



# Possible delayed evaluations and impact on transition to ISO/IEC 17011:2017

## INTRODUCTION

The transition policy published by ILAC and IAF in October 2017 defined the responsibilities of ILAC and IAF for the unaffiliated ABs and the regional groups for their signatory ABs to manage the processes to ensure all ABs that are signatories to the IAF MLA and ILAC MRA will have transitioned to ISO/IEC 17011:2017 by November 2020. The policy allowed each regional group to take into consideration factors such as their evaluation schedule, availability of TLs and decision making processes, etc,

As a result of the increasing restrictions on travel and mandatory quarantine periods following travel due to the COVID-19 outbreak, the following additional guidelines are agreed by the IAF MLA MC and ILAC AMC to help ensure this process continues to be managed consistently across all regions in the final six to eight months of this transition period.

## CONSIDERATIONS/ACTIONS

1. It is acknowledged the regional cooperation bodies have in place general policies and procedures dealing with delays to a scheduled evaluation or unscheduled events, eg a Force Majeure.
2. A key issue in the case of COVID-19 is the number of regions and economies impacted. In particular, all or some of the following situations may result:
  - a. TLs and TMs may no longer be able to travel to an evaluation due to travel and/or quarantine restrictions being imposed either by their own or the host AB (or economy) or by an economy through which an evaluator must transit to the evaluation;
  - b. ABs that provide peer evaluators are responsible for their staff and may impose restrictions on travel under workplace health and safety requirements;
  - c. The AB that is to be evaluated may raise concerns that evaluators travelling from or via some economies may result in the staff of the evaluated host AB being quarantined.
3. A decision to proceed with a specific planned peer evaluation may be taken if all parties (i.e. the AB being evaluated, the evaluators and the evaluators' ABs) agree based on their own assessments of the risks.
4. If any party referred to in point 3 identifies an unacceptable risk to proceed with a scheduled evaluation, then a decision to postpone the evaluation will be required by the regional MLA/MRA management committee. This decision should take into consideration the following options:

- a. Postponement of whole evaluation or only part of the evaluation, eg one scope if it is, for example, only one member of a team that is unable to travel;
  - b. The possibility to perform some aspects of the evaluation via remote activities, eg the document review of the management system;
  - c. Time frame for the re-scheduling of any postponed evaluation, either in full or partial, once the travel and/or quarantine restrictions due to COVID-19 have been lifted.
5. If the evaluation of the AB that is being postponed involved the transition of the AB to the 2017 edition of ISO/IEC 17011, then *Part B of the October 2017 ISO/IEC 17011:2017 Transition Plan* **must** be implemented. This section of the Transition Plan is reproduced below for convenience.
  6. The regional cooperation bodies must establish and maintain a process to ensure any evaluations (or parts thereof) that are postponed are monitored to ensure the conditions on the postponement are implemented, eg document reviews, re-scheduling, etc.

## **REPORTING TO ILAC AMC/IAF MLA MC**

No decision has been taken on reporting by the recognised regions on the status of evaluations postponed due to COVID-19.

The recognised regions will be required as per the October 2017 transition policy to provide a report to the ILAC AMC and IAF MLA MC October 2020 detailing the progress of the transition of the AB signatories to their MRA/MLA. This report must include, as detailed previously, for each AB the evaluation process used, i.e., evaluation or document review, and status of this process.

**Reproduced from *October 2017 ISO/IEC 17011:2017 Transition Plan*:**

### **B. Document Review for the ABs that will NOT be evaluated during the transition period**

1. All MRA/MLA signatories that are not peer evaluated to ISO/IEC 17011:2017 and their compliance confirmed by a decision making process prior to November 2020, must complete IAF/ILAC A3:2017.
2. A document review must then be carried out by a qualified person, preferably the TL that should have already been allocated to conduct the next on-site evaluation of the AB.
3. Any findings from the document review will be identified, coded in accordance with the definitions for NCs and Concerns and addressed by the AB.
4. The team leader or qualified person that has carried out the document review will need to report to the relevant decision making group, confirming the document review has been completed, that the findings have been addressed by the AB and that this will be further verified as part of the next scheduled evaluation (specifying the date of that evaluation).
5. The document review and decision making process must be completed by November 2020.
6. It is the responsibility of the regions to establish time frames to ensure these document reviews and associated decision making processes are completed by November 2020.