

## CROSS FRONTIER ACCREDITATION

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## 1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this document is to detail the procedure to be followed when SADCAS receives an application from a conformity assessment body which is not based within the countries serviced by SADCAS.

This document is applicable to the SADCAS Certification Bodies', Testing Laboratories, Calibration laboratories and Inspection Bodies Accreditation Schemes.

## 2. BACKGROUND

2.1. There are situations where a Certification Body, Inspection Body or a Laboratory will seek more than one accreditation or a "foreign" accreditation. The International Accreditation Forum (IAF), the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) strongly advise certification bodies (CBs), inspection bodies (IBs) and laboratories to obtain local accreditation. However there are many reasons why a CB, IB or laboratory may seek accreditation from bodies outside of their own country instead of or as well as the local accreditation. These reasons include:

2.1.1 The local Accreditation Body (AB) does not offer the full scope of accreditation;

2.1.2 The local AB is not a signatory to the ILAC MRA/IAF MLA;

2.1.3 There is no local AB in the country;

2.1.4 The CBs, IBs or laboratories' preferences are based on commercial or other business reasons;

2.1.5 The CBs, IBs or laboratories' customers demand a specific accreditation and will not be persuaded to accept an equivalent;

2.1.6 The CB, IB or laboratory is part of a group of CBs, IBs or laboratories with a single owner who wants all the CBs, IBs or laboratories to offer the same accredited certificate; and

2.1.7 Regulatory requirements within the country require accreditation by a specific AB.

2.2 If SADCAS is requested to provide accreditation to a CB, IB or laboratory outside the SADC Member States serviced by SADCAS, the following will be considered by SADCAS before acceptance:

2.2.1 Enquire if the applicant is aware of the local AB ILAC MRA/IAF MLA signatory and whether local AB is held;

2.2.2 Suggest that the accreditation could be done in a more economical manner if the local AB ILAC MRA/IAF MLA signatory performs the accreditation;

2.2.3 Point out the equivalence of the local accreditation demonstrated through the ILAC MRA/IAF MLA.

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- 2.3 If SADCAS accepts new accreditation applications outside the SADC Member States serviced by SADCAS, it shall maintain records of its rational.
- 2.4 SADCAS will only perform an accreditation of a CB, IB or laboratory in those countries where there is no established and operational AB. In those countries where there is an established AB recognized through the ILAC MRA/IAF MLA or AB signatory of contract of cooperation, SADCAS will normally request any activities required to be done by the local AB.
- 2.5 Should an applicant CB, IB or laboratory choose SADCAS instead of the local AB then SADCAS shall:
- 2.5.1 Inform the local AB MRA/MLA that SADCAS will be undertaking the work and explain the circumstances after obtaining permission for this from the applicant. Should the applicant CB, IB or laboratory refuse to allow SADCAS to reveal this information then SADCAS shall not continue with the process. Only in those circumstances where the applicant has a very acceptable reason for not informing the local AB, or the local AB refuses to cooperate, SADCAS shall continue with the accreditation process. SADCAS shall inform the ILAC MRA/IAF MLA secretariat about the reason why it has not been able to use the local AB.
- 2.5.2 SADCAS shall wherever possible utilize the local ILAC/IAF signatory AB or signatory of contract of cooperation AB to provide assessment team personnel wherever possible, and where not possible SADCAS shall seek from the local AB any relevant feedback about the CB, IB or laboratory concerned.
- 2.5.3 SADCAS would also propose a joint assessment with the ILAC MRA/IAF MLA signatory AB or signatory or contract of cooperation AB.
- 2.5.4 SADCAS may also propose a joint assessment with the local AB that is not yet signatory to the ILAC MRA/IAF MLA.
- 2.5.5 If there is an ILAC/IAF member AB in the country of the applicant that is not yet an ILAC/IAF signatory for the scope, SADCAS will enquire whether the applicant CB, IB or laboratory would be prepared to have any relevant local AB informed of the application with the option of:
- Observing the assessment for experience;
  - Providing a team member or members to the AB assessment team; or
  - Performing a joint assessment with the objective of dual accreditation.
- 2.5.6 SADCAS shall obtain permission from the CB, IB or laboratory to share information with the local AB in those instances where there is to be some form of cooperation.
- 2.5.7 SADCAS, where possible, will take into consideration the results of previous assessments done by the local AB in the development of the assessment program for the CB, IB or laboratory.

*Note:* The following sections 3, 4 and 5 are only applicable to certification bodies.

- 2.5.8 Where SADCAS decides to use the results of an assessment already performed by another AB, SADCAS shall ensure that the other AB was operating in accordance with the requirements of the ISO/IEC 17011.

### **3 CONTROL OF ACCREDITED CERTIFICATIONS IN A FOREIGN LOCATION**

- 3.1. SADCAS shall record and maintain a list of all the countries in which each CB accredited by SADCAS issues certificates. This will include:
- 3.1.1. Countries into which certificates are directly issued by the CB's head office or other office.
- 3.1.2. Countries in which the CB operates from local offices, whatever the legal relationship of such offices with the parent CB.
- 3.2 The purpose of this list is to allow SADCAS to plan assessment program for each of the accredited CBs with up to date information on the geographical spread of the CBs.

### **4. CRITICAL LOCATIONS**

- 4.1. SADCAS requires all accredited CBs to identify all those physical locations where activities are controlled or conducted that determine or demonstrate the effectiveness of the CB's performance in particular:
- 4.1.1. The processes for initial qualification, training and ongoing monitoring of auditors and assessment personnel records; or
- 4.1.2. The application review, assignment of audit personnel and/or review of the final report; or
- 4.1.3. The certification decision based on the final review of the audit report.
- 4.2 The locations described in 4.1 are referred to as "Critical Locations".

### **5. ASSESSMENT OF FOREIGN CRITICAL LOCATIONS**

*Note:* This applies when SADCAS operates outside the SADC Member states serviced by SADCAS.

- 5.1 SADCAS shall have an assessment schedule that covers all the critical locations of its applicant and accredited CBs no matter where in the world they are located. This program should, where possible, allow for the use of the local country MLA signatory AB but does not allow for sampling of the initial assessment of critical locations.
- 5.2 SADCAS requires the CB to have documented that any new foreign critical location is set up in such a way as to meet the accreditation requirements before SADCAS will authorize the issue of

certificates either directly from the critical location or resulting from certification work performed under the control of the foreign critical location.

- 5.3 An assessment by SADCAS prior to the authorization is not always necessary but all critical locations shall be assessed on site either directly by SADCAS or by an MLA signatory as agreed by SADCAS.
- 5.4 SADCAS in addition to the above assess and evaluate the effectiveness of the management control by the head office of the CB over the activities of its foreign critical location.
- 5.5 Periodic on-site assessments shall take place at the same frequency as at a single site CB that is equivalent. The frequency may be reduced subject to reduced complaints by taking into account of factors such as:
  - 5.5.1 Low levels of work being done;
  - 5.5.2 Justifiable confidence in the work done by the CB and the control of the head office;
  - 5.5.3 Access secured by formal agreement to the assessment results relative to the activities carried out at the critical location by other IAF MLA signatories;
  - 5.5.4 Justifications for a reduction in frequency shall be recorded for each case.

## **6. ASSESSMENT OF A CB WHERE THE CB IS NOT ACCREDITED BY A LOCAL IAF MEMBER ACCREDITATION BODY**

- 6.1 SADCAS will propose the use of the foreign AB as a subcontractor for appropriate parts of the assessment or will invite personnel from the foreign AB to participate in the assessment when the foreign AB is not a member of the IAF MLA. SADCAS will ensure that the foreign AB is an IAF member prior to any cooperation in this regard.
- 6.2 The CB may appeal the use of the foreign personnel in the assessment subject to the normal conditions and rights to appeal.
- 6.3 The local AB personnel invited to join such a team will undergo the necessary training by SADCAS prior to performing any assessment activities. They shall also be supervised and monitored by SADCAS and shall have normal team member duties assigned to them allowing them to play a full part in the assessment.
- 6.4 The foreign assessor may be used to assess local conditions such as complaints and conflict of interest.
- 6.5 SADCAS will cover the cost of the persons involved in the assessment and there shall be no communication with the foreign location on this by the foreign CB.

## **7. ASSESSMENT OF A CB WHERE THE CB IS ACCREDITED BY THE LOCAL ACCREDITATION BODY WHICH IS A MEMBER OF THE IAF MLA**

- 7.1 SADCAS will, wherever possible, use the foreign AB which is a member of the IAF MLA to perform assessments on its behalf. SADCAS shall decide on an individual basis if this cooperation will be as a subcontractor or as a joint assessment on an individual basis.
- 7.2 SADCAS shall establish a contract of agreement when it engages any AB in any part or whole of the assessment activities. This contract shall detail the obligations of each party.

## **8. REFERENCES**

- SADCAS PM 01 – SADCAS Policy Manual
- ILAC G 21: Cross Frontier Accreditation Principles for Cooperation

**APPENDIX - AMENDMENT RECORD**

Revision status	Change			Approved by	Effective Date
	Page No.	Clause	Description of change		
Issue 1	-	-	-	SADCAS CEO	2013-11-11
Issue 1	8	8	Deleted the years of publication of ILAC G 21 and IAF GD 3.	SADCAS CEO	2014-09-29
Issue 2	3	1	Deleted 2 <sup>nd</sup> sentence which reads "Then document also covers the procedure where accredited facilities (Certification Bodies (CB), Laboratories and Inspection Bodies (IB)) whose main office or head office is based in any one of the SADC countries that are serviced by SADCAS and has issued SADCAS accredited certificates to clients based from outside the respective country."	SADCAS CEO	2015-07-30
Issue 3	1	1	Paragraph 2, line 2: deleted "programmes" and substituted with "schemes"	SADCAS CEO	2018-11-20
		2.1.2; 2.2.1 and 2.2.2	Added "MRA" between "ILAC" and "IAF"		
	2	2.4; 2.5.1; 2.5.3 and 2.5.4	Added "MRA" between "ILAC" and "IAF"		
	3	2.5.8	New sub-clause added: "Where SADCAS decides to use the results of an assessment already performed by another AB, SADCAS shall ensure that the other AB was operating in accordance with the requirements of the ISO/IEC 17011."		