

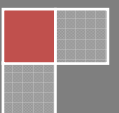
2013

SADCA MUTUAL RECOGNITION ARRANGEMENT (MRA)

SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY COOPERATION IN ACCREDITATION

The document establishes and states the general policies governing SADCA's Mutual Recognition Arrangement.

Publication reference: M002-01





Authorship

This document has been prepared by the SADCA MRA Committee.

Classification

This document is classified as an SADCA MRA Publication.

Authorisation

Issue Number: 01
Prepared by: SADCA MRA Committee
Date: 25 March 2013
Approved by: General Assembly
Issue and application date: 25 April 2013

Official language

The text may be translated into other languages as required. The English language version remains the definitive version.

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1. PREAMBLE

The Southern African Development Community Cooperation in Accreditation (SADCA) is an organisation of accreditation bodies that accredit calibration laboratories, testing laboratories, certification and inspection bodies within the SADC region.

This document describes the elements of a Mutual Recognition Arrangement (hereinafter referred to as the MRA) for testing and calibration laboratories, certification and inspection body accreditation. The Arrangement is a means by which the Signatories to the SADCA MRA for testing, calibration, certification and inspection can recognise one another's technical competence and confidence in the results of the accredited organisations. This MRA is an effort to enhance the objective of free trade within Africa and building up confidence among accreditation bodies in the region.

The criteria for the operation of accredited testing and calibration laboratories are specified in ISO/IEC 17025, for accredited clinical laboratories in ISO 15189, for accredited certification bodies in ISO/IEC 17065, ISO/IEC 17024 and ISO/IEC 17021, and for accredited inspection bodies in ISO/IEC 17020. The criteria for the operation of accreditation bodies are specified in ISO/IEC 17011 and in IAF and ILAC requirements, which are supplemented by SADCA application documents.

The principal elements for establishing confidence among the participating accreditation bodies within SADCA are listed below. These elements are designed to ensure conformity with the requirements of the standards, verified by peer evaluation, in order to establish and maintain mutual confidence in the technical competence of SADCA MRA Members and their accredited organisations. The elements are:

- 1.1 Exchange of information on the development and operation of accreditation programs of SADCA Members;
- 1.2 Participation in the work and decision making of the SADCA General Assembly and SADCA Committees where applicable;
- 1.3 Exchange of persons taking part in peer evaluations, re-assessments or surveillance visits to accreditation bodies;
- 1.4 Evaluations of applicants and re-evaluations of signatories to this Arrangement conducted in accordance with the relevant SADCA and joint IAF/ILAC documents;
- 1.5 Participation in the work of SADCA Sub-committees, working groups and task forces held to discuss problems related to testing, calibration, certification and inspection in various technical fields;
- 1.6 Observations of assessments undertaken by applicant accreditation bodies and MRA signatories, where it will be determined whether their customers meet the requirements of the relevant ISO/IEC 17025, ISO 15189, ISO/IEC 17020, or the relevant Certification standards e.g. ISO/IEC 17021, ISO 17024, or other standards for conformity assessment bodies that SADCA deems to be suitable for accreditation; and
- 1.7 Confidence in the metrology institutes which underpin the traceability claims of the laboratories and inspection bodies (where applicable) accredited by the Arrangement signatories and support for the measurement comparison activities of CIPM (Comité International des Poids et Mesures) and/or regional metrology organisations.
- 1.8 Participation in other international interlaboratory comparisons and proficiency testing programs where applicable.



This MRA does not affect other recognition required by laws and regulations in the economies of the signatories.



2. MUTUAL RECOGNITION ARRANGEMENT (MRA)

2.1 This MRA is based on the results of the evaluations carried out in accordance with the relevant standards, rules, policies and procedures contained in the SADCA **M001: Policies and Procedures for an MRA amongst Accreditation Bodies** and IAF/ILAC A series documents.

2.2 Each accreditation body signatory to this MRA will follow the applicable terms and conditions defined in **M001: Policies and Procedures for an MRA amongst Accreditation Bodies**:

- Maintain conformance with ISO/IEC 17011 (and the documents that replace it), ILAC and/or IAF requirements and the relevant SADCA applicable documents;
- Ensure that accredited laboratories comply with ISO/IEC 17025 (and the documents that replace it), and that accredited clinical or medical laboratories comply with ISO 15189 and any related ILAC requirements and the relevant SADCA applicable documents;
- Ensure that all accredited certification bodies for Quality Management System (QMS) and Environmental Management Systems (EMS) comply with ISO/IEC 17021 (and the documents that replace it), certification bodies for product comply with ISO/IEC Guide 65 (and the documents that replace it) and any related IAF requirements and the relevant SADCA applicable documents;
- Ensure that all accredited inspection bodies comply with ISO/IEC 17020 (and the documents that replace it), and any related IAF and ILAC requirements and relevant SADCA applicable documents.

2.3 Each Signatory shall:

- 2.3.1 Recognise the operation of other relevant accreditation systems as equivalent to its own as specified in the scope of the respective MRA.
- 2.3.2 Recommend and promote the acceptance of the certificates and reports issued by conformity assessment bodies accredited by the other Signatories as being equal with those of its own accredited laboratories and/or certification and inspection bodies.
- 2.3.3 Investigate all complaints initiated by a Signatory resulting from certificates or reports issued by the conformity assessment bodies accredited by its accreditation programs.
- 2.3.4 Notify the MRA Council as soon as possible of any significant changes that have occurred or will occur in its status, in the operational practices of its system or in its accreditation programs.
- 2.3.5 Contribute to the work of the MRA Council as appropriate.
- 2.3.6 Participate in the meetings of the Committees, sub-Committees and/or working groups of SADCA as appropriate.
- 2.3.7 Provide evaluators for the peer evaluation and re-evaluation of accreditation bodies.
- 2.3.8 Cooperate with other accreditation bodies so that the MRA may be extended to include other accreditation bodies in the African region.
- 2.3.9 Use all information in a confidential and professional manner.



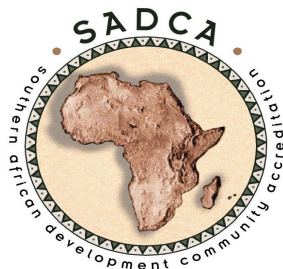
- 2.4 In order to join the SADCA MRA, an accreditation body will be evaluated in accordance with the relevant rules and procedures defined in **M001: Policies and Procedures for an MRA amongst Accreditation Bodies** and will sign the Certificate (attached).
- 2.5 The scope of recognition of a Signatory may be extended or reduces following re-evaluation in accordance with the relevant rules and procedures.
- 2.6 If a Signatory wishes to withdraw from the MRA, that body shall notify the SADCA MRA Committee in writing, no later than three months in advance of withdrawing. The MRA Committee will notify other Signatory Bodies. Upon withdrawal of a body, that body's Signature Sheet shall be withdrawn.
- 2.7 In the event of the SADCA MRA Council making an adverse decision or finding for an applicant or a Signatory the procedures defined in **M001** shall apply.
- 2.8 Any amendment of the test of the MRA shall be approved by the SADCA General Assembly.
- 2.9 It is recognised and accepted by each of the Signatories that this MRA does not create any rights, liabilities or obligations that would have a binding effect in national or international law.
- 2.10 This MRA consists of eleven (11) Clauses and the Annex that each Signatory signs, along with the scope of its accreditation programs.
- 2.11 This MRA will come into effect upon signature of the affected parties.

The scopes of participation of a Signatory to the SADCA MRA or any other scope that may be added by the MRA Council are:

- *Calibration laboratories;*
- *Testing laboratories, including clinical and medical laboratories;*
- *Quality Management System Certification;*
- *Product Certification;*
- *Persons Certification;*
- *Environmental Management System Certification;*
- *Inspection Bodies.*



ANNEX A



Be it known that the

Accreditation Body Name (ACRONYM)

Has been accepted as a Member of the

Southern African Development Community Cooperation in Accreditation

Mutual Recognition Arrangement

For

Scope of Accreditation

The Member on behalf of which this sheet is signed is committed to complying with the requirements and obligation of the SADCA MRA Members.

AB Representative
AB Name

Name
SADCA MRA Council Chair

**Approved by the SADCA MRA Council in (Place) and (Date)
Signed in (Place) and (Date)**