



members

Member Advisory Forum

9th MEETING MINUTES

November 11, 2025
NATA Melbourne Office

Member Advisory Forum (MAF) Meeting Update

The 9th meeting of the Member Advisory Forum (MAF) brought together MAF representatives, the NATA Executive Team and Board members to discuss organisational changes, accreditation developments, strategic priorities, and emerging trends influencing Australia's accreditation landscape. The discussions highlighted NATA's continued commitment to transparency, member engagement, and continuous improvement.

1. Leadership and Organisational Updates

The forum began with an acknowledgment of Jennifer's retirement, recognising her significant contribution to NATA and the broader accreditation community. Planning for a smooth transition is underway. Attendees also welcomed the appointment of new Board member, Matt Tett, and took the opportunity to introduce themselves and their organisations to support future collaboration.

Members updated the forum on significant organisational changes within the industry, including new acquisitions and growing consolidation occurring across several sectors.

2. Business Updates

2.1 Annual General Meeting (AGM)

NATA provided a detailed update on the outcomes of the Annual General Meeting. Three Board vacancies were filled: Sanmarie Schlebusch's appointment was endorsed by the Board, and the other two were made through an election process that led to the reappointment of Tracey Hoitink and the appointment of Matthew Tett. Discussion also centred on a special resolution regarding director remuneration, which fell short of the 75 percent threshold required for approval. Members reflected on the importance of broad stakeholder engagement before future proposals of this nature, emphasising the need for transparent communication and thoughtful consideration of member perspectives. The forum also explored the balance between NATA's volunteer ethos and the increasing demands placed on Board members, noting the potential benefits of attracting a broader diversity of candidates should remuneration be reconsidered in future.

2.2 Accreditation Services

Accreditation Services delivered statistics on accreditation numbers and Service Standards performance. Updates on key initiatives were also provided, including Artificial Intelligence – NATA's policy for managing the use of AI in its internal processes, and a working group established to examine how to assess AI used by conformity assessment bodies.

Development of e-learning modules for technical assessors covering the Annex topics in the Assessor Information and Guidance document.

2.3 Voice of Customer (VoC) Feedback Program

The Client Engagement Team presented strong early results following the introduction of the new Voice of Customer program in July 2025. Personalised surveys and automated processes have resulted in significantly higher response rates and more reliable insights. Feedback highlighted opportunities in documentation clarity, process consistency, timeliness, and assessor training, and these insights are now routinely shared with staff and management to support continuous improvement.

Several internal initiatives are currently underway to implement enhancements based on the feedback received.

2.4 New Accreditation Enquiries

NATA introduced a centralised and customer-focused process for managing new accreditation enquiries in August. This new system, managed by the Client Engagement Team through a SharePoint-based workflow, provides a single point of contact for prospective customers and enhances visibility of progress throughout the enquiry journey. Continuous monitoring supports improvements in conversion, onboarding efficiency, and customer experience.

2.5 UTS Economic Value of Accreditation Survey

Members were updated on the current UTS-led survey exploring the economic value of accreditation. This iteration of the survey includes financial components to deepen understanding of accreditation's economic impact. Results will be compiled by the University of Technology Sydney and released in mid-2026, with findings intended to inform both member decision-making and external advocacy.

2.6 Global Accreditation Cooperation

An update was provided on the merger of the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) and the International Accreditation Forum (IAF), resulting in the formation of the Global Accreditation Cooperation Incorporated. The new entity will launch on 1 January 2026. Members will have a transition period to update documentation and adopt the new branding once finalised. NATA will continue to represent Australian interests by maintaining active involvement in technical and executive committees.

3. Accreditation Matters 2025/2026

The Accreditation Matters program continues to grow, with the 2025 conference drawing more than 500 registrations and receiving positive feedback for its industry- focused content and networking opportunities.

NATA's "Our Everyday Heroes" campaign is also gaining momentum, celebrating member achievements through stories and video content.

Planning for Accreditation Matters 2026 in Melbourne on 7-8 July is underway and will focus on themes like digital transformation, productivity, and knowledge sharing. Members expressed interest in organising sessions by technical discipline to reduce scheduling conflicts and improve relevance for attendees. NATA encouraged MAF members to contribute ideas, presentations, content, and nominations for the NATA Excellence Award.

4. MAF Membership and Forum Effectiveness

The forum undertook a review of MAF's role and effectiveness, noting that it provides valuable two-way insight between NATA and industry. Members recommended strengthening communication between MAF and the broader membership, including more direct consultation and increased visibility of strategic initiatives.

The forum also discussed term limits and representation, noting the need to balance renewal and continuity while ensuring diversity that reflects the industry's breadth. Members agreed that meeting twice per year remains appropriate and that in-person dialogue is the most effective format for these discussions.

5. Industry and Scientific Trends

The forum received an update on steel product traceability, including the development of RFID and QR code systems to link product transportation details, digital certifications, batch test reports, and the tracing of recycled content.

The growing importance of technical expertise in the critical minerals sector was also discussed. NATA outlined its approach to sourcing qualified assessors, emphasising collaboration with CSIRO, universities, and the National Measurement Institute.

Concerns about lifting gear safety were raised, with recent industry incidents underscoring the need for improved technical assessor training and closer focus on installation and competency requirements. Members suggested that real-life case studies could support awareness campaigns to strengthen safety culture across the sector.

6. Emerging External Pressures

The forum explored the increasing presence of overseas accreditation bodies operating in the Australian market. Members noted that some of these providers are creating commercial pressure on local laboratories and may be challenging NATA's position.

While ILAC agreements assure the recognition of NATA's accreditation, members agreed that NATA must continue to monitor market developments, improve service timeliness, and maintain rigorous quality standards to uphold confidence in its accreditation processes.

The meeting reaffirmed the importance of collaboration between NATA and its members in navigating a rapidly changing environment. NATA extends its appreciation to MAF members for their insights and ongoing engagement and looks forward to continuing this partnership to support excellence in accreditation across Australia.

The next meeting is planned for May 2026.