

CIPM Position on revision of ISO/IEC 17025

Background

ISO/IEC 17025:2005 ‘*General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories*’ 2005 is being reviewed by ISO CASCO WG44. The BIPM is an ‘A’ Liaison with ISO CASCO. Andy Henson will represent the BIPM on WG44, and will be supported by R Kaarls.

It was noted that NMIs are also able to input their national positions (known to be divergent) to the review via their national standards bodies (who, unlike BIPM, have the right to vote at the various stages of the development of the revised standard), and that BIPM liaison activity should therefore focus on protecting/promoting a limited number of points deemed of highest importance by the CIPM whilst still contributing to any other relevant wider points as appropriate.

The approach laid out in this paper was [adopted](#) at the CIPM meeting in March 2015.

Decision CIPM/104-13

The CIPM adopted the position proposed in Document CIPM/15-04 on the revision of ISO/IEC 17025 as the CIPM position.

CIPM Position

Three major components of the CIPM position:

- **To maintain the principle of traceability to the SI (or other international standards, when that is not yet possible).** *This is currently a requirement for calibration laboratories in 5.6.2.1.1 for ‘Calibration’ and by cross reference in 5.6.2.2.1 for ‘Testing’, (with the extent of applicability for testing depending on the relative contribution of calibration uncertainty to the total uncertainty);*
- **To avoid calibration being classed as a “conformity assessment activity” *per se*;** *it is essential that calibration is properly understood to be a different activity compared to legal metrology, verification and assessment of conformity with product, industry, legal or other specifications, and we must avoid NMIs being classed as “conformity assessment bodies” (CABs) and hence having to meet the requirements set for CABs;*
- **To position the CIPM MRA, which is not referenced in the current version of ISO/IEC 17025, as providing ‘a presumption of compliance’ with regard to recognition of traceability; this could be achieved through a non-normative reference.** *The current standard makes no mention of the CIPM MRA. 5.6 ‘Measurement Traceability’ states in Note 7 that .. ‘if a calibration laboratory wishes or needs to obtain traceability from a national metrology institute other than in its own country, this laboratory should select a national metrology institute that actively participates in the activities of BIPM either directly or through regional groups.’ The CIPM should consider proposing the addition of the sentence ‘Participation in the CIPM MRA can provide evidence of this’.*

Additionally, there are three points where it will be important to argue for consistency with existing CIPM policy and guidance:

- **To maintain and strengthen the requirement for traceability via intrinsic standards to be linked into the international system;** *Currently addresses in 5.6.2.1.1 Note 3 which states: ‘...Calibration laboratories that maintain their own primary standard or representation of SI units based on fundamental physical constants can claim traceability to the SI system only after these standards have been compared, directly or indirectly, with other similar standards of a national metrology institute’. CIPM should consider proposing that this requirement be strengthened by elevating the text in the standard from being a Note into the body of the test;*
- **To maintain at least the non-normative reference to the GUM and to build support for upgrading the reference to normative status;** *currently addressed in a note to 5.4.6.3 ‘For further information, see ISO 5725 and the Guide to the Expression of Uncertainty in Measurement (see Bibliography).’*
- **To maintain the existing normative reference to the VIM.**

Attention will be given to correct Note 5 and Note 7 under article 5.6.2.1.1 and to make them consistent (should they remain).