

GLOBAL ACCREDITATION
COOPERATION INCORPORATED
LOGO

PERMANENT COMMITTEES AND SUBORDINATE GROUPS

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FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information on this document or other Global Accreditation Cooperation Incorporated documents, contact the Global Accreditation Cooperation Incorporated Secretariat.

Email: secretariat@global-accreditation.nz

Phone: +1 (571) 569-2614

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose

This document defines the terms of reference for Global Accreditation Cooperation Incorporated's permanent committees and subordinate groups, outlining their composition, powers, functions and procedures to enable transparency and effective management.

1.2 Scope

This document applies to all Global Accreditation Cooperation Incorporated permanent committees and subordinate groups. It does not apply to the Executive Committee or to the Appeals Board whose terms of reference are defined elsewhere.

2. GLOBAL ACCREDITATION COOPERATION INCORPORATED COMMITTEES AND SUBORDINATE GROUPS

- 2.1 As authorised by the Global Accreditation Cooperation Incorporated Constitution (Global Accreditation Cooperation Incorporated-GOV-001), the General Assembly may establish committees or other groups as deemed necessary to undertake the operations of Global Accreditation Cooperation Incorporated and to implement the purposes and objectives of Global Accreditation Cooperation Incorporated. The organisational structure of Global Accreditation Cooperation Incorporated is defined in the Global Accreditation Cooperation Incorporated General Rules (Global Accreditation Cooperation Incorporated-GOV-002).
- 2.2 Global Accreditation Cooperation Incorporated committees are considered to be permanent committees.
- 2.3 Committees may establish subordinate groups (such as sub-committees) for specific areas of conformity assessment activities, and both may establish working groups, task forces, etc. to deal with specific questions within the terms of reference of the committee or subordinate group. Sub-committees and working groups may be permanent or temporary.
- 2.4 All committees and subordinate groups shall have defined terms of reference. As specified in the General Rules (Global Accreditation Cooperation Incorporated-GOV-002), terms of reference of permanent committees and any revisions shall be approved by the General Assembly; the initial terms of reference and any revisions for a sub-committee shall be approved by the Executive Committee on the recommendation from the respective parent committee. The parent committee shall decide if terms of reference are required for any ad-hoc working group or task force.

3. PERMANENT COMMITTEES

3.1 Membership

Membership of committees is defined in the General Rules (Global Accreditation Cooperation Incorporated-GOV-002) as follows:

- 3.1.1 Each Member of Global Accreditation Cooperation Incorporated is entitled to nominate a representative for each of the committees established by the General Assembly except for the Arrangement Committee where only Full Members may be represented, and the Stakeholder Committee where only Stakeholder Members may be represented.

- 3.1.2 A Member's nominated representative to committees may be accompanied by a reasonable number of other persons nominated by the Member.
- 3.1.3 Nominated representatives for a committee shall be admitted to meetings of the Committee.
- 3.1.4 Members are expected to attend all meetings and actively contribute to the work of the Committee.

3.2 Committee Chair and Vice-Chair

- 3.2.1 As specified in the General Rules (Global Accreditation Cooperation Incorporated-GOV-002), each committee will have a chair and a vice-chair elected by the General Assembly. The Arrangement Committee shall have a chair and vice-chair elected from the Full Members. The Stakeholder Committee shall have a chair and vice-chair elected from the Stakeholder Members. Other committees shall have chairs elected from Full Members and vice-chairs elected from Full or Stakeholder Members. Where possible, chairs shall come from different economies.
- 3.2.2 Chairs and vice-chairs serve three-year terms, with a maximum of two consecutive terms if re-elected.

3.3 Observers

- 3.3.1 As specified in the General Rules (Global Accreditation Cooperation Incorporated-GOV-002), Global Accreditation Cooperation Incorporated Members may participate as observers in committees as follows:
 - 3.3.1.1 Regional Cooperation Body Members and Associate Members may participate as observers in the Arrangement Committee.
 - 3.3.1.2 The Stakeholder Committee may send up to three observers to the Arrangement Committee.
 - 3.3.1.3 Full Members, Associate Members, and Regional Cooperation Body Members may send up to three (3) observers in total to the Stakeholder Committee.
- 3.3.2 Observers may attend committee meetings with prior approval from the committee chair.
- 3.3.3 Committee chairs may invite other experts to participate in the work of a committee if considered appropriate by the committee.

3.4 Quorum

- 3.4.1 The quorum for a committee meeting is based upon the number of nominated representatives of the committee in the meeting.
- 3.4.2 The minimum number of nominated representatives that must be present in person or by proxy at a committee meeting to make the proceedings of that meeting valid is the nearest whole number above fifty percent (50%) of the total number of nominated representatives registered with the Secretariat for that committee.

3.5 Voting

- 3.5.1 Decisions shall generally be made by consensus.
- 3.5.2 A formal vote may be conducted if consensus cannot be achieved.
- 3.5.3 Unless otherwise defined in individual committee terms of reference, voting in meetings, including virtual meetings, is limited to nominated representatives present at the meeting. However, a nominated representative may authorise another participating committee member to vote on its behalf, provided the request is submitted in writing and acknowledged at the start of the meeting. A participating committee member may hold a maximum of two proxies during any given meeting.
- 3.5.4 Each nominated representative from a Global Accreditation Cooperation Incorporated Full Member or Stakeholder Member has one (1) vote. Associate Members, Regional Accreditation Group Members and observers are not eligible to vote.
- 3.5.5 Unless otherwise defined in individual committee terms of reference, the approval of a vote needs a minimum of fifty percent (50%) of the “Yes” and “No” votes cast by those nominated representatives voting in person or by proxy or, if permitted by the chair, by electronic means to be affirmative. In the event of an equality of “Yes” and “No” votes, the chair shall have a casting vote.
- 3.5.6 The chair of the permanent committee may cast a vote if representing a voting member and exercising that member’s single vote as its nominated representative.
- 3.5.7 If a committee member has more than one representative present at a meeting, only one individual shall cast the member’s vote.

3.6 Reporting

The Chairs of permanent committees are responsible for reporting their respective committee’s activities, progress, and key outcomes to the General Assembly and the Executive Committee as required.

3.7 Documentation and Information Sharing

- 3.7.1 All registered members of a permanent committee shall receive all relevant documentation prepared for the committee.
- 3.7.2 Members have the right to submit written contributions and/or proposals directly to the chair of the permanent committee.
- 3.7.3 Observers are not entitled to receive meeting documents, communications, or records unless explicitly authorised by the committee chair.
- 3.7.4 Meeting documents, records, and reports shall be distributed to all members of the relevant permanent committee in a timely manner to ensure transparency and enable informed participation.

4. SUBORDINATE GROUPS

4.1 Membership

- 4.1.1 The permanent committee that establishes the subordinate group shall determine the membership.
- 4.1.2 Subordinate groups shall generally consist of active working members who are expected to attend all meetings and actively contribute to the work of the group.
- 4.1.3 Members of subordinate groups established to deal with a particular task or issue are appointed for the duration of the specific project under consideration.

4.2 Chair/Convenor

- 4.2.1 The permanent committee establishing a subordinate group shall appoint the convener(s) for an initial term of three (3) years.
- 4.2.2 If multiple conveners are appointed, one shall be from a Full Member and the other from a Stakeholder Member, where appropriate.
- 4.2.3 At the end of the initial term, the permanent committee may reappoint the current convener, if willing, for a second three-year term.
- 4.2.4 The maximum service period for a subordinate group convener is two (2) consecutive terms, totalling six (6) years.
- 4.2.5 After completing the maximum service period or resigning, the individual shall not be eligible for reappointment, except at the discretion of the permanent committee chair if no other nominations are received.
- 4.2.6 If a convener position becomes vacant, a replacement shall be appointed under the same provisions.
- 4.2.7 The subordinate group chair/convenor is responsible for the administration of the group including:
 - 4.2.7.1 Membership Management: Keeping the membership list up to date.
 - 4.2.7.2 Task Execution: Carrying out activities assigned by the permanent committee or as specified in the group's terms of reference.
 - 4.2.7.3 Planning and Scheduling: Organising activities and meetings, including assigning tasks to members.
 - 4.2.7.4 Meeting Organisation: Preparing meeting agendas, taking minutes, and maintaining a task action list. Ensuring meeting documents, records, and reports are distributed to all members in a timely manner.
 - 4.2.7.5 Reporting: Providing regular updates and reports to the parent permanent committee.

4.3 Observers

- 4.3.1 Observers may attend subordinate group meetings with prior approval from the chair/convener.
- 4.3.2 Subordinate group chairs/conveners may invite other experts to participate in the work of a subordinate group if considered appropriate by the subordinate group.

4.4 Quorum

- 4.4.1 The quorum for a subordinate group meeting is based on the number of nominated representatives of the group in the meeting.
- 4.4.2 The minimum number of nominated representatives that must be present in person at a meeting to make the proceedings of that meeting valid is the nearest whole number above fifty percent (50%) of the total number of nominated representatives registered with the group's parent permanent committee.

4.5 Voting

- 4.5.1 Decisions shall generally be made by consensus.
- 4.5.2 A formal vote may be conducted if consensus cannot be achieved.
- 4.5.3 Voting in meetings, including virtual meetings, is limited to nominated representatives present at the meeting.
- 4.5.4 Each nominated representative from a Global Accreditation Cooperation Incorporated Full Member or Stakeholder Member has one (1) vote. Associate Members, Regional Accreditation Group Members and observers are not eligible to vote.
- 4.5.5 Proxy votes are not permitted.
- 4.5.6 The chair/convener may cast a vote if representing a voting member and exercising that member's single vote as its nominated representative.
- 4.5.7 If a member has more than one representative present at a meeting, only one individual shall cast the member's vote.

5. OPERATION OF PERMANENT COMMITTEES AND SUBORDINATE GROUPS

- 5.1 Each permanent committee or subordinate group shall primarily conduct its work via correspondence, email, or virtual meetings. Correspondence shall be shared with all members of the committee or subordinate group on each occasion. Members may submit written contributions or proposals to the chair/convener at any time.
- 5.2 The chair of a permanent committee or the convener of a subordinate group may call a meeting at their discretion.

- 5.3 The chair of a permanent committee or the convener of a subordinate group shall ensure that all members have equitable opportunities to participate fully in the work of their respective Committees or Groups.
- 5.4 The chair or the convener of a committee or subordinate group shall request participants state any potential conflict of interest with matters on the agenda of a meeting and may ask persons with identified conflicts or potential conflicts of interest to leave for particular agenda items.
- 5.5 During every meeting, the chair or convener shall take particular care to ensure that members whose native language is not English clearly understand the issues under discussion and are encouraged to contribute actively to the deliberations.

5.6 Work Plans

- 5.6.1 Each Permanent Committee shall develop and maintain a work plan aligned with Global Accreditation Cooperation Incorporated's Strategic Plan. The work plan shall outline specific committee activities, including a scheduled review of relevant Global Accreditation Cooperation Incorporated documents under the committee's responsibility.
- 5.6.2 Each subordinate group shall develop and maintain a work plan aligned with its parent permanent committee work plan.

5.7 Secretariat Support

- 5.7.1 The Global Accreditation Cooperation Incorporated Secretariat shall provide secretariat resources to each of Global Accreditation Cooperation Incorporated's Permanent Committees, but not to sub-committees or working groups except for the Arrangement Management Committee (AMC) for which the Global Accreditation Cooperation Incorporated Secretariat will provide the Secretariat.
- 5.7.2 The Convener of each subordinate group shall normally provide secretariat services for their respective group.
- 5.7.3 The secretariat of each permanent committee and of the AMC shall:
 - 5.7.3.1 Distribute a draft agenda at least 10 days before each meeting unless otherwise agreed by the committee members. The agenda shall be confirmed at the beginning of each meeting and may be subject to changes.
 - 5.7.3.2 Distribute draft minutes within 2 months after each meeting.
 - 5.7.3.3 Manage the editing, communication, printing, and distribution of relevant documentation to all committee members.
 - 5.7.3.4 Ensure timely materials delivery to support informed participation in committee activities.
 - 5.7.3.5 For permanent committees, provide copies of all relevant documents for consideration at Global Accreditation Cooperation Incorporated Annual Meetings.
 - 5.7.3.6 Prepare a concise record of meeting decisions and key outcomes, distributing it to all committee members. Any disagreements from members with the record must be promptly reported to the chair/convenor for resolution.

5.7.3.7 The secretariats of each permanent committee shall keep an up-to-date register of the members of their subordinate groups.

6. TERMS OF REFERENCE OF COMMITTEES AND SUBORDINATE GROUPS

6.1 Specific terms of reference of the Global Accreditation Cooperation Incorporated permanent committees and subordinate groups are given in the following separate Global Accreditation Cooperation Incorporated documents:

Global Accreditation Cooperation Incorporated-GOV-009: Arrangement Committee

Global Accreditation Cooperation Incorporated-GOV-011: Accreditation Committee

Global Accreditation Cooperation Incorporated-GOV-012: Technical Committee 1

Global Accreditation Cooperation Incorporated-GOV-013: Technical Committee 2

Global Accreditation Cooperation Incorporated-GOV-014: Technical Committee 3

Global Accreditation Cooperation Incorporated-GOV-015: Stakeholder Committee

Global Accreditation Cooperation Incorporated-GOV-016: Development Support Committee

Global Accreditation Cooperation Incorporated-GOV-017: Communication Committee

Global Accreditation Cooperation Incorporated-GOV-019: Financial Audit Committee

6.2 Terms of reference of permanent subordinate groups are given in the following documents:

Global Accreditation Cooperation Incorporated-GOV-010: Arrangement Management Committee (a sub-committee of the Arrangement Committee)

Global Accreditation Cooperation Incorporated-GOV-018: Permanent Working Group on MRA Documentation (a permanent working group of the Executive Committee)

7. AMENDMENT TABLE

Section	Previous Version	Summary Of Changes
All	-	New issue of the establishment of Global Accreditation Cooperation Incorporated