Nitsche pointed out the NA College's concern that, in the regulated area, national authorities have to rely on EA's activities complying with EU regulations. EA should find a compromise with UKAS inside EA in a suitable way in line with the EC.

On behalf of the Industry College, M. Stadler raised again the issue of the non-recognition of the testing results and certificates accredited by B Members. Importance should be given to the fact that B Members do respect Regulation 765 and are EA MLA signatories. M. Stadler reiterated his comment made at the last meeting that the implementation of Regulation 765 in national legislation was a fundamental condition for the operation of EA members as NABs and for EA to play its role as the European accreditation infrastructure, and should therefore be much more considered by EA. Further to a question by M. Logghe, M. Stadler said that he expected the implementation of European regulations from the Executive Board. This was not clear for M. Logghe, who replied that all EA Members should implement Regulation 765 as a membership criteria.

A. Safarik-Pstrosz said that because UKAS was no more an accreditation body under Regulation 765, UKAS could no more be part of the EA MLA. He shared the Industry College's concern about what to do with UKAS-accredited testing results and certificates.

B. McGill agreed that voting rights should be allocated to EU and EEA members that concern market regulatory matters which impact EU legislation only; however recognition under the IFA MLA, of which UKAS is a signatory, should be taken into consideration pending the outcome as an affiliate member.

M. Stadler repeated the concern of the non-recognition of the EA MLA signatory status of UKAS and, as a result, of the testing results and certificates accredited by UKAS on the market. This would undermine the EA MLA as a whole. The issue should be taken on board by the IMP expert group.

M. Logghe said that EA could support M. Dobre at the next IMP meeting.

M. Logghe is aware of the problem and can raise the issue, but she added that it was out of EA's control actually. Indeed the UK's withdrawal from the European Union is beyond EA's remit.

A. Safarik-Pstrosz agreed on M. Stadler's view. The issue is to be considered outside EA, as M. Logghe rightly pointed out. It would not be solved now in the EAAB.

B. McGill agreed that EA could only implement legislation. Because national authorities implement the EC policy, he suggested having a position paper from the EC.

M. Stadler proposed having some kind of guidance developed by the IMP expert group and implemented by EA in order to explain such issues as the national authorities' acceptance of those conformity assessment results accredited by B Members, and to improve the understanding of consequences of MLA signatory status.

This was fully supported by A. Safarik-Pstrosz.

B. McGill would welcome any guidance paper from the Member States.

The Chair recapitulated the discussion, proposing a recommendation for EA in coordination with the EC to draft a guidance document reminding the fundamental principles of recognition of the EA MLA signatory status and the acceptance of the accredited testing results and certificates.

A. Steinhorst pointed out that there were 2 different issues:

- the Articles of Association define EA's rules of functioning, including its membership with the associated rights and duties;
- the EA MLA relates to the recognition of accredited certificates, which is not provided for in the Articles of Association. A. Steinhorst agreed with M. Logghe that the EA MLA was an agreement between NABs to recognise accredited certificates.

The new membership categories will not imply any change on the acceptance of certificates and will not be reflected in the MLA brochure.

Agreeing with A. Steinhorst, M. Stadler referred to Article 11 of Regulation 765 providing that national authorities shall accept conformity assessment results when accredited by NABs that are signatories to the EA MLA. Acceptance of accreditation certificates and accredited conformity assessment results under this provision is mandatory.

Because there was no more time to discuss further the relevance of a guidance document to explain this acceptance, it was suggested to put forward additional input and concrete examples to be considered at the next EAAB meeting.

Decision

The Board:

- welcomed that, in order to allow UKAS to remain a member of EA beyond 2022, EA was preparing new *Articles of Association* setting out different membership categories (A/B/C/D) with different voting and representation rights, which should be adopted by the EA General Assembly in November 2021;
- acknowledged the Industry College's concern that the non-recognition of the EA MLA signatory status of UKAS and, as a result, of the testing results and certificates accredited by UKAS on the market, would undermine the EA MLA as a whole;
- acknowledged the CAB and Industry Colleges' suggestion for the development of guidance to explain further and promote the obligation placed on the Member States' public authorities to

recognise and accept conformity assessment results accredited by EA MLA signatories, in accordance with Article 11 of Regulation 765;

- agreed to further discuss the need for guidance at the next Board meeting, and asked all EAAB Colleges to send the Secretariat their input on the issue together with examples of non-recognition in advance of the November meeting.

Action EAAB Colleges to Secretariat

3.4 EC challenges to notifications

- **DG GROW transfer policy in light of the Brexit**
- **Notifications under the CPR and other regulations**

A. Steinhorst recapitulated the issue as elaborated on in his letter to DG Grow (Document EAAB(20)10) and previously discussed at the last meeting. The consequence of the Brexit is that the UK has no more notified bodies and some NBs are moving in the EU. There are concerns about the key functions of NBs; some of them have very few resources. The EC is challenging notification of accredited NBs, and EA has to look at this very carefully. A consensus has to be reached with the EC on some important issues in order to develop strategies how they can be transferred into sound and legally binding requirements. These issues are about notified bodies' own staff, liability insurance, independence and locally employed staff. Discussions are progressing with the EC to clarify the issue. EA needs clear requirements. As long as requirements are not sufficiently laid down in legislation, it will not be possible to implement them via accreditation (and also via the notifying authorities).

M. Stadler agreed with EA: there is a need for clear regulatory requirements. Regarding NBs' competences, he requested EA to emphasize the need to stay in line with the international ISO/IEC 17000 standards series, because any additional requirements would increase the burden on the conformity assessment industry and undermine the system. He urged not to create a specific EU system.

B. McGill pointed out that CABs should have the capacity to get expertise however and should be allowed to outsource. He also agreed on M. Stadler's concern about any additional requirements which would jeopardise the market. B. McGill suggested further investigation on the issue and would welcome any guidance document from the EC for clarification purposes.

M. Logghe as well agreed on M. Stadler's concern, asserting that EA wanted clear requirements. She just worried about the nature of the EC *Blue Guide* which, as a guide, sets out no requirement. If additional requirements were to be included for sake of flexibility, we would have to be very careful.

A. Evans warned that flexibility should not result in extra costs for CABs.

For B. De Blaere, the requirements should be as horizontal as possible to be applied at the international level. He referred to the CPR situation: there is a concern in some countries in which requirements are *de facto* not equal.

Decision

The Board:

- supported the view of EA that NBs and NABs needed to comply with requirements set out in the relevant EU legislation, specifically Decision No 768/2008/EC, Articles R14, R17, R20 and ISO/IEC 17065:2012, which relates to the legal establishment, management structure, obligations and competency requirements for the designation and notification as NBs by NABs;
- agreed on the Industry College's concern that the relevant EU legislation applied (such as referenced above) remains aligned with international ISO/IEC 17000 standards series, and does

not lead to the creation of a specific European system based on additional or deviating requirements which would create additional burden for the conformity assessment, business, trade and industry sectors, and undermine the mutual recognition of conformity assessment results at the international level.

3.5 Evaluation of the New Legislative Framework (NLF): EC roadmap

Z. Bilalis informed that the EC was performing an evaluation of where the NLF stood now, stressing that the purpose was certainly not a revision, but only an evaluation. He encouraged stakeholders to take part in the evaluation and give a precious input. The evaluation is expected to be closed by the end of 2022.

M. Stadler was pleased to know that evaluation did not mean revision. Indeed the conformity assessment system as designed in the NLF should continue to be based on international standards. The Industry College is of the opinion that new developments such as those related to cybersecurity, for instance, give rise to specific challenges and that there may be a need to address these under the NLF.

B. McGill reported that the CAB College would welcome any review provided it did not impact the agreed principles. He agreed on a basic evaluation of the NLF, which is an infrastructure applied in various sectors.

A. Safarik-Pstrosz asserted that EUROLAB did prefer stability and would be reluctant to any review likely to make changes to the NLF. Naturally he was not against improvement, but preferred no revision of the NLF which would destabilize the system.

Z. Bilalis insisted that the NLF was not reviewed, but only evaluated.

Further to a question by A. Safarik-Pstrosz, M. Logghe said that EA definitively supported the NLF evaluation and waited for the questions which would emerge from it. A. Steinhorst added that the process was considered by the HHC.

Decision

The Board:

- noted that the EC was carrying out a mere evaluation of the NLF, with no revision purpose which would go against the stability of the current framework, and was calling for stakeholders' participation in this evaluation expected to be finished by the end of 2022;
- acknowledged EA's definitive support for the NLF evaluation;
- welcomed the EC's evaluation of the NLF, and agreed to wait for the publication of the public consultation before reacting and elaborating any EAAB position.

4. Topics for information

EAAB Matters

4.1 Report from the EAAB MAC observer: 21-22 April 2021 meeting Report from the EAAB HHC observer: 2-3 March 2021 meeting

A report on the last MAC meeting held remotely on 21-22 April 2021 had been drafted by S. Leventoglu, the EAAB MAC observer, and distributed among the papers.

A report on the last HHC meeting held remotely on 2-3 March 2021 had been drafted by Christian Schramm (IIOC), the EAAB HHC observer, and distributed among the papers.

B. McGill informed that C. Schramm would no longer be able to report on HHC meetings. Marcus Long from IIOC will advise him within the next two months on another EAAB HHC observer who would be part of the Board's membership.

There was no comment on both written reports.

M. Logghe made a thorough oral report on the last HHC meeting, highlighting the following points:

- Further to the retirement of the HHC Vice-Chair this year, the HHC should elect a new vice-chair; a call for nominations has been launched and an electronic ballot will take place.

The HHC activities are divided into 3 pillars:

- ISO/IEC 17011 and Regulation 765

- A workshop on remote assessments took place on 2 March. The results of a survey reveal that some NABs are more in favour of remote assessments than others; especially the assessment of efficiency of remote audits shows large differences. The survey outcome as well as workshop materials and feedback are being provided to the EA Secretariat to prepare a report in cooperation with the HHC. In a second stage, a guidance members' procedural document will be developed based on the report and potential international and stakeholders' inputs. A TFG was set up and a NWIP has been prepared for this purpose.
- The BAM benchmark study had been presented in September 2020, and a TFG has been established to analyse the feasibility of further harmonisation.

- Schemes in the private sectors

- A number of large international scheme owners put their scheme under the home-AB approach, which turns out to be a great success. However, in several cases, scheme owners develop additional requirements to those stated in ISO/IEC 17011 which, after being endorsed by the HHC, shall be adopted by the General Assembly (IFS Food V7, for instance).

- Accreditation for notification (AfN)

- The new EA-2/17 revised in 2020 is currently under transition until April 2021 for NABs and April 2023 for CABs. A training on new EA-2/17 was performed on 3 December 2020.
- An intensive communication with the EC on AfN issues has identified several new tasks for the newly established permanent HHC WG AfN, which held its first meeting on 17 December 2020. The WG terms of reference have been endorsed at the last HHC meeting.

No question was asked to M. Logghe, whom the Chair thanked very much for her concise presentation.

EA Matters

4.2 Endorsement of new EA work items

- **Revision of EA-1/17 Supplement 5: *Levying of Membership Fees***

A. Steinhorst explained that this revision resulted from the changes in the membership categories.

- **Elaboration of *EA Procedure on Remote Peer Evaluations***

A. Steinhorst explained that this guidance document was needed even if the pandemic was becoming reduced. It should also be used for regular peer evaluations after the COVID situation. He referred to the ILAC/IAF addendum published as an informative document.

There was no comment on the new work items proposed by EA.

Decision

The Board endorsed the new work items proposed for:

- the revision of EA-1/17 Supplement 5: *Levying of Membership Fees*;
- the elaboration of *EA Procedure on Remote Peer Evaluations*.

4.3 Revision of the EC *Blue Guide*

Z. Bilalis reported that a large number of comments had been received from all stakeholders. The revision is being finalised now, and the revised *Guide* is expected to be published around the summer break.

M. Stadler asked for details about the current comments and discussions. Z. Bilalis replied that comments had been considered in the IMP expert group, and the last version of the *Guide* was now finalised and translated internally.

Finally Z. Bilalis took this opportunity to inform the Board of the reorganisation in DG GROW, whose name was changed into “Unit D3 Market Surveillance”. There is however no change in DG GROW’s responsibilities related to accreditation.

Decision

The Board took note that:

- the revision of the EC *Blue Guide* was being finalised and translated within the EC services and should be published around the summer break;
- following a reorganisation in EC DG GROW, the relevant unit had been renamed “Unit D3 Market Surveillance” with no change in its responsibilities related to accreditation.

4.4 CETA - Implementation of the Bilateral Cooperation Agreement with Canada/SCC: new momentum with EU recognition of SCC

Z. Bilalis informed that a few Canadian CABs were now listed in NANDO database as “recognised” CABs.

A. Steinhorst reported that the problem regarding the recognition of SCC (Standards Council of Canada) as National Accreditation Body according to the *CETA Protocol on Conformity Assessment* was now solved. SCC is at first recognised for ATEX equipment sector, for which it is now possible for NBs to be included into NANDO.

Furthermore the EC is elaborating guidelines on the CETA protocol.

Decision

The Board took note that:

- Standards Council of Canada (SCC) had been recognised according to Article 12 of the *CETA Protocol on Conformity Assessment* for the relevant technical regulations of the EU within the ATEX equipment sector. Accordingly, SCC will be published soon with the relevant scope of recognition on the EU NANDO database;
- welcomed the EC work to elaborate guidelines on the implementation CETA protocol.

4.5 Overview of papers regarding COVID-19

A. Steinhorst presented an exhaustive list of those pandemic-related papers that had been or would be published by EA or stakeholders, including notably:

- EA communication to NABs and accredited CABs regarding the outbreak of COVID-19, dated 23 March 2020
- List of accredited laboratories for face masks testing
- HHC report on experience with remote assessments will be finalised in May 2021
- NWIP Guidance on remote assessments dated April/May 2021
- NWIP Procedure on remote peer evaluations dated April 2021
- IAF-ILAC Statement on Replacement of assessments during the COVID-19 pandemic, dated March 2021
- GNB-CPR information on maintaining CPR certificates under the COVID-19 outbreak
- NB-Rail: Remote evaluation due to COVID-19 pandemic
- ERA Clarification note: Temporary measures adopted by the European Union Agency for Railways for delivering authorisations in the framework of the restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic, dated May 2020
- EC communication notes on the impact of COVID-19 on NoBos

The Board thanked the Executive Secretary for his overview of all papers relating to COVID-19, and asks the Secretariat to publish it among the meeting papers on the EAAB intranet.

Action Secretariat (done)

4.6 Report from EA on various issues

A. Steinhorst briefly informed on the following matters:

- Some actions in the implementation plan of *EA Strategy 2025* are followed up by the Executive Board. Good progress has been made and three quarters of actions are now closed.
- The EA MLA mark is being formally registered in the EU Intellectual Property Office; the process should be concluded by end of 2021.
- CEN-CENELEC TF Africa “Support of the African Quality Infrastructure”: this activity, also supported by the EC, EFTA and EURAMET, is currently defining a roadmap to support the African Quality Infrastructure, whose implementation will last many years.
- Cooperation with the EC, including notably:

- EA-JRC project on Breast Cancer Services, which has been restarted at the end of 2020. The focus is on the accreditation of certification bodies according to ISO/IEC 17065. EA WG BCS include several EA NABs for technical work.
- Cybersecurity Act: EU Certification scheme on Common Criteria (EUCC) and EU Certification Scheme on Cloud Services (EUCS)
- Proposed Regulation on batteries and waste batteries
- Proposed Regulation on Artificial Intelligence, which includes the notification of CABs and the CE marking (NLF approach). NBs shall demonstrate their competence and one option is to do that via accreditation according to Regulation 765/2008.
- Draft delegated Regulation supplementing Regulation (EU) 2018/848 on official controls in third countries regarding organic production and labelling of organic products

Further to a question by B. McGill, A. Steinhorst added that all the proposed regulations were available on the EC website. EA-INF/05: *Directory of European legislations and EU schemes with provisions to accreditation and/or conformity assessment* is specifically dedicated to approved legislation.

M. Logghe advised that annexes of the EC work programmes could be looked at to see which new regulations were in the pipelines.

4.7 Single international accreditation organisation: update

A. Steinhorst gave a brief update about the state of play regarding the single international accreditation organisation. The Steering Committee has been established and its terms of reference have been approved in 2020. The external facilitator or project manager, who should coordinate operational issues, has also been selected in the person of Thomas Facklam who started his work in March 2021. So a new momentum has been launched.

Decision

The Board took note that the terms of reference of the *ad hoc* Steering Committee have been set up in 2020, and that Thomas Facklam, selected as the project facilitator and manager, had been starting his work as of March 2021.

The Board thanked EA for the oral and written reports provided under these items.

4.8 Relations with stakeholders

There was no new application so far.

5. Any other business

None.

6. Selection of dates and places of next meetings

The Board agreed to meet on **Wednesday 10 November 2021** and thanked EFTA for offering to host the meeting at EFTA's new offices in Brussels, with the provision that there would be no more travel or health restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Finally, the Board paid tribute to Michael Nitsche (NA College) and Jörg Hartge (Industry College), who attended their last EAAB meeting, for their successful commitment in the Board's matters, and wished them all the best in the future.

The Chair thanked the Board's Members for their valuable participation and closed the remote meeting.

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List of the abbreviations taken for granted in the minutes

AB: accreditation body
APAC: Asia Pacific Accreditation Cooperation
ARAC: Arab Accreditation Cooperation
CAB: conformity assessment body
CAS: conformity assessment scheme
CB: certification body
CD: committee draft
CCMC : CEN-CENELEC Management Centre
EA BLA: EA Bilateral Agreement
(EA) **CC:** EA Certification Committee
(EA) **CPC:** EA Communications and Publications Committee
(EA) **HHC:** EA Horizontal Harmonisation Committee
(EA) **LC:** EA Laboratory Committee
(EA) **MAC:** EA Multilateral Agreement Council
EA MLA: EA Multilateral Agreement
EC: European Commission
ECOS: Environmental Council of the States
EFTA: European Free Trade Association
ENP: EU Neighbourhood Policy
EU ETS: European Union Emissions Trading System
FPA: Framework Partnership Agreement
IAF: International Accreditation Forum
ILAC: International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation
IMP expert group: Internal Market of Products expert group
NAs: national authorities
NAB: national accreditation body
NBs: notified bodies
NoBos: Group of Notified Bodies
NLF: New Legislative Framework
NWI: new work item
RoP: Rules of Procedure
RS: Recognised Stakeholder
TIC industry: testing, inspection and certification industry
SS: sector scheme
SO: scheme owner
TFG: task force group
ToR: Terms of Reference
WG: working group
WP: work programme