



GUIDE 58

Calibration and testing laboratory accreditation systems — General requirements for operation and recognition

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Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) and IEC (the International Electrotechnical Commission) together form a system for worldwide standardization as a whole. National bodies that are members of ISO or IEC participate in the development of International Standards through technical committees established by the respective organization to deal with particular fields of technical activity. ISO and IEC technical committees collaborate in fields of mutual interest. Other international organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO and IEC, also take part in the work.

This Guide replaces ISO/IEC Guide 54:1988, *Testing laboratory accreditation systems — General recommendations for the acceptance of accreditation bodies*, and ISO/IEC Guide 55:1988, *Testing laboratory accreditation systems — General recommendations for operation*. It was drawn up by the ISO Council Committee on conformity assessment, ISO/CASCO, on the basis of a draft transmitted by the International Laboratory Accreditation Conference (ILAC '90) and in collaboration with laboratory experts.

Its object is to provide guidance for the setting up and operation of a laboratory accreditation body and to facilitate agreements between such bodies on mutual recognition of accreditation of testing laboratories.

Whilst ISO/IEC Guides such as this are intended to provide guidance, it is hoped that any changes from the documents made in introducing systems nationally would be minimal. In recognition of the fact that some countries may choose to adopt the Guides directly, they are written to enable this to be done by including words such as "shall" to indicate those aspects which desirably would be mandatory. The overriding basis that the document is intended to provide guidance holds good.

It is only in recent years that national accreditation bodies have developed on a large scale because of the necessity to make available testing services of an assessed level of quality to all sectors of the economy and also to facilitate mutual acceptance of calibration and test results.

This Guide was approved by the ISO Council Committee on conformity assessment (ISO/CASCO) in September 1992 and by the IEC Council in October 1992.

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