



MAURITAS

A14

Procedure for suspension, reduction and withdrawal of accreditation

Mauritius Accreditation Service

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Foreword

The MAURITIUS ACCREDITATION SERVICE (MAURITAS) is a governmental body established in 1998 to provide a national, unified service for the accreditation of Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs) such as calibration/testing laboratories, certification bodies and inspection bodies. Organizations that comply with the MAURITAS requirements are granted accreditation by MAURITAS.

About MAURITAS publications

MAURITAS publications are categorized as follows:

- R series Publications containing general policy and requirements related to MAURITAS accreditation.
- G series Publications providing guidance on MAURITAS requirements.
- A series Publications related to assessment procedures.
- P series MAURITAS quality system procedures
- F series MAURITAS Forms
- Directories Classified listing of accredited organizations.

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Procedure for suspension, reduction and withdrawal of accreditation

1 Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this document is to describe situations or scenarios which can lead to suspension, reduction or withdrawal.

2 Scope and Responsibilities

2.1 This document applies to all accredited CABs and is to be implemented by relevant accreditation decision makers of MAURITAS.

3 References

The following documents contain provisions which, through reference in this text, constitute provisions of the MAURITAS accreditation system. For dated references, subsequent amendments to, or revisions of, any of these publications do not apply. For undated MAURITAS references, the latest edition of the document referred to, applies. MAURITAS maintains a register of the current valid MAURITAS accreditation documents.

3.1 **Mauritius Accreditation Service Act (Act 23 of 1998 Amended 10/17)**

3.2 **MAURITAS A Series documents**

3.3 **MAURITAS P Series documents**

3.4 **MAURITAS R Series documents**

4 Definition

4.1 Suspension

Suspension is the action of putting temporary restrictions in place for all or part of the scope of accreditation.

4.2 Reduction

Reduction is the action of cancelling part of the scope of accreditation.

4.3 Withdrawal (also referred to as 'Termination' in MAURITAS Act 1998):

Withdrawal is the cancelling of accreditation for the full scope.

4.4 Appeal

Appeal is the request by a CAB for reconsideration of any adverse accreditation decision related to its desired accreditation status.

5 Suspension of accreditation

5.1 MAURITAS may suspend the accreditation of CABs based on the following but not limited to:

- Lack of implementation of the management system;
- Changes in the key personnel;
- Lack of competence of personnel;
- Shortcoming in performing corrective actions within the time limit;
- Unacceptable conformity assessment practice;
- Conformity assessment activities in fields where the organisation has no personnel with satisfactory competence;
- Changes in the organisation.
- CAB does not pay its fees after a period of 6 months from date of issue of invoice.
- Failure of CAB to take satisfactory corrective actions in a timely manner for renewing accreditation prior to expiry date

5.2 When a CAB is found to have non-conformities of such magnitude that they threaten the quality of work, but MAURITAS/Assessment Team is satisfied that the management of the CAB has the resources and commitment to complete corrective action within the agreed time frame, the Director may suspend accreditation or part of accreditation of the CAB for a specific period of time if in addition to time taken to submit implemented corrective actions (1.5 months for laboratories and 2 months for certification bodies), the latter fails to complete corrective action within an additional period of 2 weeks.

5.3 In accordance with sub-section 11(2) of the Act, the Director may take decisions on the suspension of accreditation if specified fees are not paid by accredited bodies.

5.4 The Director shall then inform the CAB that the accreditation has been suspended, the reason, duration and date of the suspension and the right of the CAB to appeal against the suspension.

5.5 Should an appeal be received it shall be processed according to the procedure described in MAURITAS P2.

5.6 In the event of a partial/full suspension of accreditation, MAURITAS does not recall the accreditation certificate and schedule; however, a suspended accreditation does not allow the accredited body to use the MAURITAS symbol/Combined Mark on its test reports, calibration certificates, certification body's certificates, inspection reports or other documents nor represent itself as being endorsed by MAURITAS in any way. Since suspension is public information which shall be promulgated by MAURITAS on its Register and web-site and in all other ways considered appropriate at the time. The suspended CAB is required to pay the fees that is due.

5.7 MAURITAS shall suspend the CAB for a maximum period of four months in case the delay for renewal is attributable to the CAB. The re-instatement/renewal shall be effective on the date right after the expiry.

5.8 Following a suspension, MAURITAS shall perform a full assessment activity before recommending the re-instatement of accreditation of the CAB.

5.9 The Accreditation Committee may reinstate accreditation or part of the accreditation of the CAB following a further assessment by MAURITAS whereby the assessment team shall verify whether all requirements of accreditation are being met with evidence of completed corrective action.

5.10 Failure to complete corrective action by the deadline of the suspension, might lead to the withdrawal of the accreditation of the CAB as described in section on 'Withdrawal of accreditation' of this document.'

5.11 Where a CAB is providing third-party conformity assessment to IAF MLA or ILAC MRA Level 1 to 4 standards used as a basis for accrediting CABs (e.g. ISO/IEC 17025, ISO/IEC 17020, ISO 15189) as per established procedure, MAURITAS shall terminate the CAB's application process or initiate its process for

suspension of accreditation (as applicable). Further decisions by MAURITAS shall be based on the actions taken by the CAB.

6 Voluntary Suspension of accreditation

6.1 An accredited CAB may request for voluntary suspension of its scope of accreditation or part of its scope of accreditation if it has valid reasons to believe that for a period of time not exceeding 6 months, it will not be able to satisfy the accreditation requirements such as moving of premises, equipment, change of key personnel. The request shall be made to the Case Officer in writing.

6.2 The Case Officer shall then assess the reasons provided by the CAB and submit recommendation to the Director for evaluation and approval.

6.3 The Case Officer shall then inform the CAB, through a letter, to cease any use of MAURITAS symbol/Combined Mark and any implication of having an association with MAURITAS during the period of suspension. The letter shall also mention that Accreditation Certificates and schedules need not be returned to MAURITAS until voluntary suspension is maintained.

6.4 It is the duty of the CAB to inform MAURITAS when it is ready for an assessment exercise. Should the CAB not inform MAURITAS during the specified period, a letter of reminder shall be issued by the Case Officer. In case the CAB is not able to meet specified deadlines, the accreditation of the CAB may be considered for withdrawal.

6.5 MAURITAS shall make publicly available information about the voluntary suspension of the CAB.

6.6 By reinstatement of accreditation after voluntary suspension, the Case Officer shall inform the CAB about its right to use the MAURITAS symbol/Combined Mark according to MAURITAS R4 document.

7 Reduction/Withdrawal of accreditation

7.1 When a suspended CAB fails to complete satisfactory corrective action by the deadline of the suspension period or when a CAB is shown to be incapable of meeting conditions for MAURITAS accreditation, the accreditation shall be reduced or withdrawn.

7.2 Reduction/withdrawal of accreditation shall be made public on MAURITAS website and shall end any applicable obligations MAURITAS has to the CAB. No refund of subscription is made to the CAB.

7.3 The process of reduction/withdrawal requires preparation of a report for the Accreditation Committee which shall then make a decision on the issue, following the steps listed in **MAURITAS A8, A9 and A18** documents.

7.4 The Director shall then inform the CAB that the accreditation has been reduced/withdrawn, the date and reason of reduction/withdrawal and the right of the CAB to appeal against the decision. The CAB shall be required:

- to return its accreditation certificate, if applicable, and schedule
- to cease the use of the MAURITAS symbol/Combined Mark for the scope reduced or accreditation withdrawn and
- not to associate itself with MAURITAS for the scope reduced or accreditation withdrawn.

7.5 MAURITAS shall remove all reference to the CAB from its website and promulgate the withdrawal in whatever other ways it considers appropriate.

7.6 Where there is evidence of fraudulent behaviour, or the CAB intentionally provides false information or conceals information, or, in addition, if the CAB deliberately violates accreditation rules, as per established procedure, MAURITAS shall initiate its process for withdrawal of accreditation.

7.7 When a CAB decides not to transit to an updated accreditation standard, the accreditation shall automatically be withdrawn at the end of the transition period.

8 Related Forms

Appendix A: Amendment Table

| SN | Section | Amendment |
|----|----------------------------|---|
| 1. | 5.8 | 1. A new paragraph has been added at section 5.8 |
| 2. | 5.1 8 th bullet | 1. 'despite several reminders' replaced by 'from date of issue of invoice' |
| 3. | 3.1 | 1. 3.2 has been deleted and 3.1 has been written as 'Mauritius Accreditation Service Act (Act 23 of 1998 Amended 10/17)' |
| 4. | 5.11 | 1. A new paragraph has been added to include sanction if the CAB provides third party assessment. |
| 5. | 7.2 | 1. Sentence has been amended to include 'shall be made public on MAURITAS website'. |
| 6. | 7.6 | 1. 'or, in addition, if the CAB deliberately violates accreditation rules, as per established procedure, MAURITAS shall initiate its process for withdrawal of accreditation.' has been added at the end of the sentence. |