

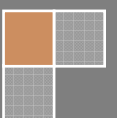
2013

SADCA QUALITY MANUAL

SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY COOPERATION IN ACCREDITATION

The Quality Manual establishes and states the general policies governing SADCA's Management System. These policies define SADCA's operations and activities in accordance with the requirements of the guidance and mandatory documents from the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) and International Accreditation Forum (IAF).

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1. PURPOSE

1.1 The Southern African Development Community (SADC) Cooperation in Accreditation's (SADCA) Quality Manual establishes and states the general policies governing SADCA's Management System. These policies define SADCA's operations and activities in accordance with the requirements of the guidance and mandatory documents from the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) and International Accreditation Forum (IAF).

2. OVERVIEW OF SADCA

2.1 SADCA is a regional Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Cooperation Structure in the SADC region established according to Article 17 of the TBT Annex to the SADC Protocol on Trade.

2.2 SADCA is a cooperation of accreditation bodies that accredit laboratories, certification and inspection bodies and reference material producers and defined stakeholders in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region. Its current geographic reach is within SADC.

2.3 SADCA participates in the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) and International Accreditation Forum (IAF) as a Regional Accreditation Cooperation,

2.4 SADCA participates in AFRAC and is a Stakeholder Member of AFRAC.

2.5 The SADCA General Assembly (GA) is SADCA's highest authority.

2.6 The MRA Council makes decisions regarding the status of Membership to the SADCA MRA, including the granting, maintenance, suspension and withdrawal from the MRA.

2.7 The SADCA Executive Committee (EXCO) is responsible for the implementation of SADCA's objectives and day-to-day management of SADCA, and operates according to its GA approved Terms of Reference.

2.8 The SADCA Secretariat is responsible for the day-to-day management of SADCA and supports the General Assembly and the EXCO.

3. STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 Vision

To be an internationally recognised accreditation cooperation, contributing towards social and economic development in SADC.

3.2 Mission

SADCA's mission is to coordinate accreditation services in the region and facilitate the national, regional and international recognition and acceptance of SADC conformity assessment services, in order to foster the social and economic growth of the region.

3.3 Quality Policy

3.3.1 To support trade facilitation in the region through the establishment of an effective and accepted Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA).

3.3.2 To facilitate the recognition and acceptance of conformity assessment certificates and reports worldwide.



3.3.3 To improve the competitiveness of SADC goods and services.

3.3.4 To facilitate health and safety of the public and the environment.

3.4 Functions

3.4.1 Fostering collaboration among accreditation bodies in SADC and facilitating collaboration between Member States having accreditation bodies and those without;

3.4.2 Assisting and supporting the establishment of national or multi-economy accreditation bodies in SADC;

3.4.3 Creation and maintenance of a system for the recognition of accreditation bodies in SADC within the framework of and consistent with global MRA/MLA international requirements;

3.4.4 Coordination and facilitation of liaison with other regional and international organisations concerned with accreditation such as International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC), the International Accreditation Forum (IAF), InterAmerican Accreditation Cooperation (IAAC), Asian Pacific Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (APLAC), Pacific Accreditation Cooperation (PAC), European Accreditation (EA), African Accreditation Cooperation (AFRAC) and Arab Accreditation Cooperation (ARAC);

3.4.5 Representation of SADC in international accreditation and other quality infrastructure *fora*;

3.4.6 Promotion and expansion of the recognition and acceptance of the MRA in SADC internationally in both the voluntary and regulatory areas;

3.4.7 Development of and managing training and technical assistance programs for transferring expertise and technical information, sharing of information and activities identified to assist new or developing accreditation programs, among present and potential members;

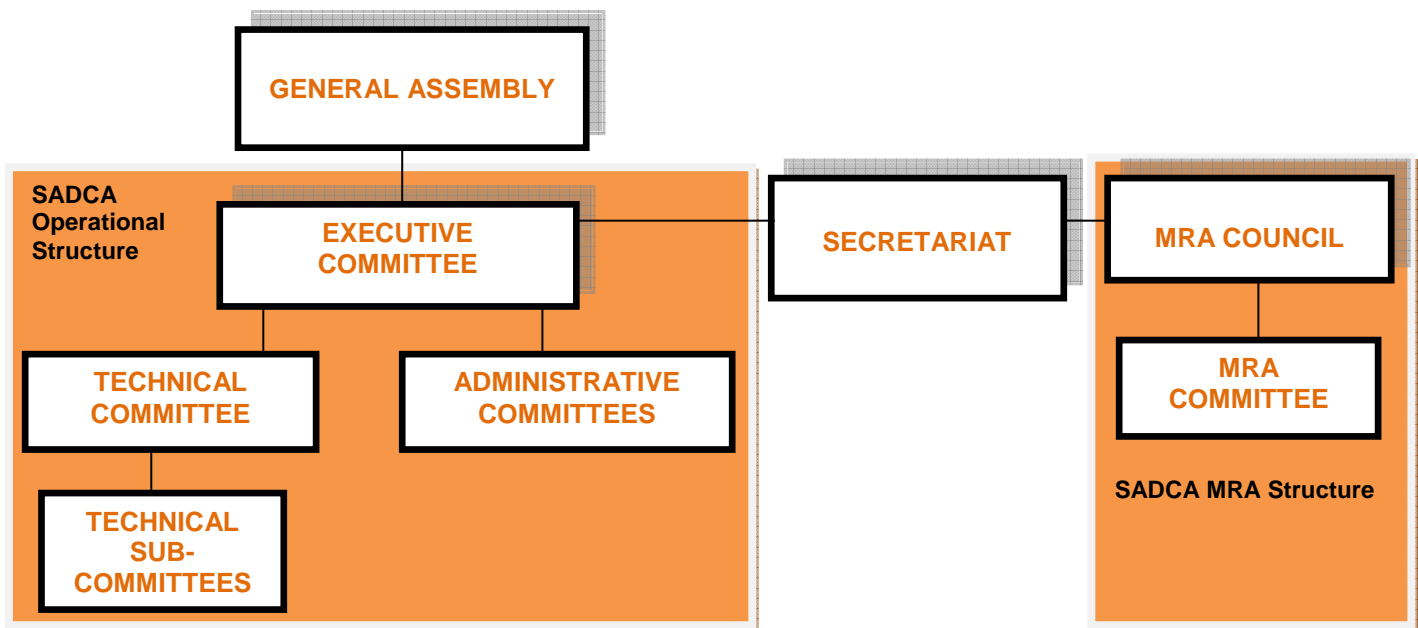
3.4.8 Harmonisation of accreditation practices within SADC in compliance with international requirements;

3.4.9 Establishment of an information system such as a database on accreditation bodies, Proficiency Testing (PT) schemes and qualified technical assessors, etc.;

3.4.10 Finding ways to reduce costs incurred by SADC accreditation bodies associated with obtaining and maintaining full membership to ILAC/IAF, in particular pre-peer and peer evaluation processes.

4. SADCA STRUCTURE

4.1 SADCA's organisational structure is made up of a General Assembly, an Executive Committee, a Chair, a Treasurer, MRA Council, a Secretariat, Committees, sub-committees and Working Groups.



5. FINANCES

5.1 SADCA is intended to be a self-funding cooperation. To this end, SADCA's financial viability is a shared responsibility amongst Members.

5.2 The direct income that is envisaged to cover SADCA's operational costs will come from:

- 5.2.1 Annual Membership fees;
- 5.2.2 Peer Evaluation Fees (*charged at cost to the organisation being evaluated*);
- 5.2.3 Projects;
- 5.2.4 Development Partner Contributions;
- 5.2.5 Training.

5.3 Each year an EXCO representative performing the Treasurer function, on behalf of the EXCO will propose to the General Assembly a draft budget for the coming calendar year.

5.4 SADCA's fees are approved by the General Assembly and formalised in a documented fee structure and are subject to change from year to year according to the General Assembly's approved formula.

5.5 The Secretariat and Treasurer function are responsible for ensuring that all fees are charged according to the documented fee structure.

5.6 Failure to pay fees by the stipulated date may result in the cancellation or withdrawal of Membership.

5.7 An annual financial report is provided to the General Assembly by the Treasurer function at each meeting of the General Assembly.

6. STRATEGIC PLAN

SADCA operates according to a five year Strategic Planning cycle, which defines the priorities and strategic direction of SADCA. The SADCA Strategic Plan A006 is available on the SADCA website.



7. DELEGATED RESPONSIBILITIES

The delegation register depicted below, lists the delegated activities identified according to the SADCA Bylaws Clause number, the responsible person/body, and the person/body to which the activity is delegated.

Activity	Responsibility	Delegation	Bylaws
Define and/or approve the policies and strategic plan of SADCA.	General Assembly (GA)	EXCO to implement SADCA policies (including financial affairs) and manage them between meetings of the GA as directed by GA.	6.2.1 6.2.10 6.2.15 7.2.1 7.2.8 7.2.12
Decisions on the SADCA's budget and supervision of other financial matters.	GA	EXCO for approval of specific funding requests that fit within budget already approved by the GA.	6.2.16 7.2.12
Endorsement of appointment of SADCA committee members.	EXCO	SADCA Committee Chairs.	7.2.5 7.2.6
Execution of decisions taken by the SADCA General Assembly and Executive.	SADCA Chair	SADCA Chair may delegate some activities to the SADCA Secretariat or a member of the EXCO.	8.2.2 8.2.3
Acting on behalf of SADCA between meetings of the General Assembly.	SADCA Chair, EXCO and Secretariat.	SADCA Chair some activities may be delegated to a member of the Executive or a GA delegate.	7.2.1 8.2.3
Promoting the interests of SADCA.	SADCA Chair and EXCO.	SADCA Chair some activities may be delegated to a member of the Executive or a GA delegate.	7.2.2 8.2.6
Monitoring of income and expenditure.	SADCA Treasurer	Day-to-day oversight may be delegated to the SADCA Secretariat.	8.5.2
Decisions regarding Membership.	SADCA Council MRA	Decisions regarding the status of Membership to the SADCA MRA.	9.1.1



8. DOCUMENT AND RECORDS MANAGEMENT

8.1 Document Management

- 8.1.1 All SADCA documentation will be developed, maintained and controlled in accordance with the SADCA Document Control Procedure P003, to ensure that documents are properly drafted, identified, classified, revised and approved in a manner which is consistent with the procedure.
- 8.1.2 The Secretariat, SADCA Committees and Working Groups are responsible for ensuring that the SADCA Document Control Procedure is adhered to when producing a new SADCA document or revising an existing document.

9. MANAGEMENT REVIEW

- 9.1 The Management Review ensures the achievement of SADCA's objectives, the development of the Strategic Plan, and the proper operation and improvement of SADCA's management system.
- 9.2 The SADCA Executive Committee (EXCO) shall review SADCA's Management System at one of its meetings annually, and the agenda for that meeting shall include Management Review.
- 9.3 The Management Review is carried out by the SADCA EXCO according to the SADCA Management Review Procedure.
- 9.4 The SADCA Management Review Procedure P006 outlines the management review procedures to be used.

10. INTERNAL AUDITS

- 10.1 In order to ensure compliance to the SADCA Management System, as well as effective implementation of its policies and procedures, SADCA will schedule and conduct internal audits at least once annually.
- 10.2 The EXCO may at its discretion obtain the services of an external consultant to perform an independent audit. The audit is performed against this Quality Manual, SADCA's Procedures as well as the appropriate international requirements as listed below:
- 10.2.1 ILAC/IAF A1 - Multi-Lateral Mutual Recognition Arrangements (Arrangements): Requirements for Evaluation of a Regional Group.
- 10.2.2 ILAC/IAF A2 – Multi-Lateral Mutual Recognition Arrangements (Arrangements): Requirements for Evaluation of a Single Accreditation Body.
- 10.2.3 ILAC P1 – ILAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement: Requirements for Evaluation of Accreditation Bodies by ILAC recognised Regional Cooperations.
- 10.2.4 ILAC P2 – ILAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement: Procedures for the Evaluation of Regional Cooperation Bodies for the Purpose of Recognition.
- 10.2.5 SADCA M001 – SADCA Procedures for Establishing and Maintaining the SADCA Mutual Recognition Arrangement Amongst Accreditation Bodies.
- 10.3 The procedures for conducting internal audits may be found in the SADCA Internal Audit Procedure P007 which establishes the requirements to present, perform and check the results of corrective actions resulting from internal audit.



11. COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

11.1 All complaints and appeals against SADCA are managed and resolved according to the SADCA Appeals and Complaints Procedure P002.

12. CORRECTIVE AND PREVENTIVE ACTION

12.1 Corrective action requests can result from management reviews, internal audits, complaints and appeals.

12.2 The steps to take corrective and preventive actions are described in the relevant SADCA Procedures established by SADCA, as well as within this Quality Manual.

12.3 If any activities lead to corrective and preventive actions resulting from sources other than the above, the SADCA Secretariat will record them and submit them to the SADCA Chair who will be appointed to monitor these actions until their closure.

13. MEMBERSHIP

13.1 General

13.1.1 An applicant must satisfy SADCA that it complies with all SADCA requirements for the applicable category of Membership.

13.1.2 An application form for either Arrangement, Full, Associate or Stakeholder Membership may be obtained from the Secretariat, and must be duly completed, with the requested additional information attached.

13.2 Membership Admission

13.2.1 The admission Ordinary, Associate and Stakeholder Members is performed in accordance with the SADCA Membership Admission Procedure P001.

13.2.2 The admission of Arrangement Members is performed in accordance with the relevant admission procedures for Arrangement Members.

13.3 Suspension and Withdrawal of Membership

13.3.1 The Executive Committee may suspend Ordinary, Associate and Stakeholder Members for conduct contrary to the best interest of SADCA and/or in terms of Clause 13 of the SADCA Bylaws, and thereafter if required make a recommendation for withdrawal to the General Assembly.

13.3.2 The Executive Committee shall manage the suspension process of Ordinary, Associate and Stakeholder Members according to the relevant procedure.

13.3.3 Ordinary, Associate and Stakeholder Membership may be withdrawn on a Member's own decision by written resignation which must be sent to the Secretariat.

13.3.4 Any Member whose membership has been withdrawn remains liable to pay SADCA any fees due and payable but unpaid at the date of withdrawal, and also has the right to appeal in accordance with the SADCA Appeals and Complaints Procedure P002.



13.4 Suspension and Termination of Arrangement Membership

- 13.4.1 The MRA Council may suspend Arrangement Members for conduct contrary to the best interest of SADCA and its MRA and/or in terms of Clause 19 of the SADCA Bylaws.
- 13.4.2 The Arrangement Members are finally suspended by a decision of a two-thirds majority of the MRA Council.
- 13.4.3 The MRA Council shall manage the suspension and termination process of Arrangement Members according to the relevant SADCA procedure.

14. APPLICABLE DOCUMENTS FOR SADCA AND SADCA MRA SIGNATORIES

Document	Title
ILAC/IAF A1	Multi-lateral Mutual Recognition Arrangements (Arrangements): Requirements for the Evaluation of a Regional Group
ILAC/IAF A2	Multi-lateral Mutual Recognition Arrangements (Arrangements): Requirements for the Evaluation of a Single Accreditation Body
ILAC/IAF A3	Multi-lateral Mutual Recognition Arrangements (Arrangements): Narrative Framework for Reporting on the Performance of an Accreditation Body - A Tool for the Evaluation Process
ILAC/IAF A4	Guidance on the application of ISO/IEC 17020
ILAC/IAF A5	ILAC/IAF Multi-lateral Mutual Recognition Arrangements (Arrangements) application of ISO/IEC 17011
ISO/IEC 17011	ISO/IEC 17011 Conformity Assessment - General requirements for accreditation bodies accrediting conformity assessment bodies
ILAC P5	ILAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement (Arrangement)
ILAC P8	ILAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement: Supplementary Requirements and Guidelines for the use of Accreditation Symbols and for Claims of Accreditation Status by Accredited Laboratories
ILAC P9	ILAC Policy for Participation in National and International Proficiency Testing Activities
ILAC P10	ILAC Policy on Traceability of Measurement Results



15. SADCA COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS

- 15.1** The SADCA General Assembly is entitled to set up the MRA and Technical Committees, and other Committees, Working Groups and Task Forces. These constituent bodies shall be established to carry out the objectives, aims and tasks of SADCA in an appropriate manner.
- 15.2** All SADCA constituent bodies shall have defined terms of reference and working programs that shall be endorsed by the General Assembly.
- 15.3** The MRA and Technical Committee and other Committees shall have a Chair elected by the General Assembly, preferably amongst its delegates. The procedure shall be the same as for the election of the Chair, except that nominations may be accepted on the day of the meeting of the General Assembly. The term of office of a Committee Chair shall be two years, and they may be re-elected.
- 15.4** The MRA and Technical Committee Members and other Committees shall be nominated by their respective SADCA delegates, unless otherwise determined in the terms of reference of the Committee in question.
- 15.5** The MRA and Technical Committees and other Committees shall report to the General Assembly at least annually and shall keep the Secretariat informed of their activities by providing the Secretariat with at least agendas and minutes of meetings.
- 15.6** The MRA and Technical Committees and other Committees may either be established to deal with specific tasks or tasks of a permanent nature.
- 15.7** The conveners of the Working Groups shall be endorsed by the General Assembly and the term of office for conveners shall be four years, and they may be re-elected.
- 15.8** The Committees to which the Working Groups or Task Forces report decide on how Members of these Working Groups and Task Forces shall be appointed. Relevant organisations of Stakeholder Members will be invited to participate.
- 15.9** The MRA and Technical Committee Chairs and the conveners of the Working Groups and Task Forces may invite other experts to participate in the work of the body in question.
- 15.10** The MRA Council makes decisions regarding the status of Membership to the SADCA MRA, including the granting, maintenance, suspension and withdrawal from the MRA, and is comprised of one representative of each signatory to the SADCA MRA.

16. SADCA MUTUAL RECOGNITION ARRANGEMENT (MRA)

- 16.1** The **SADCA Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA) M002** document describes the elements of the MRA in order to ensure its correct and appropriate implementation.
- 16.2** The MRA is based on results from evaluations carried out according to the SADCA Procedures for Establishing and Maintaining a Mutual Recognition Agreement among Accreditation Bodies M001.

17. SELECTION, TRAINING, QUALIFICATION AND MONITORING OF PEER EVALUATORS



- 17.1 In order to ensure that the peer evaluators have the necessary qualifications, experience and competence to carry out assessments and recommend the inclusion of a new member to the SADCA MRA, the process to select, train, qualify and monitor peer evaluators is established in the **SADCA Selection, Training, Qualification and Monitoring the Performance of Peer Evaluators Procedure P011**, and the SADCA Mutual Recognition Agreement among Accreditation Bodies Procedure M001.
- 17.2 All documentation relating to the Peer Evaluation of Members is kept on file as long as the organisation remains a Member of SADCA.
- 17.3 Each organisation has its own file in the Secretariats office, identified by the name of the organisation and its Membership number. The files are stored in a secure place with restricted access.
- 17.4 Files relating to organisations that have withdrawn their membership or had their Membership revoked are reviewed by SADCA six years after the change of status. The EXCO decides whether the file should be destroyed or retained for a longer period.
- 17.5 The Secretariat and Committee Chairs are responsible for filing all correspondence specific to their functions. The Secretariat maintains a record of each Lead, Technical and Expert Evaluator, detailing their training and the evaluations done by them. It also contains copies of the Team Leader's evaluation of their performance.

18. CONFIDENTIALITY

18.1 Arrangements for ensuring confidentiality of information

- 18.1.1 All SADCA Members are required to protect the confidential nature of the information regarding any SADCA matters or processes. This declaration is formally stated and described in the **SADCA Declaration of Confidentiality and Impartiality F006**.
- 18.1.2 Team Leaders, Team Members, observers of a SADCA Peer Evaluation Team, MRA Council and MRA Committee Members, the MRA Secretariat and observers of a SADCA MRA Council or Committee meeting are required to protect the confidential nature of the information regarding the MRA and peer evaluation processes, and to be impartial at all times. This declaration is formally stated and described in the **SADCA Declaration of Confidentiality and Impartiality F006**.

19. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

- 19.1 It may occur that during SADCA meetings there may be a need to decide on a matter on which a member of may have a conflict of interest. The person affected must declare this conflict of interest, and this shall be recorded in the Minutes of the meeting. The affected person may be asked by the meeting Chair to excuse themselves from the meeting room, while the particular issue is being discussed.
- 19.2 It is required that SADCA Members state any conflict of interest with a particular agenda item, and this shall be a standing agenda item for all meetings.

20. PUBLIC ACCESS TO SADCA INFORMATION

20.1 SADCA Web site



20.1.1 SADCA's website can be found at www.sadca.org

20.1.2 The SADCA website has an open public section and a Members only section.

20.1.3 The Member of each organisation is given a personal username and password to enter the website.

20.1.4 Each SADCA Committee is provided with a generic committee username and password, through the Chair.

20.1.5 It is the responsibility of the Committee Chairs to manage the use and confidentiality of that information.

20.1.6 The SADCA Secretariat manages the website and is responsible for assigning usernames and passwords.

20.1.7 SADCA has a contract with the website service provider in accordance with the required safety, privacy and confidentiality policies and rules established by SADCA that guarantees its proper and continuous function.

20.2 SADCA Newsletter

20.2.1 The following publications are distributed by SADCA on a regular basis:

- The SADCA Annual Report (published annually and distributed to all members and interested parties).
- The SADCA Bi-annual Newsletter (also available on the web page).