

## Eurachem Newsletter 16 Summer 1999

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## Happy Birthday, EURACHEM!

On 17 June 1999, EURACHEM celebrated its 10th Anniversary in Helsinki, Finland. The event was attended by numerous guests representing partner and liaison organisations from all around the world. Looking back on 10 years of commitment to quality in Analytical Chemistry and development of an infrastructure for chemical measurement in Europe, it was emphasized that, judged from the number of member states and the impressive technical work done, EURACHEM has really become a focus for Analytical Chemistry.



*A good occasion for gathering former, present and future EURACHEM chairs in one photo: From left to right Rob Kaarls, Ed de Leer, Maire Walsh, Alex Williams, Paul de Bièvre, Veikko Kommpa, and Bernard King at the Marina Congress Centre.*

Frontrunner of the event was the 3rd EURACHEM Workshop on efficient methodology for the evaluation of uncertainty in Analytical Chemistry which took place 14 - 15 June in the Marina Congress Centre Helsinki. During the workshop, a very solid piece of work was presented to the analytical community involved with quality assurance: the draft of the revised EURACHEM Guide "Quantifying Uncertainty in Analytical Measurement". [More about the workshop...](#)

### **Helsinki Beams as EURACHEM Celebrates Anniversary**

Delegates brought fine sunny weather to Helsinki: According to meteorologists, Finland normally enjoys 15 days of sunshine and temperatures above 20 degrees centigrade per year. Heavens were generous, and EURACHEM grabbed 8 of these days one after the other. For all other topics and presents at the jubilee meeting, see comprehensive meeting report inside this issue.

 EURACHEM 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary 

## EURACHEM 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

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### Editorial

Full reports of EURACHEM 's anniversary, detailed summaries of the Full and Executive Committee Meetings and different views on EURACHEM through the ages fill the pages of this newsletter edition. With so much EURACHEM-about-EURACHEM, other events almost fall by the wayside.

Our brand new membership of the Permanent Liaison Group (PLG), for example. This forum has been set up to co-ordinate strategic issues concerning EA and EUROLAB and does now also incorporate EURACHEM. Co-operation between these three 'EEE' partners was already existent at various other levels, and this step was only a logical consequence.

Let's also mention the recent three-year prolongation of the Memorandum of Understanding between EUROLAB and EURACHEM. During a solemn meeting in March, chaired by the new EUROLAB president Prof Horst Czichos, this MoU (dating from 1995) was resigned. The very good relationship was thus confirmed and mutual observer membership formally fixed.

Formal liaisons have also been established between EURACHEM and CITAC, the Co-operation on International Traceability in Analytical Chemistry, and ISO/REMCO, the ISO Committee on Reference Materials. Let me further mention the recent change of the CITAC chair from Alan Squirrell (Australia) to Wolfhard Wegscheider (Austria), who also happens to be member of the EURACHEM Committee.

Anything forgotten? Certainly. But this is admissible – every 10 years of EURACHEM.

Johannes van de Kreeke  
EURACHEM Secretariat

 EURACHEM 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary 

## EURACHEM Towards the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

EURACHEM is a network of organisations in Europe, having the objective of establishing a system for the international traceability of chemical measurement results and the promotion of good quality practices. It provides a forum for the discussion of common problems and for developing an informed and considered approach to both technical and policy issues.

The goals of EURACHEM are to

- promote best practice and develop networks for collaboration
- develop international comparability of chemical measurements
- provide a framework for co-operation in establishing traceability
- establish national EURACHEM groups and provide input to other international organisations
- raise awareness amongst decision makers and develop broadly based education and training.

## Present status

At present, full EURACHEM membership is open to EU and EFTA, other countries may become associate members. It has been recognised that a revision of that regulation is urgently needed, and a decision-making process has been put on the wheels. Currently, 28 countries and the European Commission are EURACHEM members (including associated), most of which have a national mirror organisation. This, in fact, is now a prerequisite to become accepted as a new member.

Most of the technical work is done in working groups. At the moment, EURACHEM comprises 4 WGs: Education and Training, Measurement Uncertainty, Reference Materials, and Proficiency Testing. The last two WGs are joint with EA and EUROLAB.

EURACHEM has active collaboration with various European and international organisations including AOAC Int., CITAC, EUROM II, ILAC and IUPAC. It has been invited into the Permanent Liaison Group of EA and EUROLAB since the last meeting this spring in Espoo, Finland, and continuous discussions are going on about metrology in chemistry with EUROMET. The common goal is collaboration for improving traceability of chemical measurement results, undoubtedly a long-term activity for several international organisations in the beginning of the new century.

## Outlook

Emerging issues of the forthcoming century which should be on the agenda of EURACHEM are:

- Accreditation/Certification - With the new standard ISO 17025 and the revised ISO 9000, analytical laboratories will face new challenges and problems. The European market will grow further by integrating Central and Eastern European countries. Consequently, accreditation will be a key topic for laboratories in these countries. A new understanding of metrology in chemistry will shift the accreditation scope for analytical chemistry labs from testing towards calibration.
- Traceability/Measurement uncertainty - are the vehicles of the standards mentioned above and the keys to global comparability and acceptance of measurement results and laboratory services. Considerable consequences for standardisation, method validation, the producers of reference materials, and organisers of proficiency tests are expected.
- Training/Education - Quality in Analytical Chemistry will become a basic element in the chemistry syllabi at universities and institutes of higher technical education. Globalisation will not keep clear of universities, so teaching material must be harmonised and fit for transnational application. The idea of proficiency testing (with a European Quality Award) will conquer the nowadays still impregnable fortresses of

higher education.

- R&D - The Internet will become the most important source of information and the most important medium for the exchange of data, knowledge and expert material on Analytical Chemistry and QA. Concerted problem-solving efforts will be virtualised in regional or global networks.

EURACHEM has the experts and the organisational flexibility to respond to these challenges, actively participate in and appropriately contribute to the solutions.

Veikko Komppa, EURACHEM Chair

Ed de Leer, EURACHEM Vicechair

 EURACHEM 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary 

## The EURACHEM Story

This history of the first ten years of EURACHEM must by its nature be a personal one, since I have been so closely involved in its creation and development that I would find it very difficult to write it in any other way.

### The Idea is Born July 1987

As UK Government Chemist I felt there was a need for a European forum to discuss QA in analytical chemistry, tentatively called EURO-CHEM, in analogy with EUROMET, which I had initiated a few years earlier. However the role envisaged for EUROCHEM was very different. It is interesting to recall that at the time that EUROMET was set up we considered whether or not to include chemical analysis, but there was little or no support for this, in fact there was quite strong opposition in some quarters.

Together with a colleague Dr Don Packham, who was then a deputy director at LGC, we decided on five basic issues that needed to be addressed. We made numerous visits to laboratories and government agencies throughout Europe during the latter part of 1987 and the first half of 1988. By far most of those whom we consulted said that EUROCHEM was an excellent proposal and should be set up as quickly as possible.

### The first meeting

The first meeting, under the EURO-CHEM banner was held at LGC on 11 October 1988. It is interesting to see that one of the main conclusions was the need to develop a technical analytical measurement infrastructure. Soon after the first meeting Dr Packham retired and Dr Bernard King, who took an immediate interest in EUROCHEM, replaced him. A number of meetings were held in fairly rapid succession, at NMI in Delft in December 1988, where there was a long discussion on traceability. This was followed by a meeting in Geel in April 1989 to discuss the draft terms reference.

### EURACHEM is Created

At Strasbourg in July 1989, it was agreed that the name should be changed to EURACHEM, with the A standing for analytical and that it was now time to declare that EURACHEM had officially come into existence. The first meeting under the new name was held in Frankfurt

in November 1989.

Twelve countries (Austria, Belgium, Ireland, FRG, Finland, France, Italy, The Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, and the UK) and the CEC signed the MoU at the meeting on 26 June 1990 in Frankfurt. At the following meeting on 4 October 1990 in Paris, Denmark and Switzerland signed and Portugal and Luxembourg signed in December. So by the end of 1990 the membership was sixteen countries.

## **EURACHEM's work programme**

Most of the issues of interest to EURACHEM have been addressed by working groups, which have prepared discussion papers, guides, workshops and seminars. These include workshops on Education and Training WG in Strasbourg (1991) and at GKSS in Germany (1998), a series of work-shops on Proficiency Testing in The Netherlands (1993, 1995), the workshop "Comparability and Traceability" in Geel, Belgium (1992) and a second one held jointly with CITAC in The Netherlands in 1996.

The Measurement Uncertainty WG held its first workshop in Graz, Austria (1994) and published the guide "Quantifying Uncertainty in Analytical Chemistry" in May 1995. A second workshop was held at BAM, Berlin (1997) and the third workshop this year in Helsinki.

Other WGs (including joint ones with WELAC and CITAC) produced guides for the interpretation of quality assurance standards, accreditation for microbiological laboratories, QA in non-routine analysis, and the fitness for purpose of analytical methods.

## **What has been achieved?**

We have clearly established a European wide forum for the discussion of all aspects of QA in analytical chemistry. But we have done much more than that. We have made considerable progress, through our guides and workshops, in solving the underlying problems involved. Also through initiatives taken by myself and Bernard King in early 1990 we now have the provision of a fundamental base for analytical measurement as an established programme of the CIPM and the issues are now being discussed internationally through CITAC. Also thanks to the efforts of Helmut Günzler and Paul de Bièvre we have the journal ACQUAL where many of the articles published relate directly to issues identified by EURACHEM.

I think that we can be really proud of what has been achieved in the first ten years.

Alex Williams

## **EURACHEM Officials**

### **Originators**

Alex Williams  
July 1987

Dr Don Packham

July 1987 - July 1988

**Chairpersons**

Dr Robert Kaarls

July 1989 - March 1991

Dr Bernard King

March 1991 - November 1993

Dr Paul de Bièvre

November 1993 - November 1995

Dr Maire Walsh

November 1995 - November 1997

Dr Veikko Komppa

November 1997 -

**Secretary**

Dr Bernard King

July 1989 - September 1994

Dr John Mason

September 1994 - November 1997

Dr Werner Hässelbarth

November 1997 -

 EURACHEM 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary 

## EURACHEM 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Jubilee Meeting

After the successful 3rd EURACHEM workshop on measurement uncertainty was accomplished, EURACHEM executive and full committee members began their working sessions on Wednesday. The actual jubilee event started on Thursday, 17 June 1999. As well as the full committee meeting, it was attended by a number of partner organisations' representatives and invitees. It was both an honour and a pleasure for EURACHEM receiving official and personal congratulations from the president of EUROLAB, Prof Dr Horst Czichos, BAM Berlin, Germany, the European Commission, DG XII, represented by Eddie A Maier, or Alan Squirrel, NATA, Australia, representing CITAC on this festive occasion.

Although Helsinki authorities were busy these days hosting american and russian top leaders for the Kosovo post-war summit on peace force allocation, they couldn't let the EURACHEM event pass by without recognition. During an evening reception on

Wednesday, EURACHEM delegates and invitees were welcomed by Martin Meinander, Deputy Mayor of the City of Helsinki.



*Helsinki Deputy Mayor M Meinander (right) welcomes EURACHEM delegates and guests during a reception at the Old Court House*

The morning session of the jubilee meeting was dominated by an instructive summary of what has been achieved during these ten years of EURACHEM:

**Alex Williams**, protagonist and originator of the organisation, nowadays chairman of the busiest EURACHEM working group on measurement uncertainty, took the audience for a ride through the early days of EURACHEM. It was quite interesting to learn that the foundation date of this (amongst other) measurement-uncertainty oriented organisation is also shrouded in uncertainty: Whether the meeting which decided about the official name of the organisation or the signing of the MoU by the 12 initial member states should be considered as the birth of EURACHEM is a matter of taste ([see more about EURACHEM history...](#)).

**Veikko Komppa**, the present EURACHEM chair, summarised the actual status of the organisation with respect to the goals and tasks, the membership, internal structure, the wide spectrum of international links and liaisons, and communication and dissemination issues: During the past 10 years, the number of member states went up from to 12 to currently 28 (including 10 associate members). So, the EURACHEM quality commitment reaches the most distant nooks of the continent. It has interfaces and

"When we look back on the past 10 years, we see a lot of progress in the awareness about the need for better foundations for our reporting of chemical measurements. ...It is therefore a pleasure and a duty to commend EURACHEM and in particular its

liaisons with more than 10 European and world-wide organisations including AOAC International, CITAC, EUROLAB, IUPAC and EA.

The technical work done so far is impressive. 11 successful workshops have been organised, and 6 guides published which address different key issues in the analytical laboratory. The over-all dissemination of these guides tops 4600 copies disregarding the downloads of the latest three guides available free of charge from the EURACHEM web site. Besides the on-line versions of these guides, the web site contains more valuable information for the analytical community and is actually visited 330 times per day on average ([read more about EURACHEM facing the next century](#)).

founding members, for having generated and achieved such an awareness."

Prof Dr Manfred Grasserbauer  
Director IRMM-JRC-EC

**Maire Walsh** went more into details of the EURACHEM technical work and appreciated the guides published so far:

- Accreditation for Chemical Laboratories
- Quantifying Uncertainty in Analytical Measurement (currently under revision)
- Accreditation for Microbiological Laboratories (joint with EA)
- The Fitness for Purpose of Analytical Methods
- Harmonised Guidelines for the Use of Recovery Information in Analytical Measurements (joint with AOAC Int., IUPAC, ISO)
- Quality Assurance for R&D and Non-routine Analysis (joint with CITAC)



*Maire Walsh during her talk on EURACHEM technical work*

During the afternoon session, invited guests acknowledged EURACHEM's anniversary and

presented views and opinions on both the European and international scene of chemical analysis and future trends in chemical metrology.

For the European Commission, DG XII, **Eddie A Maier** reported on recent strategies of the EU for supporting research activities in the field of measurement and testing. It was outlined that with regard to a basic problem-solving approach of the 5<sup>th</sup> framework programme, all applied measurements will be supported within the respective research programmes and key actions. Measurement and testing activities supporting industrial needs including the development of new instruments, as well as generic R&D activities on metrology and quality assurance tools will be concentrated upon thematic programme # 3 - Measurement and Testing Generic Activity.



*Eddie A Maier gave an overview on quality assurance issues in the 5<sup>th</sup> EU framework programme*

For CITAC, **Alan Squirrell** focused on the international scene of chemical analysis emphasizing the need for traceable and comparable chemical measurements. "As we move into the new millennium the time is right for analytical chemists to lift their game," he said. "They should demonstrate to their customers that metrology in chemistry not only exists but can be realised at the working level. Traceability, trueness, transparency and trust are the main ingredients."

Congratulations also reached EURACHEM from overseas: **Hratch G Semerjian** from the NIST Gaithersburg, U.S.A., gave a talk on trends in chemical metrology in the United States developing a vision of global comparability through traceable measurements based on networks of metrological intercomparisons. Undoubtedly, EURACHEM has become part of this process and will play an important role in achieving this goal.



*Congratulations from overseas: Hratch G Semerjian (NIST) on future trends in chemical metrology*

Anniversaries are a good occasion to acknowledge the activity and the commitment of all those who have contributed to make EURACHEM what it is today. This includes a word of gratitude for Veikko Komppa and his local organising team who have made EURACHEM's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary such a memorable event.

Wolfram Bremser  
EURACHEM Secretariat

EURACHEM 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

## EURACHEM Executive and Full Committee Meeting Report

On invitation from EURACHEM-Finland, EURACHEM's Annual Meeting was held on 15-19 June 1999 in Helsinki at the Marina Congress Centre. This year's programme included meetings of the Executive Committee, the Full Committee, the Working Groups on Measurement Uncertainty and on Education & Training, and a concluding boat tour to Tallinn.



*Discussing strategies and policies for the next millennium: EURACHEM delegates during the Full Committee Meeting in Helsinki*

The Full Committee meeting was attended by about 50 registered participants from 24 countries, predominantly from Europe, but with a noticeable transcontinental flavour from Australia and the United States. Invitees included Hratch Semerjian, Vice President of NIST, USA, Eddie Maier, representing the European Commission, Alan Squirrell from NATA, Australia and past Chairman of CITAC, and Horst Czichos, the new EUROLAB President.

### **New on the Committee**

The EURACHEM Executive Committee comprises the three chairpersons (Chair, Past Chair and Vice Chair), the convenors of EURACHEM Working Groups, six so-called Additional Members, and the secretary. The Additional Members are elected from among, and by, the Full Committee for a three-years term of service which may be renewed. This year four of these seats became vacant, and elections were held for them. The new Executive Committee members elected are: Ernst Halder from Lonza AG, Switzerland, Jozsef Hlavay from University of Veszprem, Hungary, Adolf Zschunke from BAM, Germany. In addition, Robert Kaarls from NMI, Netherlands was re-elected. As another change, Bernd Wenclawiak from University of Siegen, Germany entered the Executive Committee as the new convenor of the Education & Training Working Group. The retiring members, Maria Del Monte from NCRM, Italy, Alain Marschal from LNE, France, Bernd Neidhart from GKSS, Germany and Werner Steck from BASF, Germany were released with due thanks for their commitment.

The EURACHEM Full Committee had the pleasure to welcome three new representatives: John Green from BP Amoco, United Kingdom, Fehmi Ficicioglu and Fatma Sogut, both from TUBITAK-UME, Turkey. Also EURACHEM-Spain had nominated a new representative, Ramon Capellades from General Laboratories for Testing and Investigations,

Bellaterra, who unfortunately could not attend. However, he received indulgence from the secretariat through contributing an article for this newsletter (see p. 10).

## New Guides

Currently EURACHEM has two new guides in the pipeline:

- The revised version of the guide on measurement uncertainty in chemical analysis, entitled „Quantifying Uncertainty in Analytical Measurement“. Extensive revision of the first edition (1995) was started after the Berlin Uncertainty Workshop, 29-30 September 1997 and completed in May 1999, after only 18 months (!), ready for discussion at the Helsinki Uncertainty Workshop, 14-15 June 1999. The Measurement Uncertainty Working Group plans to finalize the draft during the next months and publish the 2nd edition by the end of the year. The guide will then be made available as a hardcopy version and an electronic version on the EURA-CHEM Homepage.
- A guidance document on the selection, use and interpretation of proficiency testing (PT) schemes by laboratories. This document was prepared by a EURACHEM-Netherlands task group and LGC experts and is currently under consideration in the Joint EA-EUROLAB-EURACHEM Working Group „Proficiency Testing for Use in Accreditation Procedures“ (EEE-PT).

The two new EURACHEM guides published late last year (see Newsletter 15) as well as the IUPAC Recovery Guidelines (where EURACHEM contributed) are available on the Internet, permitting free downloading. This may well have added to the popularity of the EURACHEM Homepage, which has been visited 330 times per day on the average in the first half of this year.

## Forthcoming Workshops

The current programme of workshops in preparation, organized or co-organized by EURACHEM includes:

- Status of Traceability in Chemical Measurement (joint with AOAC Int. and IRMM), Bratislava, 6-8 September 1999.
- Quality Assurance of Computer Systems in Laboratories (joint with EUROLAB), Berlin, 30 September - 1 October 1999
- Reference Materials for Technologies in the New Millennium (joint with EUROLAB, NIST, IRMM and BAM), Berlin, 22-23 May 2000
- Proficiency Testing (joint with EQALM), Boras, 25-26 September 2000

In addition, plans are under way for a workshop on sampling in Delft, 2001 and a „thinkshop“ in Geel, 2002.

## Cooperations and Liaisons

The Committee reviewed the status of EURACHEM's cooperations and liaisons with European and international organizations whose activities impinge on the Analytical Chemistry community, in particular concerning quality and conformity assessment issues. Items currently under consideration included:

- Cooperation with EUROMET concerning traceability in chemical measurement

Apart from the EURACHEM-affiliated IMEP programme, EURACHEM so far has refrained

from putting up an own programme of interlaboratory comparisons. Instead, co-operation has been sought with EUROMET, who operate an interlaboratory comparison programme in the subject field „Amount of Substance“, with the aim to establish a joint European working group and a harmonized work programme on traceability in chemistry. In spite of general agreement, practical progress has been rather slow so far, but EURACHEM is determined to continue negotiations. In this connection, the recent agreement between BAM and PTB to share responsibility for the provision of national standards for chemical measurements (see Newsletter 15) was welcomed as a model for co-operation on an eye-to-eye basis between national metrology institutes and national chemical laboratories which should be applicable in other countries.

- Memorandum of Understanding with EUROLAB

Co-operation between EURACHEM and EUROLAB has always been very intense, on the national level, where often both are part of the same organisation, as well as on the European level, where formal liaisons were already established in January 1995 by signing a MoU. On the occasion of a chairs' meeting in Berlin on 18 March 1999, this MoU was renewed for another period of three years, and mutual observer membership was agreed. At the Full Committee meeting, the new EUROLAB President, Horst Czichos, explained EURO-LAB's mission as laboratory and conformity assessment services supporting European technology and trade and presented a brief overview of major strategic items. He emphasized the importance of co-operation between EUROLAB as a horizontal organisation with sectorial organisations such as EURACHEM.

- EA-common working groups, EA Advisory Board

Co-operation with EA has developed considerably since the 1998 Annual Meeting. In autumn 1998 the EA Advisory Board was established, where EURACHEM shares a seat with EUROMET, currently held by Werner Steck (see Newsletter 15). In spring 1999 EURACHEM was invited to take a seat in the EA-EURO-LAB Permanent Liaison Group (PLG) and will be represented by Vice Chair Ed de Leer. With major input from EURACHEM, the terms of reference, rules of procedure and work programme of the EA-EURO-LAB-EURACHEM WGs on reference materials (EEE-RM) and proficiency testing (EEE-PT) were revised. Recently for both groups new convenors were appointed: Adolf Zschunke from BAM, Germany (EEE-RM) and Leopoldo Cortez from IPQ, Portugal (EEE-PT).

- Liaisons with CITAC and ISO/REMCO

Formal liaisons are now established with CITAC, the Co-operation on International Traceability in Analytical Chemistry (Chair: Wolfhard Wegscheider, University of Leoben, Austria) and ISO/REMCO, the ISO Council Committee on Reference Materials (Chair: Harry Klich, BAM, Germany), implying mutual information and representation on committee meetings.

## **Focal technical items**

Traceability in chemical measurements was again among the key items on the Full Committee agenda. Among others, Werner Hässelbarth presented a draft CITAC document on practical traceability procedures, inviting comments from EURACHEM Committee members. On behalf of CITAC, Wolfhard Wegscheider offered to carry this document on as a joint project. The Executive Committee decided to establish a Traceability Task Group, joint with CITAC,

to develop a strategy concerning the implementation of traceability in analytical chemistry, and to coordinate preparation of technical documents.

Validation of analytical methods also received major attention, a.o. through a presentation of Ales Fajgelj of recent activities of the IUPAC Interdivisional Working Party for Harmonization of Quality Assurance Schemes for Analytical Laboratories (see Newsletter 14). The IUPAC WP is currently preparing a guidance document on in-house method validation, among others based on the recent EURACHEM Validation Guide, which will be discussed at a workshop on principles and practices of method validation to be held in Budapest, 4-6 November 1999. EURA-CHEM's input was cordially invited.

## **Constitutional issues**

The EURACHEM Committee has resolved to undertake major changes of EURACHEM's constitution, as laid down in the EURACHEM Memorandum of Understanding. The main item will be a revision of membership conditions, aiming at an extension of full membership to present associate members. Revision of the MoU will be undertaken by the Executive Committee and submitted to the Full Committee for approval at the 2000 Annual meeting. This happens to almost coincide with the 10th anniversary of the EURACHEM MoU which was signed on 26 June 1990 in Frankfurt.

## **Closure**

The meeting was closed by thanking Veikko Komppa and his organising team for the generous hospitality and perfect arrangements. The 2000 Annual Meeting will be hosted by EURACHEM-Germany, in conjunction with a EURACHEM Symposium on Reference Materials, to be held on 22-26 May 2000 in Berlin.

Werner Hässelbarth  
EURACHEM Secretary



## **Workshop Report**

# **3<sup>rd</sup> EURACHEM MU Workshop Report**



*Tuesday morning session chaired by Marc Salit, NIST (on the right): Ed de Leer, NMI, presenting the final draft of ISO 17025*

EURACHEM in association with IAEA held a Workshop on “Efficient Methodology for the Evaluation of Uncertainty in Analytical Chemistry - Implementing the ISO Guide” at Helsinki, on 14 & 15 June 1999 as part of the 10th Anniversary celebrations.

This third EURACHEM workshop was held in glorious weather in a magnificent conference centre overlooking Helsinki harbour. All of the arrangements for the workshop and the 10th Anniversary Celebrations had been organised by Veikko Komppa, who had gone to endless trouble to ensure that not only the workshop ran smoothly but also to see that we enjoyed our leisure time as well. The workshop was very well attended with over 170 participants from 41 countries and some 80 of the participants attended the training course that was held the day before the workshop. The participants were sent copies of the revised Guide by e-mail and it was available from the EURACHEM website. This enabled them to have time to study the Guide before the meeting.

### **Revised EURACHEM MU Guide**

The main objective of the workshop was to discuss the draft of the revised Eurachem Guide and the draft of the guide on evaluation of uncertainty and examples of uncertainty evaluation in nuclear and related analytical techniques (NAT) being published by IAEA.

Alex Williams, Chairman of the joint EURACHEM/ CITAC uncertainty WG and Peter De Regge from the IAEA opened the meeting with a description of the main points in the guides. This was followed by lectures by Matthias Roesslein of EMPA and Steve Ellison of LGC on procedures given in the Guide for the evaluation of uncertainty.

### **ISO 17025 and the MU Guide**

On the second day Ed de Leer of NMI gave a lecture on the requirements in the revised ISO 17025 Standard, for evaluating uncertainty and establishing traceability.

Ms Carroll Croarkin, NIST described the plans for ISO/ TC 69 documents that would provide statistical procedures for uncertainty evaluation and Dr Jean Pauwels, IRMM covered the evaluation of uncertainty on reference materials (a copy of the transparencies of this talk may be downloaded from the EURACHEM web site).

### **Working Groups Encourage Guide Application**

On the first day the working groups discussed the contents of the Guides, covering the sections on the use of the component by component approach and validation data, examples from physical and nuclear analytical techniques, the particular problems with the use of prescribed and standard methods and basic metrology & traceability to SI.

On the second day the working groups discussed the application of the Guides to nuclear analytical techniques, food analysis, accreditation and reference materials.

There were lively discussions in all the working groups' sessions and the workshop achieved its objective of providing useful suggestions to the EURACHEM/CITAC uncertainty WG for further additions and changes to the draft guide. The WG plans to complete the revision of the Guide early in September so that it can be published by the end of this year.

Alex Williams

EURACHEM Measurement Uncertainty WG Chair



*Communication - one of the most valuable ingredients of a workshop: Spirited discussions during the poster session.*

 Reports from National Organisations 

## EC Workshop Discusses QA in R&D

EURACHEM/CITAC guide on the QA of R&D and Non-Routine Analysis considered a good basis for developing a QA strategy

Research managers from twelve countries met in a country hotel in Muenster, Germany at the end of May, as the guests of the European Commission, to discuss the QA of R&D. This two day workshop brought together people from industry, government research establishments and academe.

It was recognised that fostering innovation was the central issue and that managing the tension between control and freedom was the key issue for quality improvement. Some of the conclusions from the debate included the following:

- more international collaboration is needed to help improve the quality skills of researchers
- accreditation that focuses on technical rather than management issues could be a useful quality tool
- the Eurachem/CITAC guide on the QA of R&D and Non-Routine Analysis was considered to be a good basis for developing a QA strategy.

It was recommended that an industry led network should be established within the Fifth Framework Programme, in order to foster technology transfer and quality improvement in R&D. For further information please contact the workshop organiser at [<kleiboe@uni-muenster.de>](mailto:kleiboe@uni-muenster.de)

Bernard King, EURACHEM U.K.

 Reports from National Organisations 

## U.K. Attempt to Validate DNA Technology

The U.K. is starting to invest significant effort in relation to the validation of DNA technology. This rapidly developing area is having a revolutionary effect on a host of industrial and regulatory sectors, including healthcare, pharmaceuticals, diagnostics, food and agriculture, pollution abatement and forensic analysis. There is an urgent need to validate some key analytical techniques to increase confidence in, and allow intercomparisons of, the results.

Currently the regulation of DNA tests is through accepted practice rather than performance criteria, even in areas where the results are used to make critical judgements, such as healthcare or forensic science. Under the current VAM Programme the use of reference

materials, as well as proficiency testing schemes are being evaluated to meet the needs of intercomparability and improved assurance of results. Good progress is being made on the development of a Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) reference standard and a patent application covering the design of the reference material has been filed.

Source: LGC report.

For more details, see the web site at

<http://www.lgc.co.uk/best/best.htm>.

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## Supporting Lab Accreditation

EURACHEM-Lithuania was founded in May 1996 and more than 60 laboratories conducting chemical and/or microbiological analyses are involved in its activity. Four working groups - Quality Assurance, Training, Metrology in chemistry and Proficiency testing were formed.

The Quality Assurance WG focused on the support of implementation of quality systems, closely collaborating with the national accreditation body. EURACHEM-Lithuania members take part in the work of the External Council for the accreditation of chemical and microbiological laboratories. There are about 30 accredited laboratories in Lithuania. EURACHEM-Lithuania organised two workshops on quality assurance in analytical laboratories (jointly with the Institute of Chemistry). The EURACHEM MU Guide was translated into the Lithuanian language.

The Metrology in Chemistry WG submitted proposals to the Lithuanian metrological service on metrology in chemistry and organised a workshop to discuss metrology problems and the differences between metrology in physics and in chemistry.

The Laboratory of the National Nutrition Centre (member of EURACHEM-Lithuania) prepared the programme and procedures for a proficiency testing scheme on the determination of inorganic analytes in water. The first round started at the end of 1998, and 31 laboratories took part in this round.

Julius Petraitis, EURACHEM-Lithuania

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## Information System on PT Schemes

EURACHEM is represented in Spain by EUROLAB – ESPAÑA, formed by 48 private and

public laboratories, working in different fields of activity. The main activity during the last years has been the organisation of specialised courses and workshops in various aspects related to the activities of the laboratories. Three workshops have been organised during 1998, studying topics like validation of micro-biological and physico-chemical methods used in food analysis, environmental aspects as a support of quality system implementation in chemical laboratories, and accreditation or certification in laboratories performing analytical measurements.

We have participated in a National Group of Chemical Metrology developing a guide on chemical calibration supporting and facilitating the accreditation of analytical laboratories. Furthermore, we collaborate in an EC-funded project which aims at setting up an information system of and elaborating qualifying criteria for proficiency testing schemes.

Ramon Capellades, EURACHEM-Spain