



Certification Bodies Accreditation Scheme – Products (CBAS- PROD)

Background

The SADCAS Certification Bodies Accreditation Scheme – Products (CBAS-Prod) was established in June 2010. The CBAS - Prod is operated in accordance with ISO/IEC 17011: Conformity assessment – General requirements for accreditation bodies accrediting conformity assessment bodies.

The Need for Accreditation

Certification bodies provide conformity certificates to organizations for their management systems, products as well as personnel. Third party product certification is a frequently specified requirement to operate in the global market place. The overall aim of certifying products, processes or services is to give confidence to all interested parties that a product, process or service fulfils specified requirements. The value of certification is the degree of confidence and trust that is established by an impartial and competent demonstration of fulfilment of specified requirements by a third party. ISO/IEC 17065 specifies requirements, the observance of which is intended to ensure that certification bodies operate certification schemes in a competent, consistent and impartial manner, thereby facilitating the recognition of such bodies and the acceptance of certified products, processes and services on a national and international basis thus furthering international trade. This International Standard can be used as a criteria document for accreditation. Accreditation which is an independent evaluation of product certification bodies against ISO/IEC 17065 by an authoritative body, in this case SADCAS, confirms the competence, consistency and impartiality of the certification body.

Throughout the world many countries now rely on accreditation as a means of independently evaluating competence of certification bodies. With the launches of the Southern African Development Community Free Trade Areas in 2008, the Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA) in March 2018 and the Tripartite Free Trade Area in August 2018, accreditation is poised to play a key role in facilitating trade.

Areas of Product Certification Accredited by SADCAS

SADCAS currently accredits product certification bodies operating in the various industrial sectors including those which certify GLOBALG.A.P.

Systems and British Retail Consortium (BRC). SADCAS will broaden its scope for CBAS - Prod as needs arise.

Why Use an Accredited Product Certification Body?

There are many reasons why you should use the services of an accredited product certification body.

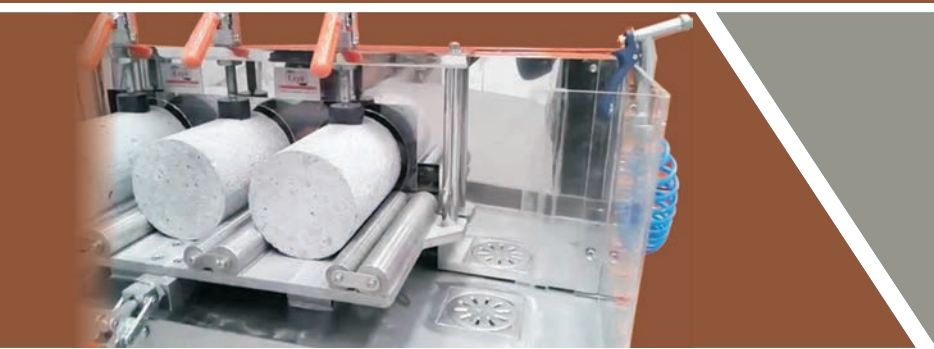
- De – risk your procurement by taking the guesswork out of choosing a certification body. Accreditation gives you confidence that you will get the service that best meets your requirements.
- Win new business particularly since the use of accredited conformity assessment services is increasingly a requirement in both the public and private sector.
- Control costs with the help of knowledge transfer since the accredited certification body can be a good source of impartial advice.
- Demonstrate due diligence in the event of legal action.
- Reduce paperwork and increase efficiency by reducing the necessity to re audit your business.
- Gain access to international market. SADCAS CBAS – Prod is operated in accordance with ISO/IEC 17011.

Accreditation Criteria

Product certification bodies seeking to be accredited by SADCAS on the CBAS – Prod need to comply with ISO/IEC 17065: Conformity assessment - Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services and the applicable IAF MD Series.

The Accreditation Process

- A product system certification body wishing to be accredited submits directly to SADCAS duly completed SADCAS F 43 (e): Application for accreditation of certification bodies for products together with the certification body's quality manual, duly completed SADCAS F 43 (f): Application for approval of personnel i.e. nominated representative in the case of product





certification bodies and duly completed and signed SADCAS F 44: SADCAS accreditation agreement.

- Upon receipt, SADCAS undertakes a **completeness check** of the application documents.
- SADCAS provides the applicant with a detailed quotation based on the scope of application. If acceptable, the applicant signs and returns to SADCAS duly signed quotation.
- SADCAS undertakes a **documentation review** of the applicant's quality manual and provides feedback to the applicant who, if there are nonconformities, institutes corrective action. If the quality manual addresses all the requirements of the standard then the application proceeds to the assessment stage.
- **Pre- assessments are optional but may be compulsory depending on the regulator's condition for acceptance where required. Pre-assessment is an on-site visit to check the readiness of applicant for accreditation.**
- An **initial assessment** of the certification body's competence is undertaken on-site with an opening meeting, an assessment which involves witnessing of certification audits and a closing meeting. Findings from the assessment are recorded as nonconformities where the certification body needs to institute corrective action.

Assessors

Assessors are experts from the public and private sectors as well as from technical institutions/associations in the SADC region who have been trained, qualified and registered as assessors by SADCAS. Assessors trained and qualified by other accreditation bodies and evaluated for competence can also undertake assessments on behalf of SADCAS. An assessment is undertaken by an assessment team consisting of a Team Leader and at least one Technical Assessor/Technical Expert with expertise in the scope of assessment. The assessment team makes **recommendations for accreditation.**

Accreditation Certificate

Accreditation decision is made by the Accreditation Approvals Committee based mainly on the information gathered during an assessment. The accreditation certificate is valid for 5 years and renewed subject to terms and conditions of the CBAS – Prod.

Periodic Onsite Assessment and Re-assessment

In order to maintain accreditation **periodic assessments** are conducted on-site. The first periodic on-site assessment is undertaken not more than 12 months after accreditation thereafter annually throughout the accreditation cycle of 5 years. The intervals between periodic on-site visits can be extended depending on the risks associated but must not exceed two years..

Re-assessments are conducted at least 6 months prior to the end of the accreditation cycle of 5 years.

Appeals

Appeals from product certification bodies on an accreditation decision shall be in writing and shall be forwarded to the Chief Executive Officer within 3 months of the cause of appeal. Appeals are handled in accordance with SADCAS AP 08: Customer feedback handling procedure which maintains independency and impartiality.

Complaints

Complaints concerning SADCAS services, personnel and assessors/experts can be received by any member of staff who shall complete SADCAS F 85 and direct the complaint to the Quality Manager.

Accreditation Fees

SADCAS accreditation fees are contained in SADCAS AP 02: SADCAS service fees. The fees contained therein are estimates. Individual quotations are provided based on the scope of application. SADCAS accreditation fees are reviewed annually.

Accreditation Documents

SADCAS accreditation documents are available from the SADCAS website www.sadcas.org.

For further information, please contact:

Southern African Development Community Accreditation Service

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