

SADCAS Hosts SADCA Executive Committee

The SADC Cooperation in Accreditation (SADCA) Executive Committee (EXCO) held its meeting at Indaba Lodge in Gaborone, Botswana from 12 to 13 December 2016. The main purpose of the meeting was to review the SADCA position paper on future direction of the Cooperation, consider the draft strategic plan for the period 2017 to 2021, review progress on implementation of the 2016/17 work plans, prepare the EXCO work plan for the 2017/18 year and to prepare for the upcoming SADCA General Assembly meeting to be held in March 2017. A total of 5 Executive Committee members attended the meeting except 4 members who could not attend. The Gaborone meetings were hosted by SADCAS, the first SADCA EXCO meeting hosted by the multi economy accreditation body.



The EXCO started off with a review of progress in the implementation of the 2016/17 EXCO, MRA Committee and Technical Committee work plans and developed the 2017/18 EXCO work. Progress was noted in the implementation of the 2016/17 MRA work plan with SADCAS having been admitted as a signatory to the AFRAC and ILAC MRAs for testing and calibration (ISO/IEC 17025) in October and November 2016 respectively and SANAS having been readmitted to the ILAC MRA and IAF Multi - Lateral Arrangement (MLA). It was noted that MAURITAS had undergone a pre peer evaluation and was working on closing the findings raised in the evaluation after which it will undergo peer evaluation in 2017/18 whilst SADCAS is set to undergo peer evaluation for scope extension to medical testing (ISO 15189) and inspection (ISO/IEC 17020) a joint ILAC/AFRAC peer evaluation in May 2017.

The SADCA EXCO then considered the position paper on the future of the Cooperation which was prepared by a Task Force comprised of Dr Elsabe Steyn the SADCA Regional Coordinator, Mr Ron Josias the CEO of SANAS and Mrs Maureen Mutasa the CEO of SADCAS. The paper reflects on the environment in which

SADCA operates and identifies and explores 2 options available to SADCA and proposes the future strategic direction for SADCA. The paper was thoroughly discussed during the EXCO meeting who agreed to its circulation to the SADCA Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA) Committee and SADCA Technical Committee for their input after which it will be presented to the SADCA GA for endorsement. Once endorsed by the GA the position paper will be used to communicate with various stakeholders on the future direction of SADCA.

The position paper formed the basis of the 2017 to 201 strategic plan which was also considered during the meeting with changes being proposed from the discussions. The strategic plan is based on the direction that SADCA will be the accreditation centre of excellence for SADC Member States and will promote the unbroken chain of trust established by the SADC Quality infrastructure of which SADCA is a part of and provides confidence in the competence and integrity of conformity assessment activities. SADCA will launch, expand and maintain the SADCA MRA and the MRA scopes and promote the mutual recognition of the accredited SADC Conformity assessment results in the private sector and by regulators. The draft strategic plan incorporating comments from

the discussions will be circulated to members for comment after which a workshop shall be held during the SADC TBT Annual meetings to present and discuss the position paper and the strategic plan before submitting it for approval at the SADCA Annual meeting.

Some time was spent on reviewing the SADCA documents which will be circulated for comment/ballot as per the SADCA document control procedure. On participation in ILAC and the IAF a report was presented by Mr Josias and Mrs Mutasa on their participation at the New Delhi meetings including updates on the revisions of ISO/IEC 17025 and ISO/IEC 17011. In order to enhance SADCA's representation at the international meetings, the EXCO drew up a list of representations to the various Committees and Working Groups of interest to SADCA. The list will be finalized after confirmation by accreditation body members following which it will be submitted to ILAC/IAF for noting the representations.

On the 20th SADCA General Assembly to be held in Swaziland, the meeting prepared the agenda for the meeting which includes amongst others an item on the AFRAC E-learning programme during which a background on the item will be presented by Ron Josias, followed by feedback from participants of the test run and a discussion of how the 3 accreditation bodies in the region had embraced the programme. The strategic plan will also be presented to the GA for approval.

In a report from the SADC Secretariat, an update was presented on the costed SADC industrialization action programme, progress with projects funded under the auspices of the EU EDF 10 REIS programme and PTB Germany programme. An update was also presented on EDF 11 with programming underway. The meeting was also informed of the restructuring of the SADC Secretariat which is also underway.

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