



EPPO Training Workshop

on ISO Standard 17025 (2017) and PM 7/98 (4)

On-line event, 2020-12-14/15

Wrap up of activity 4: Organization

In this session participants had to consider how to address risks and opportunities on a strategic level.

Risks linked to the laboratory being part of the growers' association were discussed (risk of pressure on the laboratory by growers, sources of funding). In order to mitigate the risks experts considered that written declaration regarding confidentiality and impartiality were needed and staff should be trained on those aspects. Salaries of the staff should be independent from the volume of activity. Contracts between the growers' association should be very clear. To ensure confidentiality anonymization of samples entering the laboratory should be established.

The risks of information technology being maintained by the union of seed producers (e.g. potential access to confidential information) was discussed and solutions to mitigate that risks identified (policy for access, audits on how data is managed). Three laboratories in Beatieland deliver the same diagnostic service, the potential risk (loss of activities to one of the other laboratories) and how to mitigate these risks were discussed (e.g. contracts should specify the volume of samples). It was noted that this could also be an opportunity (ensure continuous improvement of the laboratory renewal of equipment and staff training). One group discussed how a change in the top management (e.g. recruitment of a new director general) could affect the laboratory (possible challenge on the way of working and priorities) but also be an opportunity for positive change (fresh pair of eyes).

The participants also discussed the consequences of the COVID crisis in laboratories. All had to limit the number of staff onsite and plan action in case a staff member became infected. Preventing shortages of equipment or consumables was needed and, in some case, diagnostic activities had to be prioritized towards essential ones only. This also required clear and timely communication with the customers and the need to ensure that the key contact person can be reached.

The board produced during this activity are available below.

Board activities: group 1



Board activities: group 2

