

SADCAS Signs MoU with SOAC

The SADC Accreditation Service (SADCAS) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the West African Accreditation System (SOAC). The MOU spells out the areas of cooperation and modalities of cooperation in the accreditation of conformity assessment bodies. The MOU was signed on 28 October 2018 in Singapore in conjunction with the 2018 annual IAF ILAC meetings and was witnessed by Mr Steven Bruce Sidney, the Chairman of the SADCAS Board of Directors and Mr Ron Josias, the Chairman of the African Accreditation Cooperation (AFRAC).



SOAC Representatives signing the MOU



SADCAS Representatives signing the MOU

SOAC, is a non-profit multi-economy accreditation body servicing in West Africa the accreditation needs of 8 countries of which 7 are French speaking countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Niger, Senegal, and Togo) and 1 Portuguese speaking country (Guinea Bissau). SOAC was created by a regional regulation from the Council of Ministers of the West Africa Economic & Monetary Union (UEMOA). SOAC's mandate is to provide accreditation services, in accordance with international requirements (mainly ISO/IEC relevant standards), to conformity assessment bodies established in these eight economies. SOAC Head Quarters are based in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. SOAC is an affiliate member of the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) and a full member of the African Accreditation Cooperation (AFRAC).

On the other hand, **SADCAS**, a subsidiary organization of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), is a non-profit, multi-economy accreditation body whose mission is to provide credible, cost effective accreditation services for SADC Member States aimed at supporting trade; enhance the protection of consumers and the environment; and improve the competitiveness of SADC products and services in both the voluntary and regulatory areas. SADCAS offers accreditation and training associated with accreditation. SADCAS offers schemes for the accreditation of testing/calibration laboratories, medical laboratories, certification bodies (management systems/product/personnel) and inspection bodies. SADCAS office is based in Gaborone, Botswana. SADCAS is signatory to the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA) for testing (ISO/IEC 17025), calibration (ISO/IEC 17025), medical testing (ISO 15189) and inspection (ISO/IEC 1720) hence the certificates issued by SADCAS on these schemes are internationally recognized. SADCAS accreditation services are in English and French whilst SADCAS is still working towards offering services in Portuguese.

Within the MOU, SADCAS and SOAC have agreed to cooperate by:

- Jointly undertaking accreditations assessments of conformity assessment bodies;
- Exchanging of technical information and experiences; and
- Supporting awareness raising and training activities for conformity assessment bodies.



From Left to Right: Mr Steve Sidney, SADCAS Board Chairman; Mr Ron Josias, AFRAC Chairman; Mrs Maureen P Mutasa, SADCAS CEO; Mr Marcel Gbaguidi, Director General, SOAC; Ms Jeanne F Ranorovelo, SADCAS Technical Manager; and Mr Esaïe Amani, SOAC Technical Expert

The MoU negotiations started in earnest as soon as SADCAS had received an expressed interest in accreditation from a medical laboratory based Cote d'Ivoire and considering Côte d'Ivoire Law N°2013-866, Article 31, which requires that all national conformity assessment bodies are required to be accredited by SOAC or any structure mandated by the latter. Thus, through the MOU SADCAS has been mandated by SOAC to process the accreditation application of a medical laboratory from Côte d'Ivoire. The MOU was approved by the SADCAS Board of Directors at its meeting held on 6 September 2018.

