



MAURITAS P13

Procedure for Cross Frontier Accreditation

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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 cross frontier accreditation

1. Purpose

1.1 This procedure shall consider the approach that needs to be followed in handling requests on cross frontier accreditation in connection with foreign Accreditation Bodies or CABs.

2. Scope and Responsibilities

2.1 This procedure describes the process undertaken by MAURITAS for the assessment of CABs that provide conformity assessment services in countries outside Mauritius. It is the responsibility of all MAURITAS staff to ensure that the procedure is adhered to for cross frontier accreditation

3. Reference

- 3.1 **IAF MD 12** : Accreditation Assessment of Conformity Assessment Bodies with Activities in Multiple Countries
- 3.2 **ILAC G21** : Cross-Frontier accreditation Principles for Cooperation
- 3.3 **MAURITAS A Series**

4. Definition

4.1 Cross frontier accreditation is accreditation services provided by the Accreditation Body to laboratories, certification bodies or inspection bodies in other economy at the request of foreign Accreditation Bodies or CABs.

4.2 Fixed office location is the permanent premises where certification activities are performed and/or managed for the CAB, regardless of location and relationship with the CAB.

4.3 Remote personnel are individuals, who may be internal or external that perform certification activities for a CAB and do not work at a fixed office location

4.4 Critical Location refers to physical location where important activities, not limited to the following, are carried out:

- the process for initial qualification, training and ongoing monitoring of auditors and assessment personnel records; or
- the application review, the assignment of assessment personnel, and/or review of the final report; or
- the certification/registration decision based on the final review of the assessment report.

5. Procedure

5.1 On receipt of the request from foreign CABs, MAURITAS staff will examine same with the Director of MAURITAS about the possibilities of whether to provide the accreditation service or not, based on the following criteria:

- a) There is no domestic Accreditation Body.
- b) The domestic Accreditation Body does not offer accreditation for the required scope.
- c) The domestic Accreditation Body is not a signatory to the IAF/ILAC Arrangement.
- d) The CABs clients require accreditation by a specific Accreditation Body, and will not be persuaded to accept the domestic equivalent.

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- e) The CABs are part of a group who wants all their CABs to be accredited by the same Accreditation Body.
 - f) The risks associated with the activities, location and personnel of the CAB.

5.2 Where one or more domestic accreditation bodies that are IAF/ILAC Arrangement signatories for the requested scope of accreditation exist in the country (economy) of the applicant, and the applicant still elects to apply for accreditation from MAURITAS, MAURITAS should in accordance with the requirements to have a program to promote the IAF/ILAC Arrangement with major stakeholders (as specified in IAF/ILAC A2) take the following steps before accepting the application:

- a) Enquire if the applicant is aware of the domestic Accreditation Body.
- b) Enquire with the domestic Accreditation Body regarding status and history of the applicant CAB, if any, after obtaining its approval.
- c) Suggest that accreditation provided by a domestic Accreditation Body would better take account of local factors and conditions, where relevant.
- d) Point out the equivalence of the domestic Accreditation Body's accreditations as demonstrated through the IAF/ILAC Arrangement.
- e) Point out that, according to the principles in ILAC G21 and IAF MD 12, and even if the application is accepted, the local Accreditation Body may be involved in the accreditation process.

5.3 MAURITAS should proceed with the application only if the applicant insists in obtaining accreditation by MAURITAS.

6. Cooperation with the domestic Accreditation Body

6.1 MAURITAS shall seek acceptance from the applicant before consulting with the domestic Accreditation Body.

6.2 When MAURITAS decides to provide accreditation services outside the Mauritian economy, it shall ensure that appropriate assessors are used, taking into account factors such as language, local laws and regulations, culture, etc., as well as technical competence requirements. MAURITAS shall also consult the domestic Accreditation Body and take into consideration any relevant accreditation requirements that the domestic Accreditation Body has set to suit the local conditions.

6.3 The preferred approach to ensure access to relevant competence is to cooperate to the greatest extent practicable with the domestic Accreditation Body by using its personnel, as appropriate, on the Assessment Team.

6.4 If it is not possible to include personnel from the domestic Accreditation Body on the Assessment Team, cooperation with the domestic Accreditation Body shall be extended to invite the domestic Accreditation Body to observe the assessment, subject to acceptance by the applicant CAB.

6.5 Where the domestic Accreditation Body is not a signatory to the IAF/ILAC Arrangement, or where the scope of the domestic Accreditation Body does not cover the requested activity, the foreign Accreditation Body should try to cooperate with the domestic Accreditation Body according to these principles so as to provide the domestic Accreditation Body with the opportunity to gain experience to apply for the IAF/ILAC Arrangement.

6.6 The same approach shall be applied for reassessment and assessment activities performed by MAURITAS outside the Mauritian economy.

6.7 In all cases, the objective of an eventual change, with the accreditation moving to the relevant domestic Accreditation Body, shall be borne in mind when the domestic Accreditation Body becomes a signatory to the ILAC Arrangement for the relevant scope or when the applicant/accredited CAB so chooses.

7. Data collection on certification activities from CABs

7.1 MAURITAS shall plan its assessment program for the CAB that is involved in certification activities based on up-to-date knowledge of the full geographic scope of the CAB's accredited activities. MAURITAS shall collect all data and record all the information obtained from the CAB for planning assessments. MAURITAS shall require its accredited CAB's, within its scope of accreditation to identify:

- a) Countries into which accredited certificates are issued and the number of certificates issued in each country;
- b) Countries in which the CAB operates from a fixed office location that performs any certification activities;
- c) Countries in which the CAB has remote personnel that perform any certification activities;
- d) Which fixed office locations are responsible for performing and/or managing key activities as defined in IAF/ILAC A5, or from where remote personnel performing key activities are managed; and
- e) The CAB's arrangements for managing all activities that are performed from a foreign fixed office location or by remote personnel.

8. Assessment program for certification activities

8.1 MAURITAS shall have an assessment program, covering the current accreditation period that enables it to confirm the CAB's conformity with the requirements of the relevant conformity assessment standard(s), within the CAB's scope of accreditation, irrespective of where certification activities are performed.

8.2 The program shall be developed to identify the activities and key activities to be assessed and the countries where these are performed and/or managed, taking account of the following:

- i) The relationship between the CAB and its foreign entities and subsidiaries;
- ii) The CAB's arrangements for managing its foreign certification activities;
- iii) Whether the CAB holds accreditation from the local AB;
- iv) The number of fixed office locations, undertaking certification activities, in each country;
- v) The number of remote personnel, undertaking certification activities, in each country;
- vi) Where key activities are performed and managed or from where remote personnel performing key activities are managed;
- vii) The range of certification activities performed, where they are performed and from where remote personnel are managed;
- viii) The effectiveness of the CAB's management controls of its certification activities;
- ix) The accessibility of the CAB's records;
- x) The availability of selected CAB personnel (internal and external) for interview;
- xi) The number of certificates issued through a particular fixed office location;
- xii) Schemes for which certification is granted through a particular fixed office location;
- xiii) Where a fixed office location manages other fixed office locations or remote personnel outside of their national boundaries;
- xiv) The number of different countries covered by remote personnel and how they are managed;
- xv) The risks posed by the activities performed and/or managed and where they are performed and/or managed (Note: these may be non-key activities);
- xvi) The capability of MAURITAS to conduct remote assessments;
- xvii) Social and cultural aspects of each country;
- xviii) The number and type of complaints;
- xix) The effectiveness of the CAB's oversight in controlling its foreign certification activities, including internal audits it performs on fixed office locations; and
- xx) Where there is evidence of malpractice, such as misrepresentation by sales personnel, inappropriate relationships with consultants or ineffective oversight by the CAB.

8.3 MAURITAS's assessment program shall be reviewed annually to take account of changes to the information in IAF MD12 and changes to the above factors.

8.4 The personnel performing and managing certification activities are more important than where they are performed. The assessment program should include provision for interviews with a representative sample of the CAB's personnel (internal and external) to enable MAURITAS to confirm that the CAB's certification activities, irrespective of where they are performed, meet the requirements of the relevant conformity assessment standard(s).

8.5 Remote assessment can be utilised instead of conducting on-site assessments, provided the outcomes of such assessments are equivalent to those of on-site assessments.

9. Initial Assessment

9.1 The initial assessment of the CAB shall include assessment of all fixed office locations, whatever the relationship with the CAB, where key activities are performed and/or managed, or from which remote personnel performing key activities are managed, and/or where records are maintained.

9.2 Where appropriate, the initial assessment shall also include assessment of selected fixed office locations, whatever the relationship with the CAB, where other activities covered by the requirements of the relevant conformity assessment standard(s) are performed, or from which personnel performing these activities are managed.

9.3 For extensions of scope, MAURITAS shall determine an assessment program taking account of the factors in ILAC G21 and IAF MD 12 and whether the extension is for a new main scope, a new sub-scope or within an accredited sub-scope. The assessment program does not necessarily need to include visits to each fixed office location.

10. Assessment and Reassessment

10.1 For assessment and reassessment, each fixed office location, whatever the relationship with the CAB, at which key activities are performed and/or managed or from which remote personnel performing key activities are managed and/or records are maintained, shall be assessed at least once in each accreditation cycle and in accordance with MAURITAS's assessment program.

10.2 MAURITAS A24 shall detail sampling procedures for fixed office locations, including remote personnel, where other activities are performed or from which personnel performing these activities are managed. The procedure shall ensure that a representative number of these locations are assessed within a defined timeframe.

10.3 All records of implementation of the above procedure shall be kept by MAURITAS in file.

11. Related Forms