

STRAIGHT FROM THE LAB

Accreditation the best proof of competence

Accreditation has become more important in Europe since the start of 2010. That was when EU Regulation 765/2008 came into force. The regulation says that member states should regard open accreditation as the best way to indicate competence.

The new rules apply both to fields in which accreditation is a requirement and to ones with voluntary accreditation. Because this is an EU regulation, its provisions apply in all member states with equal force as a part of national legislation. The aim of the provisions

is to remove administrative hurdles and create a better functioning market. In practice the result will be less bureaucratic red tape. For instance, measurements done using equipment calibrated under accreditation will not be questioned.

Accreditation work is coordinated in accordance with regulations established by the EA (European co-operation for Accreditation), in which Sweden is represented by Swedac (the Swedish Board for Accreditation and Conformity Assessment). Swedac in turn monitors accredited operations in Sweden, such as Pentronic's and its

subsidiary Inkal's temperature calibration laboratories.

A similar cooperative process is done at the global level via ILAC (International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation). At this level there are still differences of opinion but in practice cooperation usually works well. As an example, calibrations done by Pentronic's accredited calibration laboratory are approved in China.

