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Dossier: IBE-BVI implements the new ISO 17025

At the end of November 2017 the new ISO 17025 was published.

The latter determines general requirements for the standards of competence in test and calibration labs and is used as an international reference.

The standard was first published in 1999 and was last revised in 2005.

The updated ISO 17025: 2017 takes into account the current modi operandi within contemporary labs and replaces all previous versions.

Main changes

Both structurally and content-wise a number of changes were introduced:

- The scope was revised to include all lab activities in order to include all tests, calibrations and the corresponding sampling
- The chapters in the standard are aligned with the other existing standards for conformity assessment (ISO 17000 series)
- The emphasis lays on the results of a process instead of detailed description of tasks and steps (process approach)
- In accordance with the increasing importance of digitalization in the lab, the standard includes a separate part regarding information technology. Data integrity and data quality are hereby important aspects
- A new chapter regarding 'risk-based thinking' was included in accordance with the ISO 9001:2015 and most of the other standards of the ISO 17000 series. Impartiality and confidentiality have to be guaranteed and risks for unwanted influence have to be taken into account

Implementation

In order to fulfill the ISO 17025 standard, a lab has to dispose of a functional quality system and it has to be able to guarantee the quality of the results.

Belgian labs enforcing the ISO 17025, have to undergo an internal audit via BELAC (the Belgian accreditation system) in order to receive an official certificate.

The European and international accreditation organisations (EA and ILAC) impose this renewed standard on the activity of all accredited labs within 3 years following the date of publication of the ISO 17025:2017. From December 1st 2020 the accreditation according to ISO 17025:2005 is thus no longer valid.

ISO 17025:2017 at IBE-BVI

Currently IBE-BVI is busy working out the implementation of the renewed standard. In September 2018 IBE-BVI will still be audited by BELAC for conformity to the ISO 17025:2005, but from December 2019 the audit will already be adjusted to the ISO 17025:2017.

In that way IBE-BVI will definitely be ready in a timely manner for the implementation of the new ISO 17025 so that the quality will be guaranteed.



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