SADCAS/SANAS JOINT COMMUNIQUE - SADCAS ACHIEVES SIGNATORY STATUS IN ILAC MRA FOR MEDICAL TESTING (ISO 15189) AND INSPECTION (ISO/IEC 17020)

The Southern African Development Community Accreditation Services (SADCAS) scope in the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) Mutual Recognition Arrangement has been extended to include Medical Testing to ISO 15189 and Inspection to ISO/IEC 17020 following an extraordinary joint peer evaluation successfully held from 14 to 19 May 2017 by ILAC and the African Accreditation Cooperation (AFRAC). The decision was made by the ILAC Arrangement Council at its meeting held on Saturday 28 October 2017 in Vancouver, Canada.

With this additional achievement the accreditation certificates issued by SADCAS for the Medical Laboratories and Inspection bodies’ accreditation programmes are internationally recognized thus enhance the acceptance of medical test/inspection results across national borders, remove the need for repetitive testing/inspection of products traded internationally and in the case of medical improves patient care.

SADCAS is recognized by the SADC Council of Ministers as a subsidiarity institution of SADC. SADCAS draws its mandate from Article 15 B of the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Annex to the SADC Protocol on Trade and as per the Memorandum of Understanding signed between SADCAS and SADC, SADCAS provide accreditation services to 13 SADC Member States who do not have a national accreditation body namely; Angola; Botswana; Democratic Republic of Congo; Lesotho; Madagascar; Malawi; Mozambique; Namibia; Seychelles; Swaziland; Tanzania; Zambia and Zimbabwe.

This communiqué serves to inform all medical testing and inspection bodies about the way forward regarding accreditation following SADCAS’ achievement. A number of scenarios are considered as follows:

1. For all medical testing (ISO 15189) and inspection bodies (ISO/IEC 17020)] accredited under the SADCAS/SANAS Twinning Partnership Arrangement (TPA). The South African National Accreditation System (SANAS) certificate will be valid until the upcoming surveillance assessment and thereafter SADCAS will be the sole provider of accreditation services to your facility. Your organization’s listing will be removed from SANAS directory of accredited facilities and you will be required to return the SANAS accreditation certificate and schedule of accreditation and to destroy any other materials that refers to SANAS accreditation.

2. For all medical testing (ISO 15189) and inspection bodies (ISO/IEC 17020) whose applications are in progress and or were accredited under the SADCAS/SANAS TPA from 28 October 2017, only a SADCAS certificate will be issued.

3. For all medical testing (ISO 15189) and inspection bodies (ISO/IEC 17020) at the various stages of accreditation process by SANAS and which may have missed the changeover plan and may have set up the system based on the SANAS requirements, SANAS will
notify them to changeover to SADCAS but continue to proceed with the application until accreditation and to changeover thereafter.

4. All new applications received by SANAS from the 13 SADC Member States serviced by SADCAS from 28 October 2017 shall be referred to SADCAS.

5. SANAS accredited medical testing (ISO 15189) and inspection bodies (ISO/IEC 17020) in the 13 SADC Member States serviced by SADCAS. Upon expiry of the current SANAS certificate, SANAS will no longer be legally able to provide accreditation to the said facilities. Should the said facilities wish to continue with accreditation, they shall forward their application to SADCAS. Such accredited facilities can transfer their SANAS accreditation to SADCAS prior to the expiry of the current SANAS certificate. In all these cases, should the facility’s decision be to continue with accreditation then the facility shall inform SANAS at least three (3) months in advance.

SADCAS accreditation documents and application forms are available from the SADCAS website www.sadcas.org/policies_n_procedures.php or else we refer you to contact the SADCAS Technical Manager on jfranorovelo@sadcas.org for the Inspection Bodies Accreditation Programme and the SADCAS Programme Coordinator for the Medical Laboratories Accreditation Programme on emuronda@sadcas.org for more information.

Meanwhile SADCAS is also working towards signatory status for its and certification bodies – management systems (ISO/IEC 17021-1) and certification bodies - product (ISO/IEC 17065) accreditation programmes, and any applications from such certification bodies shall continue to be processed under the SADCAS/SANAS TPA until SADCAS has achieved international recognition in the IAFRAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement/International Accreditation Forum Multilateral Arrangement.

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Date of Issue: 2017-12-14