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## 1.4 Impartiality

### 1.4.1 General

**1.4.1.1** MAURITAS has the commitment of its top management through an Impartiality Policy, **Annex I**, which is made public and takes responsibility for the impartiality of its accreditation activities. MAURITAS activities are not linked with consultancy or other services that could pose an unacceptable risk to impartiality. There are no conditions/requirements that implies that MAURITAS accreditation would be simpler, easier, faster or less expensive if any specified person(s) or consultancy were used.

### 1.4.2 MAURITAS Staff/Assessors/Technical Experts Impartiality and non-discrimination

**1.4.2.1** MAURITAS, as the sole national accreditation body, has the objective of providing a national unified service of accreditation to all CABs whose requests fall within our scope of services.

**1.4.2.2** Our accreditation is voluntary and open to CABs performing calibrations/tests, certification and inspection irrespective of size or scope of activity. These include independent CABs as well as those which form part of a larger organisation such as a manufacturing company, a research institute or a government department. We provide accreditation services to CABs at permanent, temporary and mobile sites and on sites remote from permanent premises. Our accreditation is not conditional to the number of CABs already accredited.

**1.4.2.3** MAURITAS staff, Assessors and Technical Experts are:

- Working in a non-discriminatory and impartial manner;
- Dealing with applicants and accredited CABs in a non-discriminatory way and not differentiating between CABs on the basis of size, ownership(private/public), gender, religion and race of personnel;
- Encouraged to disclose any undue commercial, financial and other pressures that could compromise their impartiality in the execution of their duties for MAURITAS;
- Not allowed to provide consultancy services or be involved in conformity assessment services provided by CABs he/she assesses;
- Required to disclose any potential conflict of interest, whenever applicable.

**1.4.2.4** All MAURITAS Staff have signed a Job Description, **F 2.11**, and a Code of Ethics.

**1.4.2.5** All Assessors/Technical Experts are required to notify MAURITAS of any existing, prior or foreseeable relationships which may compromise impartiality prior to undertaking an assessment, via form **F 1.23**. When the Assessor/Technical Expert declares any relationship, MAURITAS evaluates the impact on impartiality and if deemed to be valid, the Assessor/Technical Expert will not be used in any further steps of the accreditation process for the particular CAB.

### 1.4.3 Committees/Council Impartiality and non-discrimination

**1.4.3.1** MAURITAS ensures that the Committees and Council are established in such a way so as to safeguard the impartiality and non-discriminatory nature of accreditation. Committees and Council are thus established so as to:

- Ensure balanced representation of all stakeholders with no single party predominating;
- Ensure competence and independence of those involved in the accreditation decision;
- Provide for any undue commercial, financial and other pressure that could jeopardise the impartiality to be declared;
- Ensure any potential conflict of interest are disclosed, whenever applicable.

**1.4.3.2** We also ensure that those involved in assessment are not involved in the accreditation decision.

**1.4.3.3** All Committee and Council members sign an attendance sheet with an undertaking of impartiality, **F2.18.** Committee and Council members not present in meetings but who will be given access to information in relation to a CAB or Committee/Council documents/records or any other assignments for MAURITAS are required to declare their impartiality prior to being given access to any such information.

### 1.4.4 Related Bodies

**1.4.4.1** MAURITAS, as a department under the Ministry of Industry, is related to the conformity assessment bodies which operate as

- departments under the same Ministry;
- parastatals governed by a Board appointed by the same Ministry;
- departments/parastatals under other Ministries.

The table below summarises the relationships with the related CABs as well as the risk/ potential conflicts of interest and their elimination. The above exercise has been validated by interested parties through the MAURITAS Advisory Council (MAC).

Related Body	Type	Relationship	Risk	Risk Elimination
1. Assay Office	Government Laboratory and Inspection Bodies	Reports to the same Top Management as MAURITAS	Perceived preferential treatment	Ensure that Top Management of Parent Ministry is not involved in accreditation-decision making of MAURITAS
2. Mauritius Standards Bureau (MSB)	Parastatal Laboratory, Inspection Body and Certification Body	Governed by a Board appointed by the same Top Management as MAURITAS	Perceived preferential treatment	
3. Mauritius Sugar Cane Industry Research Institute, Mauritius Cane Industry Authority	Parastatal Laboratory	Governed by a Board appointed by Ministry of Agro-Industry, Food Security, Blue Economy and Fisheries	No perceived preferential treatment	-

4.	Plant Pathology Laboratory, Food & Agricultural Research and Extension Institute	Parastatal Laboratory	Governed by a Board appointed by Ministry of Agro-Industry, Food Security, Blue Economy and Fisheries	No Perceived preferential treatment	
5.	Food Technology Laboratory	Government Department	Funds allocated by the same Central Government to the Ministry of Agro-Industry, Food Security, Blue Economy and Fisheries	Perceived Interference/Pressure with accreditation process and decision making	Ensure that Top Management of Parent Ministry is not involved in accreditation-decision making of MAURITAS
6.	Albion Fisheries Research Centre	Government Department	Funds allocated by the same Central Government to the Ministry of Agro-Industry, Food Security, Blue Economy and Fisheries	Perceived Interference/Pressure with accreditation process and decision making	
7.	National Environment Laboratory	Government Department	Funds allocated by the same Central Government to the Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change	Perceived Interference/Pressure with accreditation process and decision making	
8.	Legal Metrology Service	Government Department	Funds allocated by the same Central Government to the Ministry of Commerce and Consumer Protection	Perceived Interference/Pressure with accreditation process and decision making	
9.	Wastewater Laboratory	Parastatal Laboratory	Governed by a Board appointed by Ministry of Energy and Public Utilities	No Perceived preferential treatment	
10.	Central Water Authority	Parastatal Laboratory	Governed by a Board appointed by Ministry of Energy and Public Utilities	No Perceived preferential treatment	-
11.	Forensic Science laboratory	Government Department	Funds allocated by the same Central Government to the Prime Minister's Office	Perceived Interference/Pressure with accreditation process and decision making	Ensure that Top Management of Parent Ministry is not involved in accreditation-decision making of MAURITAS
12.	Government Analyst Division	Government Department	Funds allocated by the same Central Government to the Ministry of Health and Wellness	Perceived Interference/Pressure with accreditation process and decision making	

13. Central Health Laboratory	Government Department	Funds allocated by the same Central Government to the Ministry of Health and Wellness	Perceived Interference/Pressure with accreditation process and decision making	
14. Sir Edgar Laurent TB Laboratory	Government Department	Funds allocated by the same Central Government to the Ministry of Health and Wellness	Perceived Interference/Pressure with accreditation process and decision making	

**1.4.5 MAURITAS Risk Management Process.**

**1.4.5.1** MAURITAS has adopted a risk management process applicable to the accreditation of conformity assessment bodies (CABs). The process has been developed to manage risks with respect to impartiality that could arise from its activities, including any conflicts arising from its relationships of from relationships of its personnel.

**1.4.5.2** The main steps in the process are:

- i. Communication and consultation
- ii. Establishing the context
- iii. Identification of risks
- iv. Analysis of risks
- v. Evaluation of risks
- vi. Treatment of risks
- vii. Monitoring of risks

**1.4.5.2.1 Communication and consultation**

MAURITAS consults with all its permanent staff as well as with the members of the various Technical Advisory Committees, Advisory Council and Accreditation Committee regularly for implementing the risk management process. In so doing, MAURITAS ensures that the views of its stakeholders are also taken on board in the process.

**1.4.5.2.2 Establishing the context**

In this step, MAURITAS defines the parameters or sources of risks to impartiality which includes external sources such as legal, financial, competitive environment and internal sources such as governance/organization structure, personnel and shared resources.

**1.4.5.2.3 Identification of risks**

MAURITAS makes use of a number of techniques to identify risks to impartiality and opportunities for improvement. These may include, but not limited to, brainstorming during staff and committee meetings, interviews and SWOT analysis.

**1.4.5.2.4 Analysis of risks**

The risks identified by MAURITAS are analysed by determining the levels of their consequences or severity and the levels of their likelihood or frequency. These data are then fed in a risk register.

The levels of the likelihood/frequency are defined as follows:

- Low (occurring once in 5 years, score 1)
- Medium (occurring once every year, score 2)
- High (occurring at least once every month, score 3)

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Similarly, the levels of consequences/severity are defined as follows:

- Low (score 1)
- Medium (score 2)
- High (score 3)

#### **1.4.5.2.5 Evaluation of risks**

The risk score is calculated by multiplying the risk levels for the likelihood and for the consequences.

A risk score of <3 will imply that it is a low-level risk and that it is acceptable. Thus, an accreditation activity can be pursued with no immediate action required, except continuous monitoring

A risk score of 3-5 will imply that it is a medium-level risk and that the risk level is manageable and actions are required to bring down the risk to low-level.

A risk score of >5 will imply that it is a high-level risk and is an unacceptable risk and that actions must be taken to avoid the risk by changing the whole process, if possible, before activities can resume.

#### **1.4.5.2.6 Treatment of Risks**

Once the risks have been analysed, MAURITAS uses the following risk treatment strategies:

- Avoid
- Transfer
- Accept
- Control

The treatment adopted will be integrated, as far as possible, in the MAURITAS management system.

#### **1.4.5.2.7 Monitoring of Risks**

The risk treatment will be monitored, once every six months in the start and thereafter every year, to determine its effectiveness and records kept.

The whole process will be recorded in a table/Risk Register and discussed annually in management reviews and in the respective committees and council meetings.

### **1.4.6 Residual Risk**

The Top Management of MAURITAS has analysed the risks mitigation measures identified in the table above and has concluded that for the time being the residual risks are negligible.

In cases where the residual risks that have been identified cannot be mitigated to an acceptable level, MAURITAS will not provide the accreditation services.

### **1.4.7 Cross References**

**1.4.7.1** PREC files, Assessor files (LB and CB series), F 2.18, F 2.11, F 1.02, F 1.23, Annex I, Code of Ethics for public officers, MAURITAS Risk Register

**Appendix A: Amendment Table**

SN	Section	Amendment
Issue 1, Rev 5		
1.	1.4.2.3 2 <sup>nd</sup> bullet	1. 'gender, religion and race of personnel' has been added at the end of the sentence.
Issue 2, Rev 5		
1.	1.4.3.3	A new section 1.4.3.3, "All Committees...any such information." has been added
Issue 3, Rev 5		
1	1.4.4.1	1. In section 1.4.3.3, clarification on the request for impartiality for committee members not present has been included. 2. "Sir Edgar Laurent TB Laboratory" has been added in table of related bodies
Issue 4, Rev 5		
1	1.4.4.1	1. "Industrial Development" has been replaced by "Industry" 2. "Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security" has been re-written as "Ministry of Agro-Industry, Food Security, Blue Economy and Fisheries" at Row 4, 5 & 6 in the table of related bodies 3. "Ministry of Blue Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries & Shipping" has been re-written as "Ministry of Agro-Industry, Food Security, Blue Economy and Fisheries" at Row 7 in the table of related bodies