

SADCAS Publishes Guidance for Addressing and Clearing Nonconformities

The clearance of nonconformities can often be a difficult process for different reasons. The recently published document **SADCAS TG04 - Guidance for Addressing and Clearing Nonconformities** aims to help address some of the challenges and assist conformity assessment bodies (CABs) in improving submission of corrective actions and take away some of the pain and frustration associated with the process. The document also is a reminder about the purpose of having nonconformities cleared. The document outlines the guidance for addressing and clearing of nonconformities and some of the points highlighted in the document are as follows:

- **Recording and Addressing Nonconformities**

The nonconformities recorded by the assessment team must be factual, clear and concise. The CAB personnel should ensure that they understand the deviations, and the assessor can be asked to reword the findings where required. For optimum resolution of the nonconformity and implementation of corrective action, the CAB must thereafter conduct a thorough root cause analysis of the nonconformity and consequently take effective global corrective action as the assessment is usually a sampling exercise.

- **Corrective Action time lines.**

It is very important to note that all nonconformities should have been cleared and signed off by the assessment team within a period of three (3) months.

- **Submission of Evidence**

Evidence submitted should be specific, sufficient, and legible and where completed, corrective actions and evidences shall be submitted separately and the facility must clearly link the evidence related to the nonconformity. Evidence can be submitted electronically or as hardcopies to SADCAS only and not directly to the assessors. Resubmission of corrective actions impacts on the CAB's and assessors' time, energy and other resources.

- **Benefits of taking Corrective action**

Taking corrective action is not for SADCAS or to avoid suspension as can be wrongly perceived. It is an opportunity for the CAB to improve its own system and give confidence to the user that the CAB can provide reliable results at all times and is able to address challenges as they occur.

SADCAS TG04_Guidance for Addressing and Clearing Nonconformities was published on 2016-06-15 and is available and can be downloaded from the SADCAS website: www.sadcas.org under Accreditation Documents Policies and Procedures.