



MAURITAS

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Regulations to be met by applicant and
accredited Conformity Assessment Bodies
(CABs)

Mauritius Accreditation Service

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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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Regulations to be met by applicant and accredited Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs)

1. Purpose

- 1.1. This document gives an overview of the conditions that an accredited or applicant CAB shall fulfil.
- 1.2. Accreditation will be granted to all CABs which are able to document that they comply with the accreditation requirements. The accreditation does not replace any other necessary approval. It is the CABs' own responsibility to make sure that all other necessary permissions are obtained.
- 1.3. Further information regarding the accreditation scheme may be obtained from MAURITAS.

2. Scope and Responsibilities

- 2.1 It is the responsibility of applicant and accredited testing and calibration laboratories, inspection bodies, and certification bodies to implement the requirements of this document. MAURITAS assessors shall make use of this document for assessing testing and calibration laboratories, inspection bodies and certification bodies based on the clauses set in this document.

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 17065 : Conformity assessment - General requirements for bodies operating product certification systems**
- 3.2 **ISO/IEC 17021 (Series)**
- 3.3 **ISO/IEC 17024 : Conformity assessment - General requirements for bodies operating certification of persons**
- 3.4 **ISO/IEC 17025 : General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories**
- 3.5 **ISO 15189 : Medical Laboratories –Requirements for quality and competence**
- 3.6 **ISO/IEC 17020 : Conformity assessment - Requirements for the operation of various types of bodies performing inspection**
- 3.7 **IAF MD 7 : IAF Mandatory Document for the harmonization of sanctions and dealing with fraudulent behaviour**
- 3.8 **IAF MD 12 : IAF Mandatory Document for the accreditation assessment of conformity assessment bodies with activities in multiple countries**
- 3.9 **IAF MD 15 : IAF Mandatory Document for the collection of data to provide indicators of management system certification bodies' performance**

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- 3.10 IAF MD 28 : IAF Mandatory Document for the upload and maintenance of data on IAF database
- 3.11 ILAC P9 : ILAC Policy for Proficiency Testing and/or Interlaboratory comparisons other than Proficiency Testing
- 3.12 MAURITAS A Series documents
- 3.13 MAURITAS R Series documents
- 3.14 MAURITAS G Series documents
- 3.15 MAURITAS P Series documents
- 3.16 Documents published by IAF, ILAC, AFRAC and SADCA are available on:
- a) www.iaf.nu
 - b) www.ilac.org
 - c) www.intra-frac.com
 - d) www.sadca.org
- 3.17 Mauritius Accreditation Service Act (Act 23 of 1998 Amended 10/17 (cio 24/7/17))

4. Definition

4.1 Technical Signatory

A Technical Signatory (not applicable to Medical Testing Laboratories and Certification Bodies) is a technically competent person approved by MAURITAS, whose signature confers validity on the CAB's certificates, reports and/or results issued under MAURITAS accreditation. The Technical Signatory accepts responsibility for the contents (results and/or measurements) of the certificate/report which he/she is signing or authorising.

4.2 Certification

A **third-party attestation** related to products, processes, systems, or persons. In this document, the term "**certification**" is deemed to cover product certification, certification of management systems and certification of personnel.

4.3 The term "**laboratory**" is deemed to cover both calibration and testing laboratories.

5 Application and the application process

5.1 Application

5.1.1 When applying for accreditation, it is required that the applicant CAB sends relevant application form which is duly filled and signed, with the necessary enclosures and the respective application fee(s), before handling of the application can be started.

5.1.2 MAURITAS shall have an up to date copy of the Quality Documentation of the CAB, appendices, procedures and also descriptions of relevant education and work experience (CV) for applicant Technical Signatories, where relevant.

5.1.3 When applying for accreditation, MAURITAS also requires that the CAB sends a duly filled Self-Assessment checklist or Cross-reference matrix, as applicable, that shows detailed references between the accreditation standard and the CAB's management system.

5.1.4 Where there is evidence of fraudulent behaviour or if the CAB intentionally provides false information or conceals information, MAURITAS shall reject the application.

5.1.5 When a decision has been made by the Accreditation Committee or when the application process has been stopped, all documentation received will be returned to the applicant.

5.1.6 Applicant or accredited CABs shall inform MAURITAS if they are applying for accreditation within the same area at another Accreditation Body, or if their application has been approved or declined by such body.

5.1.7 If an applicant CAB states to have applied, or got a rejection for application at another body as described above, MAURITAS shall request for the reason for this and if necessary request for the relevant assessment report or other relevant information.

In the event the applicant CAB does not wish to disclose the reason for the rejection of its application, MAURITAS will immediately after an accreditation has been granted inform the Accreditation Body, which is considering the application (or have refused the application) regarding its decision. This is done to give the other Accreditation Body a possibility to make an appeal.

5.2 Normative documents (applicable only for certification and inspection bodies)

5.2.1 The applicant CAB shall state the normative document for certification/inspection. A normative document may be a national or international standard, a national law or regulation, a governmental guidance or another document that are accepted by interested parties. Another requirement is that the criteria for certification/inspection shall be accurate to the extent that the two independent bodies will reach the same decision regarding certification/inspection.

5.2.2 MAURITAS may require that the applicant CAB make available for MAURITAS and/or the assessors a copy of the normative document.

5.2.3 MAURITAS cannot be put into a situation where it is in competition with its customers. Therefore, it is not acceptable that a certification body is certifying CABs using any of the accreditation standards. This applies also when certification/inspection is done as a non-accredited service.

5.3 Application process

5.3.1 If MAURITAS engages external Assessors/Technical Expert(s) during the handling of the application, MAURITAS shall get approval of the applicant for the choice of Assessor/Technical Expert(s). Should the applicant refuse the proposed Assessor/Technical Expert(s), this shall be substantiated. MAURITAS will then evaluate whether the reasons for refusing the proposed Assessor/Technical Expert(s) can be approved.

5.3.2 For MAURITAS to be able to evaluate the functionality of the applicant's management system, it is a requirement that the system shall have been implemented before the accreditation is granted. It is the responsibility of the CAB to ensure that all relevant information, including records pertaining to accreditation are made available to MAURITAS upon request and to ensure that all its policies and procedures are documented in its Quality Documentation.

5.3.3 In order to be able to decide if the accreditation requirements are fulfilled, a review of the CAB's management system, assessment of the implementation of the system and witnessing of the performance of selected accredited activities (with respect to the extent of witnessing, see relevant paragraph), shall be carried out.

5.3.4 If the applicant CAB performs so called critical activities (qualification of personnel, contract review and/or decision on certification/inspection) in different locations, all these locations shall be visited before accreditation is granted and during maintenance of accreditation.

5.3.5 If the applicant CAB performs critical activities in one or several countries outside Mauritius (land of origin), all these locations shall be visited before accreditation is granted and selected locations shall be visited during maintenance of accreditation. For assessment of foreign critical locations, the CAB shall bear all costs with respect to travel, accommodation, subsistence and travelling time for the Assessment Team.

5.3.6 As per the standard ISO/IEC 17011 for accreditation bodies, there are requirements for accreditation bodies to be impartial and avoid performing any consultancy towards applicants. If the applicant's cooperation with MAURITAS demands guidance activities from MAURITAS, which compromise MAURITAS' impartiality, MAURITAS has the right to terminate the application.

5.3.7 Only staff of the CAB will be assessed by MAURITAS. Consultants will not be assessed by MAURITAS. Consultants shall not be allowed to participate in the assessment or interfere in one way or the other during the assessment. Consultants may attend the opening and closing meetings as observer.

5.3.8 If it is clear during the assessment that the conditions, on which the visit was based on, are not fulfilled, the Assessment Team can terminate the assessment visit. e.g. if key personnel are not available as agreed, the management system/procedures are not implemented, the CAB shows a lack of willingness to cooperate during the assessment or there are serious nonconformities so that a continuation of the assessment visit is not appropriate.

5.3.9 If the Assessment Team raises a nonconformity during the assessment, the applicant shall within the agreed deadlines submit to MAURITAS, the proposed corrective actions in the respective nonconformity forms and the root cause analysis, together with the documentation as evidence for the actions performed. MAURITAS shall send a copy of the nonconformity forms, together with the corresponding documentation, to the Assessor/Technical Experts which have filled in the nonconformity forms. The Case Officer at MAURITAS may convene a meeting with the Assessor/Technical Expert to review implemented corrective action(s) together with the corresponding documentation.

5.3.10 If requirements given by MAURITAS are not fulfilled within the agreed time limit, or if the applicant during the next six months after the assessment has not made any progress in the accreditation process, MAURITAS may decide to terminate the application without refunding any fees paid by the applicant. The applicant is bound to pay all accrued costs.

5.3.11 The applicant CAB has to apply again after each withdrawal. All applications are valid for only two years as from the date of application.

5.3.12 Reports prepared by MAURITAS, either during or after an assessment, shall not be reproduced in parts without a written approval from MAURITAS.

6 The extent of witnessing associated with application for accreditation

6.1 For management system certification, it may occur that the certification body performs combined audits against two standards. In such cases one witnessing may be enough for the two standards.

6.2 For management system certification, the accreditation scope is defined by the standard and/or specific IAF scope sector / Food Chain Category. In order to guarantee the appropriate coverage of the applicant scope, the witnessing rules as per **MAURITAS A22** shall be applied.

6.3 The certification body shall submit to MAURITAS a complete and updated schedule of confirmed and planned audits which include at minimum the date(s) of the audit, location, organisation to be audited, audit team composition, audit type and scope to enable MAURITAS to plan its witnessing assessments. The certification body shall not change the yearly audit schedule unless appropriate justification is given to MAURITAS.

For witnessing of audits outside Mauritius (land of origin), the certification body shall bear all costs with respect to travel, accommodation, subsistence and travelling time for the Assessment Team.

6.4 Prior to the witnessing activity, the certification body shall submit a copy of its audit plan, previous audit report if applicable, audit programme for the certified organisation, audit team competence records and the justification for calculation of the audit time.

6.5 For laboratory accreditation, all tests must be assessed by witnessing and/or vertical assessment before granting of accreditation. Accredited parameters must be assessed by witnessing and/or vertical assessment at least once during the accreditation cycle based on risks associated with the parameters. In certain cases, MAURITAS will select test/calibration methods that will provide confidence in the competence of the laboratory in performing all the gamut of testing/calibration parameters for which it is accredited.

7 Assessments and re-assessments, submission of Quality Documentation and related documents

7.1 Assessments and re-assessments of an accredited body

7.1.1 The accredited CAB shall be assessed based on an assessment programme during the accreditation cycle. An accreditation is valid for 4 years as from the date of decision for granting the initial accreditation or the date for renewal of accreditation for the next accreditation cycle provided that all requirements are fulfilled during the period. During each accreditation cycle, MAURITAS will perform assessments in order to have confidence in the accredited body. There will also be annual witnessing of certification bodies.

7.1.2 In order to verify that the requirements for accreditation is fulfilled, MAURITAS will carry out assessments no later than 6 months after the accreditation has been granted thereafter regularly after 12 months. This date is set as the scheduled date for assessment. The accreditation will be renewed to the next cycle after re-assessment is performed 6 months prior to the expiry of the current accreditation cycle. The re-assessment will be as comprehensive as the initial assessment. All assessments will be carried out within 1 month of the scheduled date.

7.1.3 When decisions are taken for renewal of a CAB, it shall be ensured that there are no laps/discontinuation in the accreditation cycle and therefore, the following shall be applicable:

- a) In the event that the process is completed before the expiry date, the renewal of accreditation shall be effective on a date right after the expiry;
- b) In case the process is not yet completed before the expiry date:
 - MAURITAS shall suspend the CAB for a maximum period of four months in case the delay for renewal is attributable to the CAB. The re-instatement/renewal shall be effective on the date right after the expiry;
 - The Accreditation Committee shall extend the validity of the accreditation for a maximum period of three months in case the delay for renewing is attributable to MAURITAS. The re-instatement/renewal of accreditation shall be effective on the date right after the expiry
 - The Accreditation Committee shall extend the validity of the accreditation for a maximum period of six months in case the delay for renewing is attributable to an extraordinary event.

7.1.4 In addition, MAURITAS shall, when required, carry out other control activities such as extraordinary assessments as a result of complaints or changes, or other matters that may affect the ability of the CAB to fulfil requirements for accreditation.

7.2 Preparation and completion of assessments

7.2.1 Accredited CABs shall before an assessment or re-assessment send to MAURITAS updated version of documents including Quality Documentation. The documentation shall be sent to MAURITAS not later than 1 week before an assessment or re-assessment, for transmission to the Assessment Team, if nothing else is agreed on with MAURITAS.

7.2.2 In addition to the above requirement, in case of re-assessment or extension of scope, certification bodies shall submit to MAURITAS no later than 1 week before an office assessment, an up-to-date cross-reference checklist for ISO/IEC 17021-1 for Management and Technical Requirements for each accredited Management System accreditation scheme.

7.2.3 The accredited CAB shall submit, where relevant, at least 1 week before an assessment or re-assessment, its Quality documentation, a copy of the latest complete internal audit, management review reports, and where relevant, Proficiency Testing plan for the current cycle and Proficiency Testing plan for the next cycle in case of re-assessment, test methods or Standard Operation Procedures, list of analysts, risk register and information about complaint received by the CAB.

7.2.4 Prior to each assessment, applicant/accredited calibration laboratories shall submit the calibration certificates for all relevant measurement standards and equipment for all parameters. These certificates shall demonstrate valid metrological traceability to the International System of Units (SI) or to appropriate national or international reference standards.

7.2.5 During assessment of the CABs, key personnel shall be available for the assessment team. The representatives of the CAB shall be present at the opening and closing meetings.

7.2.6 After completion of the assessment, the assessment team destroys/deletes all relevant documents provided by the CAB prior to the assessment.

7.3 Closing of nonconformities

7.3.1 If the Assessment Team raises any nonconformity during an assessment or re-assessment, the procedures for clearing nonconformities must be followed.

7.3.2 All nonconformities shall be cleared within the appropriate time frame before a decision is made.

7.4 Assessment of accredited CABs with several critical locations

7.4.1 The previous sections above are valid for the head office and offices in other countries with critical activities.

7.4.2 In the case of laboratories, if there are several critical locations in a country, the head office shall be assessed as described, and the other locations shall be assessed once within each accreditation cycle. The number of collection points/sampling points to be assessed shall be according to **MAURITAS A24**.

7.4.3 For assessment of foreign critical locations, collection points and sampling points, the CAB shall bear all costs with respect to travel, accommodation, subsistence and travelling time for the assessment team.

8 MAURITAS witnessing of audits (applicable only for certification bodies)

8.1 MAURITAS shall witness audits performed by certification bodies performing certification of management systems. For product certifications, witnessing shall consist of the certification body's audit of the licensee. For certification of personnel, the certification body's performance of certification and evaluation of personnel competence against specific requirements will be witnessed.

8.2 MAURITAS shall have access to witness the audits and examinations carried out by the certification body. All accredited certification bodies shall therefore, when applicable, inform their customer and include in the contract agreement a commitment for the customer to provide access to MAURITAS Assessment Team as well as to IAF, ILAC, AFRAC, SADCA evaluators and that MAURITAS may insist on witnessing of accredited activities. Refusal to accept a witness assessment by MAURITAS shall be justified and accepted by both the certification body and MAURITAS, and could result in withdrawal of certification where reasons are not accepted.

Prior to the witnessing activity, the certification body shall submit a copy of its audit plan, previous audit reports if applicable, audit team competence records, audit programme for the certified organisation and the justification for calculation of the audit time.

The Certification Body is not expected to change its audit team, audit plan or audit duration due to the witnessing. If such changes do take place, the certification body shall provide appropriate justification to MAURITAS.

8.3 Usage of such witnessing in connection with application for extension of scope could for instance be relevant for:

- a) Applicant who has limited experience with regard to the carrying out of certifications/examinations within the accreditation area applied for
- b) Application on extension within areas of business that does not have a close relation to the areas of business the certification body already is accredited for

8.4 An eventual witnessing is carried out prior to the decision on extension of the accreditation is made. If a witnessing is necessary MAURITAS shall give the applicant a feedback as soon as possible.

8.5 MAURITAS will perform at least one witnessing annually of an audit performed by the certification body. MAURITAS will select which Scope / IAF Code / Food Chain Category is to be witnessed based on the assessment programme. The basis to increase the number of witnessing in addition to the ones that are mandatory shall be, but not limited to:

- a) Number of certificates issued by the certification body;
- b) Scope of accreditation;
- c) Certification scheme and scope of certification for which certification body is accredited;
- d) Certifications activities outside the country;
- e) Results of earlier witnessing;
- f) Risks associated with the scope sectors; and
- g) Complaints.

8.6 Witnessing performed in connection with applications of extension of scope may be part of the annual witnessing. If there have been limited activities within the accredited scope, e.g. delay in certified clients transiting to new standards, the witnessing can be postponed up to 24 months.

8.7 To make it possible for MAURITAS to plan witnessing assessments, the certification body shall, on an annual basis, submit to MAURITAS a complete and updated schedule of confirmed and planned audits (dates, location, audit team composition, audit type and scope, etc.) which have been planned over a period of one year.

MAURITAS may also require to get access to the certified organisation's Quality Documentation for use by the certification body during the document review, prior to the witnessing.

8.8 The certification body is obliged to provide facilities that will enable MAURITAS to carry out these witnessing activities.

8.9 If the certification body client refuses the witnessing, in order to avoid sanctions, the certification body shall withdraw the existing accredited certificate, or if not yet certified, the certification body shall not be allowed to place the accreditation symbol on the future certificate, unless the refusal is duly justified and accepted by MAURITAS. In case sanctions have been imposed on the certification body resulting in certificate withdrawal, this information shall be made public on MAURITAS website.

8.10 Certified clients of the certification bodies may complain against MAURITAS' choice of Assessment Team. Valid reasons for such complaints shall be given to MAURITAS.

8.11 MAURITAS shall consider any information collected during the witnessing of an audit as confidential.

9 Application for extension of scope

9.1 Accredited CABs can at any time apply for extension of the accreditation scope. When applying for an extension, the CAB has to send a completely filled and signed application form together with the necessary appendices and application fee(s), before the handling of the application can start.

9.2 If the application for extension is sent to MAURITAS not later than 3 months before an assessment or re-assessment, the application for extension will normally be treated during the planned visit. In such cases, full documentation for evaluation of the application (for laboratories, validation report and uncertainty of measurement report shall be required) shall be sent to MAURITAS within 1 month before the date of the planned visit.

9.3 The assessment related to the extension of scope will follow the relevant parts of the descriptions given in this document such as: "The extent of witnessing associated with application for accreditation", and "MAURITAS witnessing of audits/inspections" of this document.

9.4 In scarcity areas involving foreign assessors, the CAB shall apply for extension 6 months prior to the presentation of the National Budget so that MAURITAS can make necessary provisions.

10 Access to premises and availability of documents

10.1 Applicants as well as accredited CABs have a duty to give MAURITAS Assessment Team(s) as well as IAF, ILAC, AFRAC and SADCA evaluators the necessary access to their personnel, locations, equipment, information, documents and records as needed to verify fulfilment of requirements for accreditation. Documents concerning related bodies shall be available to MAURITAS if it is necessary in order to confirm independence and stable economy.

10.2 During the assessment or re-assessment, the CAB has a duty to adjust their normal activities so that the Assessment Team can perform an efficient assessment.

10.3 MAURITAS will inform the CAB about the visit within suitable time, but when it is required MAURITAS' Assessment Team shall be given access without being informed in advance.

11 General information obligation

11.1 MAURITAS shall be informed if the certification body has received a complaint from the relevant regulatory authorities.

11.2 Specific information regarding the status of the CAB located in foreign countries under MAURITAS' accreditation scheme shall be given. If the CAB intends to start activities in other countries under MAURITAS' accreditation scheme, MAURITAS shall be informed immediately to consider whether the activity is in line with the cross-frontier policy of **MAURITAS P13**.

11.3 Where there is evidence of fraudulent behaviour, or the CAB intentionally provides false information or conceals information, or, in addition, if the CAB deliberately violates accreditation rules, as per established procedure, MAURITAS shall initiate process for withdrawal of accreditation as per **MAURITAS A29**. Other situations that may lead to sanctions being applied to applicant or accredited CABs include, but are not limited to the following:

- a) Negative outcome of a complaint investigation;
- b) Misuse/misrepresentation of an accreditation symbol (see ISO/IEC 17011:2017 clause 4.3.5 and NOTE) or combined mark (ILAC R7 and IAF ML 2);
- c) Non-compliance with legislations that are under the purview of MAURITAS, as applicable to the accreditation scope;
- d) Fraudulent behaviour as described in section ‘Specific Sanctions dealing with Fraudulent Behaviour’; and
- e) Non-payment of fees to MAURITAS.

11.4 Where a CAB is providing third-party conformity assessment to IAF MLA or ILAC MRA Level 1 to 4 standards used as a basis for accrediting CABs (e.g. ISO/IEC 17025, ISO/IEC 17020, ISO 15189) as per established procedure, MAURITAS shall terminate the CAB’s application process or initiate its process for suspension of accreditation (as applicable). Further decisions by MAURITAS shall be based on the actions taken by the CAB.

11.5 Notification to IAF Secretariat in case of sanctions

11.5.1 In case a ‘Specific Sanction dealing with Fraudulent Behaviour’ as listed in MAURITAS A29 leads to suspension or withdrawal of accreditation of the Certification Body and after any appeal decision in accordance with MAURITAS’s appeals procedures, MAURITAS shall notify the IAF Secretariat of this decision and the reasons, where relevant in the following format:

“MAURITAS [state the action as ‘withdrew’ or ‘suspended’] accreditation of [Name of CAB] on [date] pursuant to [IAF MD 7 Clause 4.1 or Clause 4.2]”.

The IAF Secretary shall then communicate the decision and status to all IAF Member Accreditation Bodies.

11.6 Upload of data on IAF CertSearch Database

11.6.1 All accredited certification bodies shall upload information in relation to all certified entities that it certifies under ISO/IEC 17021-1 using one of the electronic methods made available in IAF CertSearch Database.

11.6.2 In exceptional cases where the certification body is not able to upload all or part of the information as per the requirements of IAF MD28, the certification body should provide a written justification to MAURITAS. MAURITAS shall review same to determine if justification is eligible to be accepted.

11.6.3 In the case where the exclusion to upload data has been accepted, MAURITAS will advise the certification body to provide at least quarterly, aggregated analytical data to IAF Database. MAURITAS will also periodically review the exclusion to ensure its current applicability.

11.7 Collection of data to provide indicators on management system certification bodies' performance

11.7.1 Accredited certification bodies shall submit to MAURITAS, on a yearly basis, data on:

- a) Number of accredited certificates valid at the end of December;
- b) Number of auditors;
- c) Number of transfers accepted;
- d) Number of overdue audits;
- e) Number of auditor-days delivered; and
- f) Number of multi-site certifications.

11.7.2 The indicators as above shall be reported by country and by certification standard under the accreditation by MAURITAS.

11.7.3 MAURITAS may adjust its assessment activities for a Certification Body following analysis of these indicators.

11.8 Collection of data for the assessment of management system certification bodies with activities in multiple countries

11.8.1 Accredited certification bodies shall submit to MAURITAS, on a yearly basis, data on:

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

11.8.2 Accredited certification bodies shall inform MAURITAS when they intend to proceed with an application for certification outside Mauritius.

11.8.3 Following assessment output based on up-to-date knowledge of the full geographic scope of the CB's accredited activities, MAURITAS shall confirm CB's conformity with the requirements of the relevant conformity assessment standard(s) within the CB's scope of accreditation and may decide to limit or restrict the scope of a certification body's accreditation to certain geographical areas or fixed office locations.

12 Certification /inspection overview

12.1 The accredited body is responsible to keep an updated list of certifications/inspections performed under MAURITAS accreditation scheme. The list shall be made available to MAURITAS upon request.

13 Requirements on maintenance of competence after accreditation has been granted

13.1 Accredited certification bodies shall inform MAURITAS, in writing, if no accredited certification service has been provided within 2 years for a scope sector or a related sector, according to a system standard or a related group of standards, against a competence standard, or according to standard of products. MAURITAS may, in such conditions, reduce the scope of accreditation unless the certification body can demonstrate that proven competence has been maintained. In such cases, there will be no reduction of the scope of accreditation.

13.2 Accredited laboratories and inspection bodies shall inform MAURITAS in the event that they have not performed any accredited test/calibration/inspection for more than 1 year. The laboratory shall inform MAURITAS whether and how the competency of the laboratory/inspection body staff has been maintained in such cases.

13.3 In the event that accredited laboratories and inspection bodies are not in a position to demonstrate their competency to perform certain specific test/calibration/inspection for a maximum period of 2 years (e.g. in case of equipment out of order, lack of resources, etc), MAURITAS shall initiate actions for reduction or withdrawal of accreditation as appropriate.

13.4 The Technical Signatory:

- a) Accepts responsibility for the contents (i.e. results and/or measurements) of the Certificate/Report which he/she is signing or authorizing;
- b) Must be knowledgeable of the test/calibration/inspection method used;
- c) Must be able to assess and interpret the data;
- d) Must be confident when authorizing results or measurements, that all the necessary checks have been completed as required by the quality system implemented to ensure the quality of the results;
- e) Must have comprehensive knowledge of the technical requirements of the relevant accreditation standard; and
- f) Must be conversant with the quality system implemented within the organization.

13.5 Accredited laboratory/inspection body shall assess and monitor the competency of all of its Technical Signatories at least once in an accreditation cycle.

In case a laboratory/inspection body Technical Signatory has been promoted and is no longer carrying out tests/calibrations/inspections, the CABs shall define their mechanism for monitoring of competence. The monitoring shall be performed at least once in the accreditation cycle.

13.6 Technical Signatories who have been on leave from an accredited laboratory/inspection body for a period of more than one year shall no longer be considered as Technical Signatories. The laboratory/inspection body shall re-apply for them to be assessed again by MAURITAS before they are being allowed to sign reports/certificates bearing the MAURITAS accreditation symbol/the Combined Mark.

13.7 Initially, MAURITAS shall assess Technical Signatories by a combination of witnessing and interview. MAURITAS shall, thereafter, assess Technical Signatories at least once in an accreditation cycle by witnessing. However, MAURITAS also acknowledges that over time, some Technical Signatories have been promoted and are no longer involved in testing/calibration/inspection activities. In such cases, MAURITAS shall assess these Technical Signatories by interview.

13.8 Accredited laboratories shall not permanently subcontract accredited tests for a period of more than 1 year and shall ensure that the section on ‘subcontracted tests/calibrations or inspections’ in MAURITAS R4 are met.

13.9 A Technical Signatory of an accredited laboratory/inspection body who no longer works for the latter shall not be considered as Technical Signatory for that particular accredited laboratory/inspection body and his/her name shall be immediately removed from the schedule of accreditation. One person cannot act as Technical Signatory for more than one organization.

14 Use of the MAURITAS Accreditation Symbol or the Combined Mark, and reference to accreditation

14.1 Accredited CABs are encouraged to use MAURITAS’ Accreditation symbol and/or Combined Mark and shall be in accordance with MAURITAS R4 document.

14.2 The CABs shall have rules for how they (and if relevant their customer) refer to accreditation in advertising materials and in other connections.

15 Acknowledgement of MAURITAS accreditation certificate

15.1 A certificate issued within an accreditation scheme must in addition to an extent definition described in the relevant standard, include the issuers name, accreditation number and MAURITAS’ name or accreditation symbol in order to be acknowledged as an “accredited certificate”.

(“Accredited” certificate is here understood as a certificate being issued by an accredited body within the body’s valid scope of accreditation and where all procedures for accredited certification have been followed). An accredited certificate which falls under the scope of the multilateral recognition agreement that MAURITAS has entered into with other accreditation bodies, would according to the agreement be acknowledged by all those having signed the agreement.

15.2 For certification of products, the certification bodies are requested to accept the suppliers’ management system to sufficient extent, if this management system is certified by another certification body which is accredited by a signatory to the relevant IAF’s multilateral agreement.

15.3 An accreditation certificate and scope will only describe compliances to the standards/normative documents the body is accredited for.

15.4 Certificates issued by an accredited certification body prior to the accreditation being assigned, can be converted to an accredited certificate if the following conditions are met:

- a) The certification body has carried out at least one surveillance audit on the certification holder after the accreditation is granted;
- b) The certificate is issued with a new date;
- c) The certification is carried out within the scope of accreditation; and
- d) No significant changes had been made within the certification system since the certificate was issued, alternatively that the surveillance covers areas in the certification system that because of earlier gaps were not satisfactorily covered.

15.5 If a non-accredited certificate shall be converted to an accredited certificate, the certification body shall perform a complete new audit if the validity period has expired.

16 Change of Certification Body

16.1 If a certified organisation wishes to change to another certification body, the new certification body shall issue a new certificate based on a certification audit/examination. It is up to the new certification body to judge in what way earlier audit reports/examinations can be used. If they can be used, a reduction in the number of auditor days can be achieved for the certification audit/examination.

17 Actions when failing to comply with the requirements

17.1 If the accredited CAB fails to comply with the requirements for accreditation, MAURITAS shall put in effect one or more of the following actions, depending on how serious the nonconformities are:

- a) Instructions for corrective actions (nonconformities);
- b) Suspend the accreditation or parts of it;
- c) Withdraw or reduce the accreditation.

17.2 MAURITAS will evaluate which action to be used. When it is necessary to withdraw accreditation, instructions for corrective actions and/or suspension shall be used first if MAURITAS finds that appropriate. The actions can be described as following:

17.3 Instructions for corrective actions (nonconformities)

17.3.1 MAURITAS can require that the CAB correct the nonconformity within a specified date. If the CAB wishes to keep the accreditation, it must prove that the nonconformity is satisfactorily addressed within the time limit.

17.3.2 The instructions may include withdrawal of accredited certificates and reports. MAURITAS may also decide that an extraordinary visit to the CAB is required to check that the corrective actions are satisfactorily implemented.

17.4 Suspension of accreditation by MAURITAS

17.4.1 If the nonconformity is not corrected within the agreed time, or if the nonconformity is very serious, or if continuous unsatisfactory proposed/implemented corrective actions is submitted, the accreditation or part of it can be suspended for a limited time. A suspension is the action of putting temporary restrictions for all or part of the CABs accredited activity due to serious deficiency in fulfilling the requirements set by MAURITAS. Examples of serious deficiencies are:

- a) Non-satisfactory or lack of competence because of changes in key personnel and/or changes in the qualifications of key personnel;
- b) Conformity assessment activities in fields where the organisation has no personnel with satisfactory competence;
- c) Lack of performance of satisfactory corrections within the time limit;
- d) Unacceptable conformity assessment practice;
- e) Lack of implementation of the management system;
- f) Misuse of the accreditation;
- g) Missing follow-up of relevant governmental requirements;
- h) Failure in paying any MAURITAS fees after a period of 6 months from date of issue of invoice.
- i) Failure of CAB to take satisfactory corrective actions in a timely manner for renewing accreditation prior to expiry date

17.4.2 When the accreditation or parts of it is suspended, the CAB shall not offer or refer to accreditation for the suspended activities as long as the suspension lasts. Accredited certificates/licences shall not be issued within the area which is included in the suspension. Certification bodies shall however perform annual audits of its certified clients.

17.4.3 Suspensions shall be for a period of 4 months, but MAURITAS can prolong the limit up to 9 months. MAURITAS will perform an assessment in view of re-instating accreditation 3 months prior to the expiry of the suspension period. The accreditation will be re-established by MAURITAS if the conditions which caused the suspension are improved in a satisfactory way within the time limit. If the non-conformity is not corrected within the time limit, the accreditation will be withdrawn.

An assessment activity, if necessary, shall be conducted before recommending the re-instatement of accreditation of the CAB. The extent of the assessment shall depend on the cause of the suspension of the CAB.

17.4.4 When the accreditation or parts of it is suspended, MAURITAS shall require that the CAB give information to the affected customers about the consequences without undue delay.

17.4.5 Already paid fees are not returned when a CAB is suspended. The CAB has to pay all accumulated costs. Applicable fees remain payable even during the suspension period.

17.4.6 Appeals on decisions related to suspensions can be made.

17.5 Voluntary Suspension of accreditation

17.5.1 An accredited CAB may request for voluntary suspension of its scope of accreditation or part of its scope of accreditation if it has valid reasons to believe that for a period of time not exceeding 6 months, it will not be able to satisfy the accreditation requirements such as moving of premises, equipment, change of key personnel. The request shall be made to the Director in writing. The Case Officer shall then assess the reasons provided by the CAB and submit recommendation to the Director for evaluation and approval.

A suspension of accreditation may not be required in the event that a laboratory relocates its premises, calibrates all equipment and performs all necessary verifications to ensure accreditation requirements are met, allowing accredited activities to resume within 1 week. The laboratory shall not issue accredited reports during the relocation period.

17.5.2 During the suspension period, the CAB will no longer be able to use the MAURITAS symbol/Combined Mark and make any implication of having an association with MAURITAS. The laboratory / inspection body can still continue to use the MAURITAS accreditation symbol / Combined Mark for parameters not under suspension. Parameters which are under voluntary suspension shall be reported as non-accredited during suspension period. Accreditation certificates and schedules need not be returned to MAURITAS during the voluntary suspension.

17.5.3 It is the duty of the CAB to inform MAURITAS when it is ready for a complete assessment exercise. In case the CAB is not able to meet specified deadlines, the accreditation of the CAB shall be withdrawn.

17.5.4 MAURITAS reserves the right to be able to make publicly available information about the voluntary suspension of the CAB.

17.5.5 When a CAB is on voluntary suspension, MAURITAS shall require that the CAB give information to the affected customers about the consequences without undue delay.

17.5.6 Following a voluntary suspension, MAURITAS shall perform an assessment activity before recommending the re-instatement of accreditation of the CAB, if necessary. The extent of the assessment shall depend on the cause of the voluntary suspension of the CAB.

17.5.7 By reinstatement of accreditation after voluntary suspension, MAURITAS shall inform the CAB about its right to use the MAURITAS symbol/Combined Mark according to MAURITAS R4 document. MAURITAS will also make publicly available the information on the re-instatement of accreditation of the CAB

17.6 Withdrawal or Reduction of accreditation by MAURITAS

17.6.1 If the CAB is not able to correct the nonconformities within the time limit, or the nonconformity is so serious that the CAB no longer has the necessary qualifications to carry out accredited services, the accredited scope or parts of the scope shall be withdrawn by MAURITAS. By withdrawal of the accreditation, the CAB is required to return the accreditation certificate and schedule to MAURITAS.

17.6.2 If parts of the accreditation are withdrawn, the CAB shall hand over to MAURITAS accreditation certificate and/or schedule for destruction or alteration. The CAB shall no longer offer to carry out accredited services within the areas withdrawn.

17.6.3 If the accreditation is withdrawn or reduced, the CAB shall, in writing, inform the clients concerned about the consequences without undue delay. For certification bodies (system, product and personnel), the consequence will be to withdraw and destroy all certificates with MAURITAS' symbol/Combined Mark and/or other references to accreditation. A copy of the letter sent to the clients shall be sent to MAURITAS.

17.6.4 In the case of withdrawal, paid fees will not be refunded. The CAB has a duty to pay all accumulated costs.

17.6.5 MAURITAS reserves the right to be able to make publicly available information about the withdrawal or reduction of the CAB and same shall be promulgated by MAURITAS on its Register and web-site and in all other ways considered appropriate at the time. In the case of withdrawal, MAURITAS shall remove all reference to the CAB and shall end any applicable obligations it has to the CAB.

17.6.6 Appeals on decisions can be made.

18 Transferring of accreditation

18.1 By purchase, merger, changes of name etc. some situations arise where accredited CAB wishes to transfer an accreditation from one CAB to another.

18.2 Transfer implies that an assigned accreditation is transferred from one CAB to another. The accreditation number will normally be kept, or chosen by the CABs that are involved in a merger or similar. MAURITAS reserves the right to deviate from this practice.

Conditions for approval of transfer of accreditation are as follows:

- a) The system of performance of the accredited certification shall not in principal be changed, and the changes shall not be in conflict with the accreditation conditions;
- b) The changes do not lead to weakening of the quality of the work or the integrity of the CAB;
- c) The changes have no influence on fulfilment of the requirements of accreditation;
- d) The transferring of accreditation does not mislead the market;
- e) The CAB attends to the responsibility towards customers and MAURITAS. (This implies that, at any time in the transfer process, there have to be a clearly defined legal body that is responsible towards customers and MAURITAS);
- f) The changes are not in conflict with Mauritius' (or another nations' if the CAB is located in another country) laws.

18.3 If transfer is requested, the accredited CAB has to send an application by letter for transfer of the accreditation. The application must include:

- a) Complete description of the background of the application;
- b) Clearly and precise description of new legal status, when it is relevant;
- c) Description of possible changes in the management system;
- d) Company-attestation;
- e) Binding statement from the new owner/management that they will fulfil the requirements for accreditation;
- f) Binding statement from the new owner/management that possible relevant responsibility is taken over from the one the accreditation was transferred from (e.g. acceptance of previous contracts for delivery of accredited services);
- g) Plan for updating of the Quality Documentation and other affected documents (e.g. change of name);
- h) Information regarding updating of necessary contract of employments, agreement with subcontractors etc. when relevant.

18.4 Depending on the changes due to the transfer, MAURITAS will decide if verifications must be done at the location of the CAB or if a transfer can be granted based on the received documentations.

18.5 In the cases where changes will lead to a new accreditation certificate and schedule, the one who is accredited have the duty to return the earlier edition of these documents to MAURITAS when the transfer is granted.

19 Notice on withdrawal of accreditation or closure of the CAB

19.1 An accredited CAB may withdraw its accreditation giving notice in writing to the Director.

19.2 If the CAB is in the process of ceasing its operation, it has a duty to immediately inform MAURITAS, which will withdraw the accreditation at once. The requirements, which are described in paragraph above on “Actions when failing to comply with the requirements”. of this document regarding withdrawal are valid. The same requirements are valid if the CAB for different reasons has to reduce the accreditation scope.

19.3 The accreditation number for a withdrawn CAB will not be used by another CAB at a later time.

20 Financial responsibility in connection with accreditation

20.1 MAURITAS is not to be held responsible for the accredited CABs obligations towards their clients.

21 The right to appeal against decisions made by MAURITAS

21.1 Any appeal against MAURITAS’ decisions must be presented to MAURITAS within 30 days after the CAB received MAURITAS’ decision. If the appeal is deemed to be valid by MAURITAS, all documents concerning the matter shall be sent to the Appeal Panel appointed by the Minister. The Appeal Panel makes the final decision.

21.2 The CABs have however, at any time the opportunity to make a complaint regarding MAURITAS’ activities, as e.g. administrative work and interpretation of the requirements for accreditation. Complaints have to be in writing and be substantiated. During the handling of complaints, deadlines for closing of possible related non-conformity will be postponed.

22 The right to refuse an Assessor/Technical Expert proposed by MAURITAS

22.1 CABs have the right to object to the appointment of the nominated Team leader, Assessor or technical expert or MAURITAS Staff, by providing valid reasons in writing, and, in such cases, MAURITAS will endeavour to offer an alternative including foreign assessors/technical experts at the cost of the applicant CABs.

23 Participation in Proficiency Testing (applicable to Laboratories and Inspection Bodies)

23.1 All applicant/accredited laboratories and inspection bodies, where relevant, seeking accreditation/extension of scope, shall participate with satisfactory results in Proficiency Testing (PT) program, External Quality Assurance (EQAS) and/or ILC other than PT or measurement audit for all parameters for which accreditation is sought. The outcome of the Proficiency Testing participation shall be available at latest during the initial assessment/extension of scope exercise. Proficiency Testing participation which are more than two years prior to the initial assessment/extension of scope shall not be considered. The applicant laboratory/inspection body shall also submit a plan for participation in Proficiency Testing in the first accreditation cycle.

For grant of accreditation, laboratories or inspection bodies, where relevant, shall participate satisfactorily in PT/EQAS and/or ILC other than PT for each parameter.

23.2 All accredited laboratories and inspection bodies shall participate satisfactorily in Proficiency Testing External Quality Assurance (EQAS) and/or ILC other than PT or measurement audit for all parameters at least once every four years and, where relevant, shall update the Proficiency Testing Plan for each accreditation cycle at the beginning of each cycle.

In the event that accredited laboratories and inspection bodies do not participate in Proficiency Testing External Quality Assurance (EQAS) and/or ILC other than PT or measurement audit for any specific parameter(s), MAURITAS shall suspend that/those parameter(s) from the schedule of accreditation for a maximum period of 4 months, pending satisfactory participation in Proficiency Testing External Quality Assurance (EQAS) and/or ILC other than PT or measurement audit. In case accredited laboratories and inspection bodies still do not participate in Proficiency Testing External Quality Assurance (EQAS) and/or ILC other than PT or measurement audit, following suspension period, MAURITAS shall withdraw that/those parameter(s) from the schedule of accreditation.

23.3 The frequency of participation in PT/EQAS/ILC other than PT/Measurement audits may vary depending of the outcome of a risk assessment by the Laboratory/Inspection Body. The risk assessment shall consider the following:

- a) Number and frequency of tests/calibrations/sampling/measurements undertaken;
- b) Turnover of technical staff;
- c) Experience and knowledge of technical staff;
- d) Source of metrological traceability (e.g. availability of reference materials, national measurement standards, etc.);
- e) Known stability/instability of the test or measurement technique;
- f) Stability of the analyte and matrix, and the impact of storage and transportation;
- g) Significance and final use of testing/calibration/sampling data (e.g. forensic science, food safety and medical laboratories represent areas requiring a high level of assurance);
- h) Level of risk posed by Biohazardous PT items used and the containment precautions required;

23.4 Accredited laboratories/inspection bodies shall submit an updated Proficiency Testing Plan, either in word or excel format, to MAURITAS prior to each assessment/re-assessment. The Proficiency Testing plan shall include, as a minimum, the following information:

- a) Accreditation cycle period;
- b) Parameter and method;
- c) Name of PT provider;
- d) Frequency of participation in one (1) accreditation cycle;
- e) Date(s) of participation/expected date(s) of participation;
- f) Z-score (if any) or an indication if PT results was satisfactory.

23.5 The Proficiency Testing Plan, for the current accreditation cycle shall include all the results for PT participation obtained during the cycle. All accredited laboratories/inspection bodies, where relevant, shall update the Proficiency Testing Plan in case they are granted an extension for new parameters.

This Proficiency Testing Plan shall be maintained and include all accredited parameters irrespective of whether the laboratory has already participated in its Proficiency Testing prior to the assessment/re-assessment. In the case of re-assessment, the laboratory shall additionally be required to submit the Proficiency Testing plan for the next cycle so that MAURITAS can analyse same and determine whether it is appropriate.

For maintenance of accreditation, laboratories/inspection bodies, where relevant, shall participate satisfactorily in PT/EQAS and/or ILC other than PT/Measurement audits for specific areas of technical competence (for example, for similar techniques like AAS, GCMS, ICP-MS).

23.6 MAURITAS/Assessment Teams shall evaluate the level of frequency of Proficiency Testing participation based on the Proficiency Testing plan submitted to ensure that it is appropriate. MAURITAS may request the laboratory/inspection body to review the frequency of Proficiency Testing participation based on risks identified.

Participation through PT and/or ILCs other than PT to demonstrate the validity of results can be done through:

- a) A PT provider, accredited to ISO/IEC 17043 by an Accreditation Body signatory of the ILAC MRA for PT providers;
- b) A PT provider, accredited to ISO/IEC 17043 by an applicant Accreditation Body or an Accreditation Body non-signatory of the ILAC MRA for PT providers;
- c) Participation in an ILC, which is organised for other purposes than determining a CAB's competence (ISO/IEC 17043);
- d) Organisation of, or participation in, ILCs organised, in accordance with the relevant requirements of ISO/IEC 17043, to determine the performance of accredited CABs by comparison with results of other laboratories.

23.7 Laboratories/inspection bodies shall analyse Proficiency Testing participation data in such a way to identify trends and shall document the rules/criteria used for trend identification. Where trends are identified, laboratories/inspection bodies shall conduct an investigation and implement appropriate corrective actions. Laboratories/inspection bodies that do not have sufficient results for Proficiency Testing for performing the trend analysis shall combine the Proficiency Testing results from the previous and current accreditation cycle and provide same to the assessment team at each visit.

23.8 Where the performance is deemed to be questionable or unsatisfactory or is persistently poor, the Laboratory/Inspection Body shall be required to undertake an investigation, take corrective actions and report back to MAURITAS.

23.9 In turn, MAURITAS may accept the explanation provided, accept the corrective actions undertaken, require a further assessment or reduce the accreditation scope.

23.10 In the event that there are areas for which Proficiency Testing is not available, the laboratory/inspection body shall discuss with MAURITAS and agree on suitable options by which competence of the laboratory/inspection body can be recognised and monitored. This information shall be documented in the Proficiency Testing Plan of the laboratory/inspection body.

24 Changes in Accreditation Standards (Transition Plan)

24.1 Whenever there are changes in the accreditation standards, MAURITAS prepares a transition plan based on the transition period as defined by ILAC, IAF, AFRAC, SADCA and/or ISO. Accredited and applicant CABs shall bring the necessary changes required in their management systems within the transition deadline in order to continually fulfil the requirements of the MAURITAS accreditation.

24.2 MAURITAS shall carry out an assessment to determine whether the CAB has successfully transitioned to the updated standards. In the event that an accredited/applicant CAB fails to complete the transition to the updated standard within the deadlines set by MAURITAS, the latter shall take appropriate actions as follows:

- a) When a CAB willing to transit has not been able to meet the transition deadline it will be suspended for a period of not more than 4 months as from the transition deadline. If after the 4 months, there has been no progress, the accreditation will be withdrawn.
- b) When a CAB is not willing to transit to an updated accreditation standard, the accreditation will be withdrawn immediately after the transition deadline.

Appendix A: Amendment Table

SN	Section	Amendment
Issue 1, Revision 5		
1.	3.8	Reference to IAF MD12 has been added
2.	7.2.4	i. Sub-section 7.2.4 now read as “Prior to each assessment, applicant/accredited calibration laboratories ... international reference standards.” ii. Previous content of section 7.4 is now at section 11.7
3.	11.7	i. A new sub-section “Collection of data to provide indicators on management system certification bodies’ performance” has been added.
4.	11.8	i. A new sub-section 11.8 “Collection of data for the assessment of management system certification bodies with activities in multiple countries” has been added.
5.	23.2	i. Line 4 “The frequency of participation in PT/EQAS/ILC other than PT/Measurement... the containment precautions required;” is now a new sub-section at 23.3 ii. A 2 nd paragraph “In the event that accredited laboratories and inspection bodies... that/those parameter(s) from the schedule of accreditation.” has been added
6.	23.7	i. At line 2, “and shall document the rules/criteria...conduct an investigation and implement appropriate corrective actions” has been added after “...trends”