

ESWATINI WATER SERVICES CORPORATION MECHANICAL METER VERIFICATION LABORATORY ACCREDITED BY SADCAS

SADCAS is proud to announce the accreditation of the Eswatini Water Services Corporation (EWSC) – Mechanical Meter Verification Laboratory in the scope of verification of Volume Measuring Instruments to ISO/IEC 17025:2005 – Mechanical Water Meters. This makes EWSC - Mechanical Meter Verification Laboratory the first Verification Laboratory to be accredited by SADCAS. Through this accreditation, EWSC - Mechanical Meter Verification Laboratory the first Verification Laboratory has been granted the unique accreditation number VER-1 001 (Volume Measuring Instruments), indicating that Eswatini Water Services Corporation - Verification Laboratory is now a SADCAS accredited verification laboratory. The Laboratory is situated at Plot 237, King Mswati III Avenue, Matsapha, Eswatini, and operates in the regulatory domain under the Metrology Act 1991 (Act No. 12 of 1991), Type Approval Certificate No. 36, issued by the Kingdom of Eswatini, Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Trade, Weights and Measures Department. The certificate which was issued on 15 October 2019 expires on 30 November 2020 the deadline for transitioning to ISO/IEC 17025: 2017.

The certificate was handed over during a ceremony held on 20 February 2020 at the Laboratory premises in Mastapha, Eswatini. The Minister of Commerce, Trade and Industry, Honourable Senator Manqoba Khumalo was the guest of honour at the ceremony. The ceremony started off with a tour of the laboratory directed by Mr Mangaliso Mavuso, the Nominated Representative of the EWSC Laboratories.



The Honourable Minister Mr Khumalo flanked by Mrs Mashwama MD EWSC on the left, Mrs Mutasa SADCAS CEO and Official from the Ministry of Natural Resources and Energy.



Mr Mangaliso Mavuso Emphasizing a point during the tour

After the tour of the laboratory, guests then proceeded to the tent where the rest of the ceremony was held. The Managing Director of EWSC Mrs Jabulile Mashwama gave the welcome remarks, words of appreciation and outlined the key milestones in the journey towards accreditation having submitted the accreditation application in July 2018. Being the first such application to be handled by SADCAS the process took a little longer than usual with consultations and benchmarking being undertaken with various stakeholders to determine the criteria for accreditation. The initial assessment was undertaken in May 2019 over 2 days by a team of 2 assessors. The Managing Director congratulated and thanked the Technical team for the achievement.

Speaking during the ceremony which was held to handover 2 accreditation certificates to the EWSC Mechanical Meter Verification Laboratory and the Main Laboratory's re-accreditation to the 2017 version of ISO/IEC 17025, Mrs Maureen P Mutasa, the SADCAS Chief Executive Officer noted that water meter verification and testing of raw water, potable water and waste water are the nucleus of the quality assurance function of the Eswatini Water Corporation Services. "ISO/IEC 17025 is the international standard that water meter verification and testing laboratories have to comply with in order to be accredited" she said. Water is normally distributed by local authorities to consumers who range from domestic to industrial. This water is treated to ensure that it is potable and distributed at a cost calculated on the basis of volume of usage. The consumers usually do not have the competence or the capability to evaluate the reliability of the measurement results from the water meters. Water

meters are designed for operators/users with no competence in measurement. Such competence normally resides within the authorities, whose impartiality as the suppliers of the water and the water meters is often questioned.



Guests at the Certificates handover ceremony

Confidence in a measurement is based on confidence in the measuring instrument and on regulatory surveillance. “What is more significant is that the accreditation of Eswatini Water Corporation Services laboratories has been confirmed by a third-party authoritative and internationally recognized body, SADCAS” she said. Thus, water meters on the market place which have been verified by the Mechanical Water Verification Laboratory and the test results from the Microbiological and Chemical Laboratories of the Eswatini Water Corporation Services are reliable and accurate and in compliance to the local legislation. This brings confidence in transaction and reduces the risk of disputes and creates a level playing field for transactions. The consumer (domestic or industry users) who risks losing out is protected, and is assured of receiving the correct quantity and quality of water and value for money noting that in the case of industry who are bulk users of water small errors in the water meters may significantly affect their bottom line. On the other hand, the supplier of the water, is assured of not over-supplying and supplying potable water. Mrs Mutasa noted that outside South Africa, Eswatini Water Services Corporation Mechanical Water Verification Laboratory is the only water meter verification laboratory that is accredited by an internationally recognized independent authoritative body presenting an opportunity for EWSC to verify water meters used in the other countries serviced by SADCAS. “Accreditation is an investment and you must realize the return on the investment you have made by being accredited”, Mrs Mutasa remarked.



Mrs Mutasa poses for a photo with the Honourable Minister Khumalo and Mrs Mashwama after the certificate Handover

In the keynote address the Minister, Honourable Khumalo congratulated the EWSC for the achievement. He informed about the Government funded efforts underway to develop capacity of conformity assessment bodies in Eswatini and prided in the 9 testing and medical laboratories that had so far been accredited by SADCAS. The Eswatini Government through the Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry has funded the training of conformity assessment bodies in their journey towards accreditation. The EWSC Laboratories were amongst the trained Laboratories. He noted the increasing importance of accreditation in the trading processes and also in safeguarding the health and safety of the public as well as the environment. He then thanked the team at EWSC for the achievement and encouraged EWSC to maintain its internationally recognized accreditation and in the case of EWSC Mechanical Meter Verification Laboratory to timeously transition to the 2017 version of the ISO/IEC 17025. He further encouraged the EWSC to take advantage of the accreditation by exporting their services to other countries in the region being the first meter verification laboratory to be accredited. After the key note address Mrs Mutasa handed over the certificate to the Managing Director of EWSC which was witnessed by the Honourable Minister.

The ceremony was directed Mr S'khumbuzo Tsabedze EWSC Strategic Services Director who then invited everybody to lunch. The handover ceremony was attended by over 45 EWSC management and staff, Government officials, NAFP-Eswatini, invited guests and the media.

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