

AFRA Holds Training Workshop on Risk Management

The Africa Accreditation Cooperation (AFRAC) successfully organized a Risk Management Workshop which was held on 28 September 2018 in conjunction with the 9th AFRAC annual meetings in Baraclava Fort, Mauritius. The workshop was attended by over 25 participants mainly accreditation body members of AFRAC including 2 SADCAS representatives Mrs Maureen P Mutasa the CEO and Ms Jeanne F Ranorovelo, the Technical Manager. The workshop was facilitated by Mr Ismail Abdoola, the Chief Financial Officer at SANAS.

The Facilitator started the workshop by defining what risk and risk management are and further defined other terms associated with risk and risk management such as residual risk and then articulated why we need to manage risk and the benefits thereof. He then informed participants about the categories of risk such as financial, reputational, strategic, governance etc. He introduced ISO 31000 the international standard on risk management which was first published in 2009 and revised in 2018 to take into account the evolution of the market and new challenges faced by business and organizations. Unlike ISO 9001 and 14001, ISO 31000: Risk management – Principles and guidelines is not intended or appropriate for certification, and any certification would be a misuse of the standard. The International Accreditation Forum at its 2017 General Assembly, passed a resolution IAF Resolution 2017-20 strongly urging conformity assessment bodies not to promote or provide certification to ISO 31000.



Participants at the Risk Management Training Workshop with the Facilitator

This was followed by a session on implementing risk during which the Facilitator walked participants through the principles of risk management, the various steps in risk management starting on how to develop the risk management framework, establishing risk management processes and demonstrating how critical risk management is at all levels of decision making and further highlighting the importance of leadership, commitment, communication and consultation in risk management. Some time was spent on how to perform a risk assessment and the risk control procedures outlining the concepts which are important in understanding the nature and context of the control. This was followed by a session on how to treat risks, and recording and reporting on risks at which stage the Facilitator introduced the risk register which is a database of information on risk and which he encouraged all to keep it simple to begin with. The need to monitor and review the risk management process was also emphasized so as to assure and improve the quality and effectiveness of processes.

The workshop was interspaced with exercises starting with the exercise on identification of risk and determination of occurrence followed by the identification of strategic risks and impact thereof and the controls put in place to mitigate the risks. The 5th and final exercise was on residual risks resulting from control weaknesses. The exercises were done in groups and resulted in lively discussions during the group presentations.

The relationship of risk management with other management systems was demonstrated and at the end participants were given tips for success of risk management such as involvement of staff and management, ensuring that the risk owner takes responsibility and also focusing on the causes of risks and not the symptoms.

Based on the feedback form the participants the workshop was very interesting, enjoyed by all and was beneficial as it unpacked this concept of risk management a requirement of the new ISO/IEC 17011 the international standard which accreditation bodies have to comply with for international recognition.

