



Asia Pacific Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation

APLAC MRA COUNCIL – RULES FOR ITS OPERATION

PURPOSE

This procedure sets out the rules for the operation of the APLAC MRA Council. It should be read in conjunction with part 2 of APLAC MR 001.

AUTHORSHIP

This publication has been written by the APLAC MRA Council.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

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

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1. MEMBERSHIP

- 1.1 Each Full Member of APLAC shall appoint a delegate to the APLAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement Council (herein after referred to as “the MRA Council”) with full voting rights. Each Full Member may also appoint an alternate delegate.

While each Full Member has full voting rights for general deliberations of the MRA Council, only those Full Members that are also signatories to the APLAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA) are eligible to vote on the acceptance of new signatories and the continuation of signatory status for current signatories, other than for themselves.

- 1.2 The General Assembly shall elect the designated representative of one of its Full Members to act as the Chair of the MRA Council. A Secretary shall be appointed by the Chair with the approval of a majority of Council members. The APLAC Secretary may also be the Secretary for the MRA Council.
- 1.3 All attendees at each MRA Council meeting shall sign a declaration of confidentiality. This shall form an attachment to the Minutes of the meeting.
- 1.4 At the start of each meeting the Chair shall ask delegates to declare any potential conflict of interest with any agenda item particularly those items related to evaluation reports. Any declared potential conflict of interest shall be recorded in the Minutes of the meeting.

2. GENERAL

- 2.1. The MRA Council may appoint a sub-committee to coordinate the evaluation of accreditation bodies wishing to join the APLAC MRA. While appointed by the MRA Council, any sub-committee shall operate under APLAC’s rules for such committees. The MRA Council shall also operate under these rules.
- 2.2 An accreditation body participating in APLAC as a Full Member and wishing to become a signatory to the APLAC MRA shall submit an application on the application form APLAC MR 003.
- 2.3 The APLAC MRA Council shall arrange for an evaluation of the activities of the accreditation body by an appropriate evaluation team.
- 2.4 The activities of an accreditation body that is a signatory to the APLAC MRA shall be re-evaluated at regular intervals.
- 2.5 The report of the evaluation or re-evaluation team, and the team’s recommendation to the MRA Council are provided to the Council delegates by the Secretariat for review prior to the MRA Council meeting at which the report is to be considered.

NOTE 1: APLAC MR 001, clause 18.2.3 details the information to be provided to the APLAC Secretariat by the evaluation team leader on completion of the evaluation. It includes information in support of the report, typically that provided by the evaluated accreditation body in support of its response to the findings. This supporting information is not routinely provided to MRA Council delegates but can be requested from the Secretariat.

NOTE 2 MRA Council delegates may choose to use the evaluation report review checklist, given in Appendix 1, to assist in their review of the report. Use is, however, optional.

- 2.6 When the MRA Council Chair was the team leader or team member for the evaluation under consideration or when the evaluation of the MRA Council Chair's organisation is being considered, a deputy shall be appointed to chair that part of the MRA Council meeting, usually the APLAC Chair.
- 2.7 The Chair of the MRA Council may invite appropriate observers to attend meetings of the Council.
- 2.8 The APLAC MRA Council shall report to each meeting of the APLAC General Assembly and the APLAC Board of Management on its evaluation and re-evaluation activities. The MRA Council shall keep the APLAC Secretary informed about its activities by providing the Secretary with agendas and records of meetings, including summaries of conclusions of meetings conducted using electronic media.
- 2.9 In the event of a dispute between signatories or with applicants to the APLAC MRA, the provisions of the MRA apply. The General Assembly may, however, discuss such matters and offer advice to the MRA Council

3. APPLICATION FOR APLAC MRA

- 3.1 Applications shall be made in accordance with APLAC MR 003. The application form shall be completed in English and sent to the APLAC Secretariat that will advise the APLAC Chair and the Chair of the MRA Council of the receipt of the application.
- 3.2 The APLAC Secretariat shall confirm receipt of the application on behalf of the APLAC Chair. The Secretariat shall notify members of the MRA Council of the receipt of the application.
- 3.3 The Secretariat shall inform the applicant body at the time of application of:
- (a) the current issue of APLAC MR 001; and
 - (b) any imminent changes approved by the General Assembly but not yet included in the current issue of this document.
- 3.4 Applications from APLAC Full Members shall be considered by the MRA Council at its next meeting or by correspondence if the next Council meeting is more than 3 months ahead. Reasons for not continuing with the application shall be discussed by the MRA Council.
- 3.5 (a) Applications from accreditation bodies outside the APLAC region shall be discussed in the APLAC General Assembly. The APLAC General Assembly shall decide whether to accept the application and to start the evaluation, and on any payment necessary. The MRA Council shall decide on the actual steps to be followed (see APLAC MR 001, clause 3.4).

- (b) Accreditation bodies from outside the APLAC region shall sign a contract of cooperation with APLAC prior to the start of the evaluation process. The contract should include specific topics such as rights and obligations, technical activities, finances, and term of validity of the contract of cooperation (see APLAC MR 001, clause 3.4).
- 3.6 The MRA Council Chair shall ensure that the applicant body is informed by correspondence of the decision of the MRA Council (or General Assembly), and that the evaluation will be conducted in accordance with APLAC MR 001 and the applicable clauses of this document. When an application is not accepted, the applicant body shall be informed of the reason(s).
- 3.7 The applicant body shall provide two sets of documents (Set A, Set B, see APLAC MR 003, appendix 2) to the team leader and team members at least three months prior to any planned pre-evaluation or evaluation visit. If the Set A and Set B documents are not provided three months prior to the planned visit, refer to clause 5.1.2.

3.8 Special Emphasis in Scope

For initial evaluations and re-evaluations, the applicant body may request that the evaluation pay particular attention to a certain area(s) of its accreditation activities, such as “EMC to domestic and foreign regulations”. In such a case, organisation of the evaluation team and of the evaluation process may need special consideration so that the request can be met. The applicant body may request that stakeholders or other interested parties (such as regulators of the economy of interest) be invited to observe the evaluation. The evaluation report should detail the accreditation body’s capabilities in the specific area(s) identified, and the MRA Council may decide to include reference to this specific area of recognition within the applicant body’s scope of recognition listed in APLAC MR 002.

This special emphasis shall only be provided on condition that the normal evaluation activities will not be adversely affected. Where such emphasis on selected areas necessitates extra evaluation activities, the applicant body shall bear all the extra costs associated with these additional activities. Extra costs would typically include the cost of the extra time of the evaluators for the evaluation, report and follow-up, additional accommodation, subsistence and travelling expenses, and related sundry costs.

4. APPOINTMENT OF THE TEAM LEADER

- 4.1 The MRA Council Chair, subject to the approval of the MRA Council, shall appoint a lead evaluator as the team leader for an evaluation or re-evaluation, with her/his consent. The team leader shall be chosen from the list of lead evaluators prepared and kept up-to-date by the APLAC Secretariat on behalf of the MRA Council. The minimum qualifications for team leaders are given in APLAC MR 004. In appointing team leaders for a specific evaluation, the MRA Council Chair:
- shall avoid appointing the same team leader for two successive evaluations of the same applicant body, except for pre-evaluations and follow-up evaluations;

- should avoid appointing team leaders nominated from an accreditation body that has been evaluated by a team leader from the applicant body within a relatively short period;
- should ensure that evaluators are nominated from all APLAC MRA signatories (and non-member and cooperation signatories as appropriate) with the objective of evenly distributing the workload.

NOTE 1: The role and responsibilities of the team leader are given in clause 4.4 of this document and section 8 of APLAC MR 001.

NOTE 2: The APLAC MRA Council requires the team leader for an evaluation to be present at the MRA Council meeting at which the report on the evaluation (s)he led is considered. If the person does not routinely attend MRA Council meetings, APLAC will provide funding for her/his attendance.

- 4.2 The applicant body shall be informed of the name of the team leader nominated by the MRA Council Chair to carry out the evaluation and the scope of the evaluation, with sufficient notice so that the applicant body has the opportunity to appeal against the appointment of the team leader.
- 4.3 The MRA Council Chair shall inform the team leader of her/his acceptance by the applicant body, approval of the appointment by the MRA Council, the scope of the evaluation, and, for a re-evaluation, the due date for the on-site evaluation and for the provision of the finalised evaluation report to the MRA Council. The Secretariat shall issue a letter of appointment to the team leader.
- 4.4 The evaluation team leader is delegated authority by the MRA Council to make final decisions regarding the conduct of the evaluation. (S)he shall have ultimate responsibility for all phases of the evaluation, including:
- (a) composition of the evaluation team
 - (b) document review
 - (c) planning the evaluation visit
 - (d) conduct of the evaluation visit
 - (e) planning and conduct of any follow-up activities, including an on-site follow-up visit,
 - (f) reporting the outcome of the evaluation

5 DELAY IN THE EVALUATION PROCESS

5.1 Caused by the Applicant

- 5.1.1 If the applicant body does not cooperate with the evaluation team within the timeframes specified in this document, the team leader may, at any stage, including before the evaluation team is constituted, propose to the APLAC MRA Council that the evaluation process be suspended.
- 5.1.2 If the applicant body does not provide the two sets of documents, in accordance with clause 3.7, to the team leader and team members at least three months prior

to the evaluation visit, the team leader may propose a change in the date of the evaluation to the APLAC MRA Council Chair.

- 5.1.3 For the initial evaluation of an applicant, if the report on the evaluation has not been finalised after two years from the date of application, the team leader shall prepare a report for the APLAC MRA Council setting out the history of the evaluation
 - 5.1.4 For a re-evaluation, if the report on the evaluation has not been finalised by the time of the next APLAC MRA Council meeting following the Council meeting where the re-evaluation report is scheduled to be tabled, the team leader shall prepare a report for the APLAC MRA Council, setting out the history of the evaluation.
 - 5.1.5 If, in the opinion of the APLAC MRA Council, the delays are caused by the applicant body, and there are no extenuating circumstances, the APLAC MRA Council may resolve to suspend the evaluation process.
 - 5.1.6 Once the evaluation process is suspended, the evaluation team shall be dissolved. The APLAC MRA Council may appoint another team leader when the applicant body is ready to resume the evaluation. Any nonconformities and concerns raised by the original evaluation team shall be taken into consideration by the new evaluation team.
 - 5.1.7 Once the process for re-evaluation is suspended, the APLAC MRA Council may suspend the signatory status of the accreditation body that is already a signatory to the APLAC MRA.
 - 5.1.8 Irrespective of any delays in an evaluation, the subsequent re-evaluations shall be done in accordance with the original schedule, i.e. at a maximum of every four years from the first day of the final full evaluation visit to the accreditation body prior to its being accepted as a signatory to the MRA, unless otherwise determined by the MRA Council.
- 5.2 Caused by Adverse Travel Advisory**
- 5.2.1 If an adverse travel advisory for the applicant's economy occurs before the evaluation date is set, the team leader shall, in consultation with the APLAC MRA Council Chair, postpone setting a date.
 - 5.2.2 In the event of an adverse travel advisory for the applicant's economy after the date for the visit has been set, the APLAC MRA Council Chair shall decide, on the basis of advice from the team leader appointed for the evaluation, on the postponement of the evaluation.
 - 5.2.3 If the postponed visit is for a re-evaluation, the APLAC MRA Council shall decide, after the postponement, on a case-by-case basis, the impact on the ongoing recognition of the APLAC MRA signatory accreditation body affected.

6. EVALUATION REPORT AND EVALUATION TEAM'S RECOMMENDATION TO APLAC MRA COUNCIL

- 6.1 As stated in clause 17.2 of APLAC MR 001, when the team leader is not able to complete the evaluation report and report the findings of the evaluation team within the time prescribed by the MRA Council, (s)he shall advise the MRA Council Chair of the situation. The MRA Council shall re-arrange the schedule or shall appoint a new team leader to complete the task. When a new team leader is appointed, the previous team leader shall send the new team leader all information gathered to date in relation to the evaluation.
- 6.2 The team leader for an initial evaluation shall attend the APLAC MRA Council meeting to present the evaluation report and participate in the discussions on the report. Under normal circumstances the team leader shall also attend the APLAC MRA Council meeting to present the report on a re-evaluation, although attendance via teleconference may be considered as an option.

For those team leaders who do not normally attend APLAC MRA Council meetings, APLAC will provide the following funding for their attendance at an MRA Council meeting that considers a report on an evaluation for which they were the team leader: return (discount) economy airfare; 3 nights accommodation; half of the registration fee (applicable for end of year meetings only).

7. DECISION MAKING

- 7.1 The APLAC Secretariat shall provide the final evaluation report and the evaluation team's letter of recommendation to the members of the APLAC MRA Council at least one month before the next meeting of the Council. A copy shall also be sent to the applicant body if it is not already a member of the Council. In exceptional cases where the four-part package cannot be submitted in time to the Secretariat, the APLAC MRA Council Chair shall advise the Secretariat on appropriate action to ensure that Council members receive the final report and letter of recommendation.
- 7.2 The team leader shall present the evaluation findings to the MRA Council, and the evaluated applicant body will be invited to respond. The MRA Council delegates may then seek any clarification from either the team leader or the applicant body's delegate. Once any clarification has been given all those present from the applicant body shall be asked to leave the room. They may enter the room again once the ballot on the applicant body has been completed.

After seeking any further clarification from the team leader, the MRA Council shall decide, taking into consideration the recommendations by the evaluation team:

- (a) whether the applicant body should be accepted as a signatory to the APLAC MRA or whether the signatory status for the re-evaluated signatory should be reaffirmed; and
- (b) the scope of recognition within the APLAC MRA; and

- (c) the time frame for any follow-up visit and/or for the next re-evaluation. It shall also decide on the meeting of the APLAC MRA Council to which the report on the follow-up visit and/or next evaluation shall be presented.

The team's recommendation shall be projected on screen and edited as appropriate during the MRA Council deliberations.

- 7.3 In the case of an existing signatory to the APLAC MRA, the APLAC MRA Council may decide, if it is not able to accept the corrective actions taken by the accreditation body in relation to any significant nonconformity(ies) to suspend MRA signatory recognition temporarily until it is satisfied that the nonconformity(ies) has been addressed, or to withdraw MRA signatory recognition.

The date of the suspension of MRA signatory recognition is the date of the decision by the APLAC MRA Council unless the Council decides on a different suspension date, taking into account the recommendation of the evaluation team.

In the case of suspension of MRA signatory recognition, the APLAC MRA Council may decide to appoint a special evaluation team to conduct a follow-up visit. If the outstanding nonconformity(ies) have not been addressed satisfactorily within six months, the Council may resolve to withdraw MRA signatory status.

The date of withdrawal of APLAC MRA signatory recognition is the date of the decision by the APLAC MRA Council.

The accreditation body may appeal the APLAC MRA Council decision in accordance with the APLAC MRA Council's appeals procedure (see section 10).

- 7.4 The MRA Council may decide to impose other conditions for entry into the MRA on the applicant body, including the conduct of follow-up or surveillance visits or reducing the re-evaluation interval.

8. VOTING RULES

- 8.1 The APLAC MRA Council shall decide on the entry of an accreditation body into the APLAC MRA or whether or not it may remain in the APLAC MRA, subject to the appeal provisions referred to below. Three-fourths of the signatories to the MRA must cast a vote for the ballot to be valid. Abstention votes are counted as valid votes. A positive vote by three-fourths of the sum of those voting "yes" and "no" is required for the ballot to be accepted.
- 8.2 Once an applicant body has been accepted as a signatory to the APLAC MRA, it is permitted to vote on any subsequent MRA decision made during the meeting.

9. SUSPENSION OR WITHDRAWAL OF APLAC MRA SIGNATORY STATUS

If the MRA Council resolves to suspend MRA signatory recognition of an accreditation body it shall decide also on the continued recognition of accredited conformity assessment bodies taking into account the reasons for the suspension.

A suspension of APLAC MRA signatory status shall only be lifted after a follow-up visit, to establish that appropriate and effective corrective action has been taken, and subsequent report and recommendation from the evaluation team to the MRA Council.

An accreditation body whose APLAC MRA signatory status has been withdrawn and wishes to regain that signatory status shall follow the same process as an applicant, as described in this document.

10. APPEALS AGAINST DECISIONS OF THE APLAC MRA COUNCIL

10.1 An accreditation body may appeal an APLAC MRA Council decision, including not to grant signatory status in the MRA, or to withdraw signatory status. In such cases, the APLAC MRA Council appeals process applies.

The APLAC MRA Council is the sole body within APLAC that makes decisions with regard to signatory status within the APLAC MRA. It is, therefore, the MRA Council that handles appeals on MRA signatory status, generally through revocation of previous resolutions and voting upon new resolutions.

10.2 The appeal shall be sent to the APLAC Secretary, in writing, within 30 days of the notification of the decision of the MRA Council. The appeal shall include:

- (i) the decision (or part thereof) of the MRA Council being appealed;
- (ii) details of the basis of the accreditation body's appeal;
- (iii) the remedy sought, including actions requested of the MRA Council and requested time frames in which such actions should be done;
- (iv) the name and title of the executive or official who will represent the accreditation body and any other person(s) who will accompany the executive or official at the appeals process.

10.3 The Chair of the MRA Council shall review the written appeal to establish its validity in accordance with the above, and whether the requested actions and timeframes are practical and achievable. The Chair of the MRA Council may negotiate with the appellant to define a mutually satisfactory process to consider the remedy sought.

10.4 When an appeal is lodged between meetings of the MRA Council, the MRA Council Chair shall generally appoint an ad-hoc sub-committee of the Council to consider the appeal and report to the next MRA Council meeting with a recommendation on a decision. The sub-committee shall consist of at least 3 MRA Council delegates who are lead evaluators or experienced evaluators and who were not part of the last evaluation team to the appellant accreditation body.

10.5 When an appeal is lodged during the meeting of the MRA Council in which the decision in dispute was made, and the appellant requests the appeal be considered at that meeting, this request shall be considered in the above review by the Chair of the MRA Council. Should such an arrangement be practical and achievable, the consideration of the appeal shall be by the full MRA Council in attendance at the meeting.

10.6 Upon receiving the report and recommendation from the ad-hoc sub-committee, the MRA Council shall decide whether to uphold the appeal or otherwise, by means of a vote in accordance with section 8.1 above. Such votes shall be

confined to decisions “on the entry of an accreditation body into the APLAC MRA or whether or not it may remain in the APLAC MRA”. The wording of a resolution for voting shall be confined to such decisions.

- 10.7 The APLAC Secretary shall promptly advise the appellant in writing of the outcome of the APLAC MRA Council resolution.

Records as listed in the APLAC Quality Manual, section 10.2.3 shall be retained.

11. NOTIFICATION OF SUSPENSION OR WITHDRAWAL OF APLAC MRA SIGNATORY STATUS

- 11.1 In the event that the APLAC MRA Council suspends or withdraws the MRA signatory recognition of an accreditation body, the MRA Council Chair shall promptly advise the accreditation body of this, and provide a detailed explanation of the reasons for the decision. The MRA Council Chair shall also advise whether or not the Council has also resolved to suspend recognition by the other signatories to the MRA of the equivalence of endorsed reports and certificates issued by accredited conformity assessment bodies, including prior to addressing any appeals procedure (see clause 10.1 above). Any such suspension of recognition shall not be considered as a breach of APLAC MRA obligations (APLAC MR 002, clause 1(ii) of Arrangement Text).
- 11.2 The change in signatory status shall apply from the date of the APLAC MRA Council resolution on the matter, unless otherwise decided as part of the MRA Council resolution.
- 11.3 The APLAC Secretary shall promptly advise other signatories to the APLAC MRA and the ILAC Secretary of the change in MRA signatory status of the accreditation body. The accreditation body’s name shall be removed from the list of APLAC MRA signatories, including on the APLAC web site. An announcement on the change in signatory status shall also be placed on the web site.
- 11.4 The other signatories to the APLAC MRA should advise all relevant organisations in their own economy of the change in APLAC MRA signatory status of the accreditation body.
- 11.5 The accreditation body itself should advise its applicant and accredited conformity assessment bodies, and all relevant organisations in its own economy of its change in APLAC MRA signatory status, and of the subsequent impact on the acceptance of its accreditations by APLAC MRA signatories.

APPENDIX 1: APLAC EVALUATION REPORT REVIEW CHECKLIST

1. INTRODUCTION

The MRA Council begins an evaluation by assigning a team leader. The team leader then forms the evaluation team in consultation with the MRA Council Chair. When the evaluation has been completed, the team will provide its report on the evaluation to the MRA Council Chair and Secretariat. The report will be distributed to all MRA Council members for review and discussion during the MRA Council meeting before a decision is made on the team's recommendations.

Review of an evaluation report by the MRA Council delegates is an essential element of the APLAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement process. It ensures the reliability of the evaluation results on which decisions on admitting and affirming signatories and also provides information to substantiate the surveillance measures adopted by the MRA Council to monitor the performance of MRA signatories. The review also contributes to harmonisation of evaluations conducted by different teams and therefore, indirectly, to harmonisation of the standards of accreditations granted by the APLAC MRA signatories. During the review process, ambiguity in the recognition criteria can also be raised for discussion to achieve harmonisation. The checklist in this Appendix is designed to aid the review process through a series of questions that MRA Council delegates should ask when reviewing an evaluation report. Use of the checklist for the review process is, however, not mandatory.

2. ROLE OF THE REVIEW

The objectives of the review are to establish that

- a. the findings are reliable;
- b. the actions taken by the AB to address the findings are effective;
- c. the conclusions of the evaluation team are well substantiated by the findings; and
- d. the recommendations of the team are appropriate to the conclusions.

MRA Council delegates should study the evaluation report carefully before attending the MRA Council meeting in which the evaluation report is to be discussed. Consideration should also be given to any precedents (passed as MRA Council resolutions) set by the MRA Council in similar cases.

Should any ambiguities in interpreting the MRA criteria are brought to light through the evaluation or the review process, they should be raised for discussion and resolution in the MRA Council. In most cases, such ambiguities should not count against the accreditation body being evaluated.

If any potential inadequacy in the evidence and rationale supporting the team's recommendations is identified, a reviewer should seek clarification from the evaluation team and the AB during the MRA Council meeting. When raising questions, care should be taken to ensure that the question is well constructed in the sense that the information requested is clearly expressed. Discussions outside of a MRA Council meeting among a reviewer, the evaluation team and the evaluated AB are not permitted. As the role of an MRA Council delegate as a reviewer is to ensure that the evaluation has been properly conducted and that the conclusions and recommendations are well substantiated by the findings, (s)he should not form her/his own judgement based on the findings given in the evaluation report. Where the findings, conclusions and recommendations are properly made based on sufficient evidence

and justification, MRA Council delegates should respect the judgement made by the evaluation team and should not amend the findings or the recommendations because of an individual preference.

3. REVIEW PROCEDURE

The review procedure consists of four sequential steps. The questions included in the corresponding sections of the table in the Appendix are designed to provide assistance in carrying out these steps.

Step 1: Establishing whether the findings are reliable

The MRA Council delegate should start by reading the evaluation report to confirm that it contains sufficient evidence that the evaluation had been conducted in accordance with the principles laid out in APLAC MR 001 and that the findings are reliable.

Step 2: Establishing whether the actions taken by the AB to address the findings are effective

Once the MRA Council delegate is satisfied with the reliability of the findings, the actions taken by the AB (where required) should be analysed to confirm their effectiveness in addressing the issues identified.

Step 3: Establishing whether the conclusions are substantiated by the findings

The overall conclusions made by the evaluation team on whether or not the AB meets (fully or otherwise) the APLAC MRA criteria are given in section 1 (Summary of Findings) of the evaluation report, and in the letter of recommendation to the MRA Council Chair written by the team leader. Based on the analysis in Step 2, the MRA Council delegate should confirm that the conclusions are supported by the evidence.

Step 4: Establishing whether the team's recommendations are supported by the conclusions

The evaluation team makes recommendations to the MRA Council on whether signatory status of the AB in the MRA should be granted or continued, the interval before the next evaluation, and any other follow-up actions. The MRA Council delegate should establish whether such recommendations are supported by the conclusions of the evaluation team, as reviewed in Step 3.

Evaluation Report Review Checklist

Activities	Yes/No	Remark
<i>Step 1. Establishing whether the findings are reliable</i>		
With reference to the evaluation schedule, was sufficient time allocated to different evaluation activities (team meetings, AB office evaluation, assessment witnessing, exit briefings)?		
Was the number and type of assessments witnessed appropriate to the range of accreditation activities covered by the AB's (proposed) MRA recognition?		
Were the major and/or critical fields of activity subject to appropriate witnessing?		
Does the evaluation report (primarily Sections 4 and 5) contain sufficient evidence that the evaluation team has conducted an evaluation of the AB against the criteria to sufficient depth?		
Were the findings (Non-conformities and Concerns) detailed in Appendix 1 of the evaluation report supported by objective evidence (detailed either with the finding or in the main body of the report)?		
Based on the evidence, <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Were the findings correctly classified in accordance with the definitions in APLAC MR 001? 2. Were they correctly referenced against the MRA criteria? 3. Were these references valid? 4. Where necessary, was the interpretation of criteria adequately explained? 		

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Activities	Yes/No	Remark
<i>Step 2. Establishing whether the actions taken by the AB to address the findings are effective</i>		
Has the AB accepted the findings?		
In the case of nonconformities, Has the AB identified the root cause? Has the AB fully addressed the nonconformity, or as fully as is possible?		
In cases where time is required to fully address the root causes of nonconformities: Has sufficient progress been made? Has a reasonable timeframe for completion been defined?.		
In the case of concerns Has the AB identified the root cause? Has the AB defined a reasonable action plan to address the identified issue?		
Has the evaluation team evaluated the corrective actions and response from the AB in sufficient detail?		
Is the outcome of this examination (as conveyed to the AB) acceptable? When drawing conclusions on the acceptability of the outcome, the MRA Council delegate should recognise that (s)he may not have full knowledge of the supporting evidence provided by the AB. The MRA Council delegate should therefore seek clarification during the Council meeting before drawing a conclusion.		
<i>Step 3. Establishing whether the conclusions are substantiated by the findings</i>		
Has the report in its entirety provided sufficient evidence to support the conclusions and recommendations of the team? The scope and nature of any or all of the findings and the corrective actions taken by the AB should be taken into consideration.		
Has the evaluation provided adequate evidence that the CABs accredited by the AB are technically competent and capable of being recognised under the MRA?		

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Activities	Yes/No	Remark
<i>Step 4. Establishing whether the team's recommendations are substantiated by the conclusions</i>		
Is the recommendation of the team with regard to entry/continuation in the MRA consistent with the conclusions made by the team and acceptable to the MRA Council?		
<p>Does the recommendation of the team with regard to the re-evaluation time frame reflect the current status of the AB? Issues to consider include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The nature of the findings from the evaluation and the status of their closure. • The maturity of the AB's accreditation programs (proposed to be) covered by the MRA. • The relative stability of the AB • Whether the AB and its accredited CABs pose a risk to the MRA. • The precedents established by the Council when deliberating similar cases in the past. 		