



The NZ mark of competence
Tohu Matatau Aotearoa

International

Accreditation Bodies

IANZ is one of a number of accreditation bodies around the world, established in many economies to ensure that organisations engaging in standards and conformance have oversight by an authoritative body.

Accreditation bodies that have been peer evaluated as competent, sign regional and international arrangements to demonstrate their competence. These arrangements support the provision of local or national services, such as providing safe food and clean drinking water, delivering health services or maintaining an unpolluted environment.

The objectives of the cooperation between accreditation bodies are to:

- *Develop and harmonise accreditation practices*
- *Promote accreditation to industry, governments, regulators and consumers*
- *Foster and promote competent conformity assessment bodies (such as laboratories, inspection bodies etc.)*
- *Gain universal acceptance of accredited certificates and reports*
- *Facilitate mutual recognition of accredited test, measurement, inspection and other conformity assessment results*
- *Exchange technical knowledge among members*

These objectives are consistent with the World Trade Organisation's (WTO's) Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT Agreement). This agreement encourages WTO members to recognise each other's conformity assessment results, provided they are confident the procedures are equivalent. In most economies, governments recognise and encourage the use of accredited reports to facilitate trade and for ensuring the safety of goods and services being imported.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

The forum for the global cooperation between accreditation bodies is the [International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation \(ILAC\)](#). First started as a conference in 1977, with IANZ as a founding member, ILAC was formalised as a Cooperation in 1996. Its aim is to facilitate trade by promoting the acceptance of accredited test, calibration and inspection reports that can be relied on to provide accurate data. Full members of ILAC, including IANZ, are signatories to the ILAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA), which allows for global acceptance of accredited test and inspection reports.

IANZ regularly contributes to ILAC through attendance at regular meetings and active participation in committees and working groups, and are regular participants on evaluation teams to other ILAC MRA signatory accreditation bodies and ILAC-recognised regional cooperations. This ensures New Zealand's interests, and those of IANZ accredited organisations, are best served in the

development of internationally harmonised criteria for accreditation and in the effective and efficient operation of the ILAC MRA.

REGIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

ILAC members also belong to formally established regional accreditation cooperation organisations. These organisations have objectives similar to and compatible with ILAC, and are committed to the obligations of the ILAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement.

There are currently six regional accreditation cooperation organisations

- *Asia Pacific Accreditation Cooperation* ([APAC](#))
- *European Cooperation for Accreditation* ([EA](#))
- *Inter-American Accreditation Cooperation* ([IAAC](#))
- *Southern African Development Community Cooperation in Accreditation* ([SADCA](#))
- *African Accreditation Cooperation* ([AFRAC](#))
- *Arab Accreditation Cooperation* ([ARAC](#))

Information about each of these regional accreditation cooperation organisations can be found on their websites.

Likewise for ILAC, IANZ regularly contributes to APAC through attendance at regular meetings and active participation in committees and working groups, and are regular participants on evaluation teams to other APAC MRA signatory accreditation bodies. This ensures New Zealand's interests, and those of IANZ accredited organisations, are best served in the development of internationally harmonised criteria for accreditation and in the effective and efficient operation of the APAC and ILAC MRAs.

MUTUAL RECOGNITION AGREEMENTS

The aim of the international accreditation cooperations – to facilitate trade and ensure safety for consumers – is realised through Mutual Recognition Arrangements (MRAs) between accreditation body members of, for example, APAC and ILAC, carried out in accordance with ILAC rules and procedures. Each signatory to the MRA agrees to (among other things):

- *Maintain conformance with ISO/IEC 17011 Conformity assessment – Requirements for accreditation bodies accrediting conformity assessment bodies, and*
- *Ensure all accredited conformity assessment bodies e.g. laboratories, inspection bodies, proficiency testing providers and reference material producers comply with their respective ISO/(IEC) international accreditation standard e.g. ISO/IEC 17025, ISO 15189, ISO/IEC 17020, ISO/IEC 17043 and ISO 17034.*

All signatories are regularly peer-reviewed to show they continually meet the ILAC criteria for recognition under the APAC and ILAC MRAs.

INTERNATIONAL EVALUATIONS

In March 2023, IANZ was evaluated by an international team on behalf of APAC to ensure that our systems and procedures remain at a world class standard, and enable test reports from organisations accredited in New Zealand to be accepted around the world. The evaluation conduct and outcome was particularly successful, resulting in subsequent reconfirmation of IANZ's MRA Signatory status in the APAC and ILAC MRAs for another 4 years.

IANZ also contributes to international evaluations, by enabling team members to become qualified evaluators. These individuals have the opportunity to travel to other accreditation bodies around the world and participate in an international evaluation team.

Contact us today

[+64 9 525 6655](tel:+6495256655)

[0800 900 099](tel:0800900099)

info@ianz.govt.nz



The NZ mark of competence
Tohu Matatau Aotearoa