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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 such as calibration/testing laboratories, certification bodies and inspection bodies. Organizations that comply with the MAURITAS requirements are granted accreditation by MAURITAS and are entitled to use the MAURITAS Accreditation symbol.

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.
- Directories Classified listing of accredited organizations.

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Guidance for MAURITAS assessors and experts for certification body accreditation

1. General

1.1 MAURITAS is managing a national accreditation service for certification bodies. For this task MAURITAS is making use of assessors/experts. Assessors/Experts can be from MAURITAS or external e.g local or foreign. The task of an assessor/expert is to assess the applicant's management system, organisation, competence and working methods against specified requirements, and during surveillance to assess how accredited organisations continue to meet the accreditation requirements. An assessment team will normally include assessors/experts with different technical competence.

1.2 The accreditation process for a first time applicant includes the following principal elements:

- Control of received application form (MAURITAS)
- Registration and invoicing of application fee (MAURITAS)
- Appointment of lead assessor and technical assessor(s)/expert(s) (MAURITAS)
- Acceptance of the selected assessors/experts (Applicant)
- Lead assessor evaluates the documentation
- Pre-assessment if relevant (Lead assessor/MAURITAS Staff)
- The other assessors/experts evaluates the documentation
- Necessary corrective actions of indicated non-compliances (applicant)
- Examine the report to evaluate if the actions are satisfactory (MAURITAS)
- Agree upon visit with the applicant (lead assessor)
- The applicant confirm the visit (applicant)
- Assessment visit at the applicant (assessors/experts)
- Witnessing of the organisation's performance of its work (assessors/experts)
- Report from the visit and the witnessing (assessors/experts)
- The applicant makes corrective actions on the non-conformities
- The MAURITAS Staff prepares an accreditation report with recommendation made by the assessment team to the Accreditation Committee
- The Accreditation Committee makes the decision about accreditation.

1.3 Assessment should be performed in accordance with MAURITAS practice and in accordance with relevant international guidelines and requirement standards. The criteria in these international standards refer to assessor's conduct, report, organisation and performance of the assessment.

Organisations applying for accreditation should meet the requirements of the relevant standard in the applied field. IAF guidelines specify how to meet the different requirements in the standard. Section 4 of this document gives further detail on the use of these documents.

2. Purpose

2.1 This document gives a general guidance for the performance of assessments of certification bodies. In addition this document gives some other information of interest for MAURITAS assessors.

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 ISO/IEC 19011, Guidelines for auditing management systems**
- 3.2 ISO/IEC 17011, Conformity assessment – General requirements for accreditation bodies accrediting conformity assessment bodies**
- 3.3 ISO/IEC 17065, General requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services**
- 3.4 ISO/IEC 17021, Conformity assessment – Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems**
- 3.5 ISO/IEC 17024, Conformity assessment – General requirements for bodies operating certification of persons**
- 3.6 MAURITAS G7, MAURITAS fees - A guide for certification bodies**
- 3.7 MAURITAS R Series**
- 3.8 IAF GD 3, IAF Guidance On Cross Frontier Accreditation**
- 3.9 IAF GD 5, Guidance on ISO/IEC Guide 65**
- 3.10 IAF GD 24, Guidance on the Application of ISO/IEC 17024**
- 3.11 IAF MD 1, Certification of Multiple Sites Based on Sampling**
- 3.12 IAF MD 2, Transfer of Accredited Certification of Management Systems**
- 3.13 IAF MD 5, Duration of QMS and EMS Audits**
- 3.14 IAF MD 7, Harmonisation of Sanctions**
- 3.15 IAF MD 10, Assessment of Certification Body Management of Competence in Accordance with ISO/IEC 17021**
- 3.16 IAF MD 12, Assessment of Certification Activities for Cross-Frontier Accreditation**

4. IAF Documents

Certification bodies offering management systems certification should refer to the relevant IAF documents as specified below:

4.1 IAF MD 1: Certification of Multiple Sites Based on Sampling

Certification Bodies should refer to IAF MD 1 document if they make use of sampling in their audit as well as certification of multi-site organizations. However relevant standards may provide specific requirements for multiple sites or preclude the use of sampling (e.g. ISO/IEC 27006, ISO/TS 22003).

4.2 IAF MD 2: Transfer of Accredited Certification of management systems

This document provides normative criteria on the transfer of accredited management system certification between certification bodies.

4.3 IAF MD 5: Duration of QMS and EMS Audits

IAF MD5 is a mandatory document that provides guidance to certification bodies so that they are able to develop their own documented procedures for determining the amount of time required for the auditing of clients of differing sizes and complexity over a broad spectrum of activities. The purpose of this document is to have consistency of audit duration between certification bodies, as well as between similar clients of the same certification bodies.

4.4 IAF MD 7: Harmonisation of Sanctions

An applicant or an accredited certification body may be subject to suspension, withdrawal or reduction of scope according to MAURITAS procedures. The purpose of IAF MD 7 is to clarify the situations where sanctions will be applied to the certification bodies and the subsequent necessary communication which will be taken by the Accreditation Body.

Situations that lead to sanctions being applied to applicant or accredited certification bodies include, but are not limited to the following:

- Failure to resolve nonconformities in accordance with MAURITAS procedures;
- Negative outcome of a complaint investigation;
- Misuse/misrepresentation of an accreditation symbol;
- Non-payment of fees.

4.5 IAF MD 10: Assessment of Certification Body Management of Competence in Accordance with ISO/IEC 17021

The Certification Body should be able to demonstrate to MAURITAS that all personnel involved in performing certification functions have the required competence.

4.6 IAF MD 12, Assessment of Certification Activities for Cross-Frontier Accreditation

Certification Bodies that provide certification in countries outside the country in which their head office is located will have to meet the requirements of IAF MD 12 document.

4.7 IAF GD 3: IAF Guidance On Cross Frontier Accreditation

Accreditation Bodies operate as a network, each providing an equivalent accreditation service. IAF operates a programme of conformity assessment which promotes the elimination of non-tariff barriers to trade, removing technical barriers caused by demands for specific certification and/or registration requirements. The IAF programme of conformity assessment delivers the confidence needed for market acceptance of certificates in the fields of management systems, products, services, personnel and other similar programmes of conformity assessment.

4.8 IAF GD 5: Guidance on ISO/IEC Guide 65

ISO/IEC Guide 65 is an International Standard which sets out criteria for bodies operating certification of products, services and processes. If such bodies are to be accredited worldwide in a harmonized manner as complying with Guide 65 some Guidance to the Guide is necessary. These Guidance Notes enable accreditation bodies to harmonize their application of the standards against which they are bound to assess certification bodies. This is an important step towards mutual recognition of accreditation.

4.9 IAF GD 24: Guidance on Application of ISO/IEC 17024

This Guidance will form the basis of mutual recognition arrangements between accreditation bodies, and is considered necessary for the consistent application of ISO/IEC 17024. Members of the IAF Multilateral Recognition Arrangement (MLA), and applicants for membership in that Arrangement, will assess each others' implementation of ISO/IEC 17024, and all of this Guidance is expected to be adopted by accreditation bodies as part of their general rules of operation.

5. Working instructions

5.1 Instruction for lead assessor

For an application of first time accreditation, the tasks for the lead assessor will consist of the following:

Prior to the assessment visit:

1. The MAURITAS Staff proposes the names of the team members forming part of the assessment team and gets its approval from the Director to ensure that the team has sufficient competence to carry out the assessment visit, **F1.09**.
2. The lead assessor should review the organisation's documentation.
 - If there are essential shortages which are vital for the applicant about the applicant's documentation for accreditation, a written feedback to the MAURITAS Staff should be given together with a note identifying the shortages, and which can be transmitted to the applicant.
 - If there are no essential shortages, the lead assessor should either conduct the pre-assessment upon request of the MAURITAS Staff or advise the other participants of the assessment team to examine the documents.
 - Lead assessor is responsible that the other participants in the assessment team have clear instructions about what is expected to be done, including time limits. The instructions must not be in conflict with MAURITAS agreement with the current assessor/expert.
3. The lead assessor should within 2 weeks forward a report from document review **F4.02**, for MAURITAS use only, to the MAURITAS Staff. Attached to the report, there may be comments from the other members of the assessment team.
4. As a result of the document review, the lead assessor should make use of the report, **F4.02**, to prepare for the assessment exercise.
5. After consultation with the MAURITAS Staff, the lead assessor should make a plan for the visit and necessary witnessing. MAURITAS Staff coordinates with the certification body and assessment team, in writing, regarding the assessment exercise. MAURITAS Staff sends a copy of the plan to the assessment team and the certification body.
6. The lead assessor should distribute tasks within the assessment team and give necessary guidance. (This may be done in an internal meeting within the assessment team before the opening meeting).

During the assessment visit and witnessing:

7. The lead assessor should carry out the opening meeting, the assessment, the witnessing, the closing meeting and reporting of non-conformities as described in this document.

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8. The lead assessor should guide the other members in the assessment team.
 9. The lead assessor should evaluate the work done by the other technical assessors/experts.

After the assessment visit:

10. The lead assessor should evaluate the reports, **F4.03 and F4.07**, from the other technical assessors/experts for requirements they covered during the assessment visit. If they are satisfactory, the lead assessor merges and sends a final report, **F4.07**, to the Head of Certification Body and Quality section within 3 weeks after the assessment visit.
11. For witnessing, the following relevant reports should be issued by the lead assessor:
 - Report for witnessing of system, **F4.04** or product certification
 - Report for witnessing of personnel certification
12. If necessary, the lead assessor should agree upon a time for verification of corrective action with the certification body and the other assessors.

Others:

The lead assessor should only assign tasks to the assessor team members for which they have been qualified to perform.

5.2 Instruction for technical assessor/technical expert

5.2.1 Instruction for technical assessor/technical expert concerning ISO/IEC 17065 (product certification)

Technical assessor/technical expert's tasks will be as follows:

Prior to the assessment visit (may be verified during the visit):

1. The technical assessor/expert should review the technical procedures, standards and CVs of key personnel in his field.
2. The technical assessor/expert should evaluate whether competence/competence requirements and technical contents of the procedures are satisfactory.
3. The technical assessor/expert should evaluate whether the product standards/the normative documents which certified products are sufficient. (See IAF GD5)

During the assessment visit at the applicant:

4. The technical assessor/expert should evaluate the implementation of the technical procedures and evaluate registrations/documentation of performed certifications and surveillance/renewal of certifications.
5. The technical assessor/expert should assist the lead assessor with technical expertise during the visit at the certification body and if relevant during the witnessing of an audit at the licensee/manufacturer.
6. The technical assessor/expert should witness whether certification, testing and/or audit are performed in accordance with their written procedures.

After the assessment visit:

7. Within 2 weeks or otherwise agreed, the technical assessor/expert should prepare a report from the assessment visit taking into account the above mentioned points.
8. Within 2 weeks unless otherwise agreed, the technical assessor/expert should prepare a report [16] from witnessing of an audit at the licensee.

Others:

The assessor/expert has an obligation to notify the lead assessor and/or MAURITAS Staff if he/she goes beyond the frames which have been agreed with regard to tasks and economy. If the body has its own testing activities, the assessment should be performed in accordance with relevant parts in the guidelines for assessment of laboratories.

5.2.2 Instruction for technical assessor/technical expert concerning ISO/IEC 17024 (personnel certification)

Technical assessors/technical experts' tasks will be as follows:

Prior to the assessment visit (may be verified during the visit):

1. The technical assessor/expert should review the technical procedures, standards and CV's of key personnel in his field.
2. The technical assessor/expert should evaluate whether competence/competence requirements and technical contents of the procedures are satisfactory.
3. The technical assessor/expert should evaluate whether the competence standards which certified personnel are sufficient.

During the assessment visit:

4. The technical assessor/expert should evaluate the implementation of the technical procedures and evaluate registrations/documentation of performed certifications and surveillance/renewal of certifications.
5. The technical assessor/expert should assist the lead assessor with technical expertise during the visit at the certification body and during witnessing of examination of certification candidates.
6. The technical assessor/expert should witness whether examination is performed in accordance with their written procedures and if the examination is performed in a professional way.

After the assessment visit:

7. Within 2 weeks unless otherwise agreed, the technical assessor/expert should prepare a report from the assessment visit taking into account the above mentioned points.
8. Within 2 weeks unless otherwise agreed, the technical assessor/expert should prepare a short report from the witnessing of the examination.

Others:

The technical assessor/expert has an obligation to notify the lead assessor and/or MAURITAS Staff if he/she goes beyond the frames which have been agreed with regard to tasks and economy.

5.2.3 Instruction for technical assessor/technical expert concerning ISO/IEC 17021(certification of quality management systems, HACCP systems, environmental management systems and information security management systems).

Technical assessor/expert is used in assessment of systems certification, in connection with witnessing of a certification body's audit at a particular company, evaluation of a certification body's competence within a technical area, assistance by interviewing of a certification body's personnel with technical competence etc. Relevant parts of paragraphs 5.2.1 and 5.2.2 will be in force. By witnessing of certification bodies for environmental management systems it will be relevant to include technical assessor /expert with environmental competence.

After a witnessing of a certification body's audit at a company, a report, **F4.03**, should be prepared by the technical assessor/expert within 2 weeks after the witnessing, unless otherwise agreed.

6. Assessment

6.1 Introduction

One of MAURITAS tasks is to assess and accredit certification bodies, and ensure by surveillance visits that they continue to meet the accreditation requirements.

Assessment visits at the organisation and witnessing of the performance of their work play a central part in this work.

Each applicant for accreditation should fill in an application form which gives important information about the applicant and the activities the applicant wishes to get accredited. The quality manual, procedures and other important information should be attached to the application. Application fees, **MAURITAS G7**, should also accompany the application form, **F4.01**.

MAURITAS assessors/experts should evaluate whether the documentation is in accordance with the requirements in the accreditation standard applied for.

If the documentation is in accordance with the abovementioned criteria, MAURITAS assessor/expert should during visit to the applicant and witnessing of performance of the applicant's work, evaluate whether the documentation is implemented and whether the applicant has the right competence.

6.2 The scope of accreditation

It is MAURITAS policy to define the scope of an organisation's accreditation as precisely as possible. By first time accreditation or by extensions, the applicant should specify the activities which are to be included in the accreditation schedule.

The scope of accreditation for certification bodies for management systems shall be defined according to the scope sectors in **IAF GD 5**.

6.3 Checklists

Assessors/Experts should make use of report form, **F4.07**, as checklist during the office assessment while during witnessing activities, the assessors/experts should make use of the form **F4.03/F4.04** in order to achieve a systematic assessment. The forms should be filled and be forwarded to MAURITAS together with the assessment report in electronic format.

6.4 *Documentation essential for assessors/experts*

MAURITAS Staff should provide the assessment team with the necessary documentation.

Necessary documentation includes documentation as described below:

The lead assessor should receive in advance:

- a) The applicant's/the accredited body's quality manual and procedures
- b) A copy of the application form with annexes (when relevant)
- c) Copy of relevant correspondence (letters, e-mail)
- d) A copy of the last previous assessment report if applicable. (Not relevant for first time visit)
- e) Brief information about extensions of scope of accreditation or other changes since the last visit, if relevant.

The documentation may also include, when relevant:

- a) MAURITAS Regulations
- b) CVs for the key personnel

Technical assessors/experts should receive in advance:

- a) The applicant's/the accredited body's quality manual and relevant procedures (normally)
- b) A copy of the application with annexes (when relevant)
- c) A copy of the previous assessment report (when relevant)
- d) MAURITAS Regulations
- e) CVs for relevant technical personnel (may be verified during the visit)

6.5 *Performance*

6.5.1 *Pre-assessment*

Depending on whether there are essential shortages in the documentation complying with the accreditation requirements, a pre-assessment may be agreed with the applicant. The pre-assessment is normally performed by the MAURITAS Staff and/or lead assessor and should last for 1 (one) to 2 (two) days. During the pre-assessment the assessor should be aware that he/she is not involved in consultancy because this is not acceptable. The following items should be taken care of during the visit unless there are other reasons:

- a) Review of the accreditation requirements
- b) If necessary, comments based on the document review
- c) The MAURITAS procedure which has to be followed during assessments of applicants
- d) If necessary, time schedule for forwarding documents to be used during initial assessment

After the pre-assessment, the lead assessor prepares and submits a brief report to MAURITAS. The report has to highlight:

- a) What was examined during the pre-assessment
- b) The assessor resources being necessary for the initial assessment of the applicant
- c) Actions which have to be implemented before an initial assessment can be planned

Following the pre-assessment visit, the findings shall be reported by the Lead Assessor to MAURITAS, in writing. The report should indicate:

- a) whether plans for initial assessment of the certification body can proceed, or
- b) specific reasons why plans cannot proceed.

The recommendations should be supported by general and detailed comments.

MAURITAS will inform the applicant certification body about appropriate course of action based on the recommendation of the Lead Assessor. MAURITAS will not issue to the certification body any detailed checklist or documents that have been used during the course of the pre-assessment.

6.5.2 Assessment visit

Prior to the assessment visit, the assessment team should meet to clarify the job allocation and programme. This can be arranged at the applicant's premises immediately before the opening meeting or at an earlier stage. In some cases, it can be arranged by telephone or through correspondence.

The assessment visit contains the following elements:

- a) Opening meeting, **F4.01**, with participants from the assessment team and representatives from the organisation
- b) Verification of documents and interviews
- c) An internal meeting among the assessment team to prepare for the closing meeting (at assessment lasting longer than one day it is often adequate to have an internal meeting at the end of each day for summing-up/coordination).
- d) A closing meeting to present the conclusion of the visit for the organisation's representatives.

6.5.3 Opening meeting

The purpose of the meeting is:

- a) That the organisation's representatives and MAURITAS assessment team should become acquainted
- b) To clarify issues, if any
- c) To confirm the assessment plan for the visit.

The contents of the opening meeting will normally be:

- a) Introductions
- b) A presentation of the assessment plan
- c) An explanation of the purpose of the assessment and the methods
- d) An explanation of the roles of the organisation's representative during the assessment
- e) An explanation of what will happen at the closing meeting
- f) An assurance that all findings will be treated in confidentiality
- g) Changes within organization since last contact with MAURITAS, including management structure and personnel
- h) Explanation of any specific requirements
- i) Confirmation of resources and facilities needed by assessment team, including allocation of company representative/s to accompany the team member
- j) Confirm arrangements for closing meeting and any interim meetings
- k) Clarification of who is authorised by the client to accept the non-conformities and to propose corrective actions
- l) An opportunity for the organisation's representatives to ask relevant questions.

6.5.4 Performance of assessment

The purpose of the document review is to consider whether the applicant's quality documentation is in accordance with MAURITAS regulations and requirements of the accreditation standard.

The purpose of the assessment done at the applicant's premises is to confirm if the certification body's management system and procedures are satisfactorily implemented.

All conclusions must be objective and fair. Therefore, they have to be based on objective evidence which can be verified and re-examined.

An assessor must not be engaged in the solution of the certification body's non-conformities, because this will threaten MAURITAS independence.

If during the assessment, it becomes obvious that the system is not implemented within basic fields or there are other considerable non-conformities, the assessment visit should be stopped and the organisation must be informed about the reason for the decision.

6.5.5 Non-conformity report

Non-conformities are classified into three categories depending on the degree of seriousness:

Very serious non-conformity: Non-conformities where the credibility to the organisations accreditation is seriously threatened. A warning of suspension will be evaluated for the whole accreditation or relevant parts of it (valid for accredited organisations). **Category 1.**

Essential non-conformity: Non-conformity where corrective action must be completed within a specified time interval to avoid suspension. **Category 2.**

Minor non-conformity: Non-conformity which can be an isolated incident and does not affect the results of the organisation's accredited activities. **Category 3.**

Non-conformity report form, **F4.05**, should be used to describe the categories of the non-conformities very serious or essential. Follow up and verification are carried out on the agreed corrective actions during the next visit.

The non-conformity report should contain only factual observations related to lack of compliance within a specific clause in the applicant's own procedures or with respect to MAURITAS regulations or the requirement of the accreditation standard. The assessor should avoid making tendentious or emotive statements in the report or using it as opportunity to lecture the organisation on how to manage its affairs. It should be the responsibility of the lead assessor assisted by the assessment team to discuss and agree on all identified non-conformities prior to the closing meeting.

All relevant columns in the non-conformity report form should be filled in.

For the initial assessment, the time limit for presentation of corrective actions (category 1, 2 and 3) should normally be 3 months with an opportunity for prolongation over a maximum period of 1 month. For surveillance of existing accreditations, the time limit will normally be 8 weeks for non-conformities with an opportunity for prolongation over a maximum period of 2 weeks. For surveillance of existing accreditations, it can be necessary to shorten the time limit if it is found necessary to implement corrective actions as soon as possible. Especially this will be necessary in connection with non-conformities of category 1 which normally will lead to a warning about suspension. In this context, MAURITAS procedures for suspension and withdrawal will be followed.

6.5.6 Summary

After the assessors have completed their individual assignments, an internal meeting within the assessment team should take place, where all assessors present their non-conformities and conclusions. The lead assessor will use this as a basis for a summary at the closing meeting. If the assessment team cannot reach a conclusion about a finding, the team should refer back to the accreditation body for clarification.

The summary should include all conditions which need to be corrected and the lead assessor's recommendation to MAURITAS. The lead assessor's recommendation may for example be that a new assessment visit need to be performed, a new witnessing (Section 6.7) or a recommendation for granting accreditation with or without any conditions (like implementation of corrective actions for closing of non-conformities).

The summary should not only be a reiteration of the contents in the non-conformity reports. It should for example correlate individual non-conformities which are not serious but together reveal serious weaknesses in the system.

The summary should also give positive feedback to the organisation when relevant.

6.5.7 Factors affecting recommendations for accreditation

In deciding on his/her recommendation, the lead assessor should take into consideration the number of different category of non-conformities.

If no non-conformities are identified, the lead assessor should normally recommend that accreditation be granted.

If non-conformities have been raised, the lead assessor will recommend that the accreditation be granted upon submission of satisfactory implemented corrective actions to MAURITAS. All implemented corrective actions have to be verified at the next surveillance visit.

If there are basic shortages in the system, a complete new assessment visit may be recommended or a refusal of accreditation. If a new assessment visit is recommended, all part of the system that need to be evaluated during the next visit should be highlighted in the summary report, **F4.06**.

When closing non-conformities, the lead assessor or technical assessor, where relevant should make the following evaluations:

- a) If the non-conformity should be closed based on satisfactory corrected procedures;
- b) If the non-conformity should be closed based on satisfactory corrected procedures in addition to evidence of implementation;
- c) If the non-conformity should be closed based on a visit to verify the implementation of the corrective actions.

6.5.8 Closing meeting with the organisation representatives

The purpose of the closing meeting, **F1.04**, is to present to the organisation's representatives a summary of the results of the assessment.

The lead assessor should normally:

- a) thank the applicant for their assistance and cooperation;
- b) emphasise that some non-conformities may not have been discovered;
- c) present a summary of non-conformities identified, together with the summary report ;
- d) inform the organisation about the date by which implemented corrective actions need to be submitted to MAURITAS (see paragraph 6.5.5);
- e) conclusion with respect to effectiveness of organisation's system;
- f) answer any questions;
- g) hand a copy of non-conformity reports with the applicant together with a copy of the summary report;

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- h) close the meeting.

During the closing meeting, the assessment team should not be lead into debating about the validity of their conclusions or their recommendations. If these are questioned, the lead assessor may, however, give a short reason and refer to the non-conformity or combination of non-conformities which lead to that conclusion. If the applicant still do not accept the conclusion, the lead assessor should advise the applicant to take up the matter with MAURITAS and Accreditation Committee.

6.6 Reporting

See the description under the working instructions in Section 5.

6.7 Witnessing of the applicant's performance of assessments

In addition to the assessment visit, there should be at least one witnessing of the certification body in operation before accreditation is recommended.

For product certification, an audit of a licensee/manufacture should be witnessed.

For system certification, an audit of a certified organisation's management system for each type of system for which they have applied should be witnessed. (If the applicant's audit is a combination of more systems, the witnessing will cover all systems included in the audit). Relevant documentation that normally should be presented for the assessment team prior to assessment are CV's for the audit team and report from the last audit, where relevant.

For personnel certification, the examination of personnel competence should be witnessed. The total number of witnessing will depend upon what is included in the application.

Assessors/experts who participate during witnessing should only witness the applicant's performance with the intention to consider:

- a) The applicant's competence
- b) Whether the application's procedures are followed
- c) If all relevant aspects are covered
- d) MAURITAS assessors/experts should abstain from being actively engaged in the process. So as not to interfere with the certification body's personnel, questions can, to a limited extent, be asked in order to clarify things.

Assessment reports, **F4.03** and **F4.04**, after the witnessing should be prepared. Report, **F4.04**, should be used if an audit of a management system is witnessed by the lead assessor. The technical assessor/expert should fill in the report, **F4.03**, during his/her witnessing.

Unsatisfactory performance should be reported as non-conformities (ref. paragraph 6.5.5) as described above. If possible, MAURITAS assessors/experts should give feedback to those being witnessed when the witnessing is finished.

If the witnessing take place at companies where there is a requirement for the use of personnel protection equipment, the assessment team should call attention to that, if protection equipment is not distributed. In such cases, if protection equipment is not provided, the assessment team should not perform the witnessing.

6.8 Surveillance

The purpose of surveillance is to determine whether an organisation is continuing to comply with the requirements for accreditation. During the first accreditation cycle (4 years) assessments visits should be performed annually, and

all elements in the standard should be assessed during the accreditation cycle. The report from each assessment visit should show which parts of the standards have been assessed. Surveillance visits will be according to the surveillance plan. The final report, **F4.07**, is written and submitted for any representative of the certification body for verification of the contents and the report is signed in accordance with MAURITAS policy and practice.

If a technical assessor/expert is participating in the assessment, he/she should complete the relevant part of the report.

The following points should normally be checked during each regular surveillance visit:

- a) Major changes in organisation, key personnel and procedures
- b) Implementation of corrective actions on non-conformities from the last visit
- c) Documents showing how certifications have been performed and the competence which has been used to carry out certification activities
- d) Appeals and complaints
- e) Internal audit and management review
- f) The contents in advertising and web-sites
- g) Certificates
- h) Use of accreditation marks

6.9 Renewal

For renewal, a document review should be performed if there are essential changes in the management system after the last assessment. The assessment visit will be the same as for the initial accreditation.

The lead assessor's recommendation from a renewal visit will depend upon the number of non-conformities and category. The recommendation will be one of the following alternatives:

- a) Unconditional renewal (if no non-conformity has been found).
- b) Renewal under the condition that all non-conformities are closed within agreed time.
- c) Suspension (of the whole or parts of the accreditation) for a specified period until corrective actions on non-conformities have been implemented and a new visit has been performed with satisfactory results.

Suspension of an accreditation should be evaluated if non-conformities of category 1 have been found.

6.10 General attributes of assessors/experts

During an assessment visit or witnessing, different problems may show up. It should always remain the duty of the individual assessor/expert to weigh all the evidence available before making a judgment on a particular situation in an organisation. Assessors should always bear in mind the need for tact and objectivity. It is important to be aware that to be assessed may be a great mental stress for the auditees.

Assessors/experts should act in a prejudice manner and be able to accept new solutions on old problems as long as the existing requirements are satisfactory met.

7. Assessor Monitoring

At least once every three years, MAURITAS should carry out monitoring of each assessor used. This monitoring should be performed during a visit to the certification body and should be recorded. The appraisal should be performed by the Director of MAURITAS or any relevant senior staff designated by him.

Every three years, all active assessors will be requested formally by MAURITAS to confirm, or otherwise, that their originally identified competencies are still valid. This may be done through the use of an updated CV. Assessors will of course be expected to inform MAURITAS of any changes in the interim.

8. Invoicing

MAURITAS covers the expenses for travelling, accommodation costs and travelling time according to Governmental rates for assessors/experts outside Mauritius, in addition to the assessment fees charged by these assessors/experts or their accreditation body.

The assessment work will be invoiced to MAURITAS after the performance of the work and after the report is submitted to MAURITAS.

For local assessors and experts which are hired as private persons by MAURITAS, they should be remunerated at a rate fixed by MAURITAS.

9. Impartiality

MAURITAS assessors/experts are obliged to inform MAURITAS if they or their employers have performed any service during the last three years for a client being assessed.

In the same way, they are obliged to inform MAURITAS of other situations which possibly can affect the evaluation of a current client.

10. Confidentiality

MAURITAS assessors and experts are obliged to be strictly observant of the rules of the Official's Secrets Acts and MAURITAS rules for confidentiality. Information about MAURITAS customers which is acquired through the task as MAURITAS assessor should not be revealed to a third party. Documentation received from MAURITAS or MAURITAS customer or documentation prepared by the assessor himself should be protected against access from a third party. Confidential documents must not be sent by telefax if not agreed by the affected party. Confidential documentation cannot be thrown, but must be destroyed or returned to those it may concern.

MAURITAS policy is also not to reveal information about applicant's identity outside MAURITAS.

11. Distribution of documents

MAURITAS management system includes all documents necessary for performance of accreditation activities. MAURITAS is keeping their assessors and experts updated with all documents which are necessary for performance of MAURITAS tasks. Information about changes will normally be done by use of e-mail, or sending copies of documents by mail, if necessary or from website of MAURITAS (www.mauritas.org). Assessors and experts are obliged to take care of the distributed documents and keep themselves updated.

12. Related Forms:

- Agenda Opening Meeting, F1.01
- Declaration of confidentiality for assessors/technical experts, F1.02
- Agenda Closing Meeting, F1.04
- Resource Review Form, F1.09
- Assessor monitoring checklist, F1.10
- Application - Accreditation of certification body for management systems certification, F4.01
- Non-Conformity Report, F4.05
- Summary Report, F4.06
- Lead assessor's report from assessment of certification bodies for management systems, F4.07

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