



**SRI LANKA ACCREDITATION BOARD  
for CONFORMITY ASSESSMENT**

**POLICIES & PROCEDURES  
for ACCREDITATION OF  
INSPECTION BODIES**

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## ACCREDITATION SCHEME FOR INSPECTION BODIES

### PILICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR ACCREDITATION OF INSPECTION BODIES

## INTRODUCTION

The Sri Lanka Accreditation Board for Conformity Assessment (SLAB) is the National Accreditation Authority of Sri Lanka established under Act No. 32 of 2005. The SLAB offers accreditation services to bodies that provide Conformity Assessment Services such as Certification Bodies, Inspection Bodies, Testing and Calibration Laboratories, and Bodies Certifying Persons.

The work procedures of the SLAB for Inspection Bodies are based on ISO/IEC 17011 – General Requirements for Accreditation Bodies Accrediting Conformity Assessment Bodies. Preference will be given to Subject Specific Documents published by International Laboratory Accreditation Corporation (ILAC) and Asia Pacific Laboratory Accreditation Corporation (APLAC), wherever applicable. ILAC P15 provides guidelines on application of ISO/IEC 17020:2012 and it is intended to be used by SLAB for accreditation of inspection bodies as well as inspection bodies seeking to manage their operations in a manner fulfilling the requirements for accreditation. In addition, IAF/ILAC -A5: Application of ISO/IEC 17011:2004 provides interpretation on ISO/IEC 17011 with mandatory and non mandatory requirements for the accreditation of Inspection Bodies. The Governing Council of SLAB or relevant advisory committees if required, will advice the SLAB management in the areas for which there are no ILAC, APLAC or other acceptable explanatory documents available.

## 1. GENERAL

### 1.1 Scope

This document outlines the policies and procedures to be adopted when Inspection Bodies (type A, B or C) seek accreditation for their inspection activities from SLAB. Inspection activities for accreditation by SLAB are described in Appendix 1. Accreditation will be granted against the applicable International Standards or widely accepted standards or guidelines that are auditable or verifiable.

### 1.2 References

- Sri Lanka Accreditation Board for Conformity Assessment Act No 32 of 2005
- SLAB Quality Manual
- ISO/IEC 17011: 2005- Conformity Assessment – General Requirements for Accreditation Bodies Accrediting Conformity Assessment Bodies
- ILAC –P15:06/2014 – Application of ISO/IEC 17020:2012 for the Accreditation of Inspection Bodies
- IAF/ILAC -A 5 :11/2013 - IAF/ILAC Multi-Lateral Mutual Recognition Arrangements (Arrangements): Application of ISO/IEC 17011:2004

### 1.3 Terms and Definitions

Refer: ISO/IEC 17000:2004 – Conformity Assessment General Vocabulary

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## **2. ACCREDITATION REQUIREMENTS**

### **2.1 Accreditation Criteria**

The international standard ISO/IEC 17020 – General criteria for the operation of various types of bodies performing inspection is used by the SLAB along with specific criteria developed subject-wise, as applicable and required for accreditation of inspection bodies. If any document is revised, the SLAB will automatically adopt those modifications in its criteria, but will give the parties concerned a realistic period of time for the transition.

### **2.2 Eligibility**

The applicant Inspection Body must comply with all the requirements of ISO/IEC 17020, standard or guideline specific to the scope/field of inspection, if available. In addition, the applicant Inspection Body must comply with the relevant regulations (if any), specific criteria (if any) of SLAB for the scopes covered in their inspection scheme.

Any inspection activity operated by an Inspection Body as a regular inspection scheme developed under contractual, mutual or regulatory arrangements for consumer protection or public safety or any other broad based objective can be accredited by SLAB.

The applicant Inspection Body must ensure that their auditors are qualified and involved in continual professional development activities gaining skills and competencies as well as updating themselves to meet the demands and expectations of their clients/ stakeholders.

## **3. PREPARATION FOR ACCREDITATION**

### **3.1 Preparing for Accreditation of Inspection Bodies**

The management of Inspection Body should first decide to obtain accreditation for their inspection activity from SLAB. It is important for an Inspection Body to make a definite plan of action for obtaining accreditation and nominate a responsible person to co-ordinate all activities related to the accreditation process. The person nominated should be familiar with the Inspection Body's existing quality system.

A request can be made to SLAB in person, by post, by telephone or by E-mail for relevant information on Accreditation. Information regarding SLAB Accreditation process, relevant documents and application form (IB-FM (P) -01) will be made available to prospective clients. The Inspection Body should be acquainted with the SLAB assessment procedure & methodology before submitting the application in the prescribed format.

A quality manual shall be prepared in accordance with the requirements specified in the International Standard ISO/IEC 17020 and this should be supplemented by a set of other documents such as procedures, standards, work instructions etc. to be in alignment with the particular quality system requirements. If the Inspection body itself perform testing activities, the documentation of Inspection body shall address the requirements given in ISO/IEC 17025. The Inspection Body must ensure that the procedures described in the Quality Manual and other documents are being implemented. Preferably the applicant Inspection Body must have conducted at least one Internal Audit and one Management Review before the submission of application to the SLAB.

The Inspection Body needs to establish the status of its existing quality system and technical competence with regard to the requirements of SLAB for accreditation.

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## 3.2 Scope of Accreditation

The scope of the accreditation, often referred to as the 'scope', is defined as those activities for which the SLAB has determined that the Inspection Body complies with the requirements. The scope also specifies the locations/branches where the Inspection Body carries out its activities. During the preliminary audit process, the scope of the accreditation is discussed with the Inspection Body in detail, and the nature and extent of the assessment will be based on that. The details of scopes with regard to inspection are given in **Appendix 1**.

## 4. ACCREDITATION PROCESS

The accreditation process consists of registration followed by an adequacy assessment (document and record review), a pre-assessment and an initial assessment (Final assessment for the grant of Accreditation). The process is completed with the decision on accreditation. After the accreditation is granted, the post accreditation phase begins.

### 4.1. Pre-assessment Process

#### 4.1.1 Application and Registration for Accreditation

The application form shall be available for distribution at SLAB and any Inspection Body that wishes to apply for accreditation may obtain this document (IB-FM (P)-01) which is free of charge. The Inspection Body shall return the completed application form in duplicate and Self Assessment Questionnaire (IB-FM (P)-02) along with two copies of the quality manual of the Inspection Body and other relevant documents to SLAB. The application shall be accompanied with the prescribed application fee stated in the fee structure (IB-RG (P)-01). Inspection Body has to take special care in filling the scope of accreditation for which the Inspection Body wishes to apply. In case, the Inspection Body finds any clause of the Standard (in part or full) not applicable to the Inspection Body, it shall furnish justifiable reasons. A registration is valid for a period of three years. The Inspection Body is notified well in advance before the expiry of this period. During this period, the Inspection Body will be notified, if there is any change in procedures and requirements.

#### 4.1.2 Special Cases

- **Additional Accreditation**

If an Inspection Body that is already accredited wishes a second accreditation against any recognized and accepted standard or a scope extension to existing accreditation, the procedure is same as for a new registration. However, in such case, the assessment by the SLAB may be limited to cover the areas not covered by the existing accredited system and certain specific areas as decided by SLAB.

- **Already Accredited Certification Activity**

In case an applicant Inspection Body is already accredited for the applied scope by another Accreditation Body with ILAC, APLAC membership or MRA, the SLAB will communicate with the particular Accreditation Body to collect necessary information and will seek possibilities to act in collaboration with the said Accreditation Body when processing the Accreditation Application. In such circumstances, the SLAB may grant accreditation after an abbreviated assessment; however any such decision will be taken at the sole discretion of SLAB.

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- **Non Routine Cases**

In case an Inspection Body requests accreditation for an Inspection Activity where an established Standard/ Guide is not available, SLAB, in consultation with the Technical Advisory Committee will decide on the suitable accreditation criteria to be followed by the Inspection Body.

The applicant Inspection Body has to submit necessary supportive documents as evidence to substantiate their claim when they seek accreditation under Special Cases.

#### **4.1.3 Acknowledgement and Registration of Application**

SLAB on receipt of application, the quality manual, other relevant documents and the fees, shall issue an acknowledgement to the Inspection Body. After scrutiny of application for its completeness in all respects, a unique customer reference number shall be allocated to the particular application, which shall be used for correspondence with the Inspection Body thereafter. SLAB may request for additional information/ clarification(s), if necessary from the applicant Inspection Body.

If, on the basis of documents and information provided by the Inspection Body, SLAB is of the opinion that an assessment cannot result in accreditation, the applicant Inspection Body shall be informed in writing giving reasons. All information of the Inspection Body shall be kept strictly confidential.

### **4.2 Assessment process**

#### **4.2.1 Appointment of Lead Assessor**

The SLAB shall appoint a Lead Assessor from the pool of Assessors to carry out assessments on the Management System adopted by the applicant Inspection Body. Other general criteria for the selection of Lead Assessor include his/her acceptance by the applicant Inspection Body, free from any direct or indirect involvement with the particular Inspection Body which may compromise his/her impartiality and independence, and availability during assessment process.

The Lead Assessor shall have the overall responsibility of conducting the Assessment Process. As such he/she shall be responsible for evaluating the adequacy of the quality manual and conducting Pre-assessment and Initial Assessment on the Inspection Body.

The Lead Assessor shall preferably have technical expertise in one of the main disciplines for which the application has been made. However, in exceptional cases, a Lead Assessor belonging to a different technical field of expertise may be appointed considering his proven competence in evaluating Quality Management Systems.

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#### 4.2.2 Adequacy of Quality Manual

The Lead Assessor with the assistance of SLAB will commence the assessment process with an adequacy assessment of document and record review based on the application submitted within one month. The aim of the adequacy assessment is to determine whether the Inspection Body is sufficiently prepared for a pre-assessment and having a reasonable chance of getting Accreditation and to ascertain the compliance of the documents with the criteria specified in ISO/IEC 17020. The adequacy assessment is also meant to obtain a clear idea of the intended scope of the accreditation.

The Lead Assessor, shall inform SLAB regarding the adequacy of the quality manual with a report (IB-FM-05), indicating inadequacies (if any) in the quality manual which in turn should be communicated to the Client Inspection Body. Based on this feedback the Inspection Body shall amend the quality manual and also implement the quality system accordingly within two months.

If the Inspection Body satisfies the relevant requirements at the adequacy Assessment stage or after the Inspection Body has taken necessary corrective action based on the adequacy assessment, the assessment process will move into the next phase.

If, on the basis of documents and information provided by the Inspection Body, SLAB is of the opinion that an assessment cannot result in accreditation, the applicant Inspection Body shall be informed in writing and the documents concerned will be returned to the Inspection Body for necessary improvement. All information of the Inspection Body shall be kept strictly confidential.

#### 4.2.3 Appointment of Assessment Team

Towards the task of on-site assessment, the Lead Assessor shall be assisted by a team of Assessors/ technical experts who will be appointed by SLAB as appropriate with the scope of accreditation and in accordance with the criteria adopted for the selection of Lead Assessors. The SLAB shall propose the composition of assessment team. The Inspection Body may lodge an appeal against specific team members. Such an appeal shall be motivated by clear reasons. If no replacement is available, it is possible that the visit will be postponed, or that a part of the scope will not be assessed until a suitable replacement is found.

SLAB may also nominate one of its officers to participate in the assessment, unless an officer is appointed as an Assessor, as an observer during the on-site assessment to convey his/her opinions to the Lead Assessor and to provide clarification on the International Standard and SLAB specific criteria (if any) to the assessment team, whenever necessary.

#### 4.2.4 Onsite Assessment Plan

The SLAB contacts the Inspection Body to agree on the date(s) and schedule for the assessment. Based on this SLAB prepares the Assessment schedule (IB-PL-01) and the composition of the team and send it across to the Inspection Body well in advance.

#### 4.2.5 Onsite Assessment

The Onsite Assessment will be carried out two stages namely Pre-assessment and Initial Assessment (The Final Assessment for the grant of Accreditation). During both these stages, witness assessments at the site of the applicant Inspection Body's Client may be required. Although there are no strict demarcations for these two assessments, the objectives of these Assessments may be expressed in the following manner.

If an inspection body carries out at least one following key activities at different premises, prior to granting accreditation, all premises shall be assessed as per ISO/IEC17020 and other requirements as relevant.

- Policy formulation
  - Processes and /or procedures development
  - Process of initial selection of inspectors and as appropriate
  - Contract review
  - Planning conformity assessments
  - Review and approval of conformity assessments
  - Contract review separate from the Head office
  - Maintenance of records not kept at Head Office
  - Maintenance of management system documentation not kept at Head Office
  - Maintenance and calibration of specific equipment kept separate from Head Office
- **Pre Assessment**
    - a. Assess the completeness of the documentation structure of the implemented system
    - b. Assess the degree of preparedness of the Inspection Body for the assessment
    - c. Study the scope of accreditation so that the time frame, number of Assessors required in various disciplines and visits to sites, if applicable, for the assessment can be determined more accurately
  - **Initial Assessment**
    - a. Assess the effectiveness of the implementation of the documented system
    - b. Inspection Body's Competence in Performing Conformity Assessment.
    - c. Take a decision on the Recommendation for the Grant of Accreditation

At the end of each assessment the Lead Assessor shall submit an Assessment Report as appropriate to the objective of the assessment.

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#### 4.2.6 Conducting the Assessment

The assessment team shall commence an on-site assessment with an opening meeting at which the purpose of the assessment and criteria are clearly defined and the assessment schedule and the scope for the assessment are confirmed. During the assessment, the Assessment team will assess the documentation and implementation of the management system as well as the competence of the Inspection Body in accordance with the International Standard and specific criteria (if any) of SLAB. In doing so, the assessment team will take a representative sample in the areas within the scope of the accreditation.

This process shall be extended to witness assessment activities also. The Inspection Body shall demonstrate that it is competent in all the activities at all sites for which accreditation has been requested. With regard to the management system of the Inspection Body, the assessment team shall be able to assess at least one complete cycle of the Internal Audit and Management Review.

If nonconformities are found, the team member of the assessment team involved fills in a 'nonconformity form (IB-FM-20)' for each non-conformity. The team grades the nonconformities based on the Guideline AC-GL-07.

Under normal circumstances the onsite Assessment shall be terminated with the closing meeting. In the closing meeting, the team discusses the results of the assessment with the Inspection Body. The nonconformity reports are handed over to the Management of the Inspection Body, so it can immediately proceed with the implementation of corrective action plan. The Assessment should not proceed into next stage unless all Non Conformities are satisfactorily addressed and closed.

#### 4.2.7 Assessment Techniques

The SLAB Assessors use one or more combination of the following assessment techniques when conducting the assessment.

- **Document review:** assessing quality manuals, procedures etc. for compliance with the criteria; a document review can also involve records at the Inspection Body's Location, such as personnel files, quality control charts, audit reports, management review reports, audit files etc.;
- **Office assessment:** an assessment at the premises of the Inspection Body in order to assess the implementation of the system;
- **Interviews:** evaluating the expertise of the Inspection Body's personnel via targeted interviews.
- **Witnessing:** observing inspections and examination carried out by the Inspection Body

The choice of inspectors and sites to be witnessed by the SLAB assessment team is done by the SLAB considering the critical factors such as new employees, the risk, the complexity of the inspection activity. However, this does not mean that every inspector is witnessed on-site. Prior to grant accreditation, at least 50 % of the inspection activities under each field of inspection as given in the scope of accreditation is witnessed. Review of competence can be carried out on – site witnessing or off-site document review prior to grant accreditation. However, inspection activities reviewed off- site will be covered within accreditation cycle.

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The above witness requirements are applicable unless otherwise witnessing national legal requirements, regulations, standards, or other relevant authority stipulate level of witnessing. Any such adjustments should be made explicit in scope statements by reference to the relevant law, regulation etc.

#### **4.2.8 Participation in Inter-laboratory Comparisons or PT Programmes**

If applicable, the Inspection Body shall participate in inter-laboratory test comparisons or proficiency testing (PT) programmes as per SLAB policy for participation in proficiency testing activities.

#### **4.2.9 Frequency of Inspection**

Inspection body shall defined and informed frequency of inspection to its clients. Frequency shall be one year for all sites unless specified in the regulations.

#### **4.2.10 Corrective Actions & Follow-up of Assessment**

Inspection Body shall take necessary corrective action on the remaining non-conformance(s)/ other concerns and shall submit a report on the action taken to SLAB within a maximum period of six months.

If it deems necessary, SLAB should communicate with the Inspection Body and shall ensure that all outstanding non conformities are available with and are well understood by the Inspection Body. SLAB should monitor the progress and coordinate the activities with regard to the closure of non-conformities. The decision with regard to closure of Non Conformities shall be taken by the Assessment Team.

When there are significant non-conformities identified during the on-site assessment, the progress is monitored closely and in this regard the SLAB may arrange for a verification or follow-up visit for the closure of the non-conformities.

Whatever it may be the case, all non-conformities raised during the assessment shall be closed before consideration for the Grant of Accreditation.

#### **4.2.11 Assessment Report**

The assessment report (IB-FM-17) prepared by the Lead Assessor in the formats prescribed shall be handed over to SLAB once the particular assessment phase is complete. The assessment report shall contain the evaluation of compliance to the International Standard and relevant specific criteria (if any) and the non-conformances, if any. In case of initial assessment, the assessment report shall also provide a recommendation towards grant of accreditation or otherwise.

### **4.3 Accreditation decision**

After satisfactory closure of all non conformities, the SLAB prepares a summary of (IB-FM-15) all relevant information gathered during the processing of the application, the assessment report prepared by the assessment team, additional information received from the Inspection Body and the Consequent verification activities. The summary report is placed before the Accreditation Committee which is appointed by the Governing Council. The Accreditation Committee for Inspection Bodies studies the final report (IB-FM-46) and the recommendation given by the team and then makes its own recommendations on grant of Accreditation.

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The Accreditation Committee recommendations regarding grant of Accreditation shall be submitted to the Council through Director/CEO, SLAB for approval.

The SLAB informs the Inspection Body in writing of the decision taken. If a favourable decision is taken, the SLAB will draft the accreditation documents. In case of a negative decision, the SLAB will wait for a period of six months before accepting a new application from the same Inspection Body.

All decisions taken by SLAB regarding grant of accreditation shall be open to appeal by the Certification Body consistent with the appeal procedures (GN-PR-09).

#### **4.3.1 Issue of Accreditation Certificate**

As soon as a decision is taken to grant Accreditation SLAB shall prepare the following Documents.

- Accreditation certificate with a unique number for identification duly signed by the Director / CEO, SLAB. This certificate specifies the date on which the accreditation was granted, the standards based on which the accreditation was granted and the period of validity of the certificate.
- A Schedule Referring to the Scope of Accreditation.
- Accreditation Agreement -Terms and condition for maintaining accreditation (IB-RG(P)-03)- This contains the rights and obligations of parties; the party providing the accreditation and the party being accredited and signed by both parties. The applicant Inspection Body must fulfil all the financial obligations due to SLAB, before receiving the certificate(s).

### **5. POST ACCREDETATION PROCESS**

#### **5.1 Post Accreditation Assessments**

The SLAB accreditation certificate shall be valid for a period of 3 years. During the validity of accreditation, the Inspection Body must continuously comply with the requirements of the International Standard and “Terms and condition for maintaining accreditation” (IB-RG (P)-03). In this regard SLAB shall periodically review the validity of Accreditation. To this end, the SLAB carries out surveillance assessments annually and a re-assessment within three years. During the accreditation period, the scope of the accreditation may be changed.

##### **5.1.1 Surveillance**

SLAB shall conduct annual surveillance of all accredited Inspection Bodies. Surveillance is aimed at examining whether the accredited Inspection Body is maintaining all the requirements of the International Standard and SLAB specific criteria (if any). SLAB shall inform the accredited Inspection Body at least two months before the due date of accreditation for conducting the surveillance visit and the Inspection Body shall confirm its readiness within 30 days.

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The Inspection Body during the validity of accreditation may request to enhance the scope of accreditation for which they should preferably apply two months before the conduct of assessment/ surveillance. The modus operandi for surveillance visit is similar to the initial assessment albeit it will cover only selected areas. The non-conformities, if any, shall be closed within three months of conduct of surveillance. The summary of the surveillance report along with other relevant information shall be submitted to the Director / CEO, SLAB to make a decision on the continuation of accreditation or otherwise. SLAB shall inform the Inspection Body, in writing, about the decision.

### 5.1.2 Reassessment and Renewal of Accreditation

The SLAB will intimate the Inspection Body in writing on the expiry of Accreditation approximately four months in advance and the Inspection Body has to respond at least one month before the expiry. The Inspection Body may also apply for renewal of accreditation by submitting a new application in the prescribed Application form (IB-FM (P)-01) if desired so. Along with this, a copy of the current Quality Manual of the Inspection Body which describes the existing quality system in accordance with ISO/IEC 17020 should be made available. The request shall be accompanied with the prescribed re-assessment fee.

The Inspection Body may request for extension of scope of accreditation, which should be explicitly mentioned in the application form. The procedure for processing of renewal of application is similar to that of first application except that no Pre-assessment is conducted and likewise, the procedure for the on-site reassessment visit is similar to that of initial assessment. If the results of reassessment visit are positive and all non-conformances are closed before the expiry of the certificate, then the validity of the certificate is extended by a further period of three years without any discontinuity. In case of renewal, a new certificate of accreditation is issued while the certificate number is retained.

### 5.1.3 Supplementary/ Special Assessments

The SLAB may organize Supplementary/ Special Visits under the following circumstances:

- Repeatedly finds nonconformities of category Major or large numbers of nonconformities of Category Minor during the surveillance/ reassessment.
- Receiving complaints that are substantiated with facts or on instances where the Inspection Body is found to be misusing the Certificate/ Accreditation Logo.
- Based on public complaints, publications or information from interested parties and the government.

The Director/CEO, SLAB may decide to carry out Special Assessments at any time during the period of validity of Accreditation. The execution of special assessments may take place with no prior notification or with very little time between notification and execution.

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Special Assessment may also become necessary when changes occur in Accreditation Criteria, Organizational Structure and in Management/ Ownership. However in these cases, the SLAB will give Inspection Bodies sufficient time for preparation.

All costs associated with special assessments will be charged to the Inspection Body.

## **5.2 Changes in the Accreditation / Specific Criteria**

If there is a change in the Standard or in the accreditation criteria of SLAB, SLAB shall inform the Inspection Body of this in writing indicating the transition period, which shall be at least 6 months duration. Upon receiving such information, the Inspection Body must confirm to SLAB, its willingness in writing to modify its quality system in accordance with the changes. Upon receiving confirmation from the Inspection Body, SLAB may conduct a supplementary / special assessment to assess the implementation of same.

## **5.3 Changes Affecting the Inspection Body Operations**

In the event of the Inspection Body informing SLAB about any changes affecting the Inspection Body's activities and operations, SLAB may organize a supplementary/ special visit. The reportable changes are described in section 6.1.4. Inspection Body shall communicate this with relevant documentary evidence along with the amended Quality manual. The final decision is communicated to the Inspection Body along with an amended certificate. The costs associated with the issue of amended certificate will be charged to the Inspection Body.

## **5.4 Reduction of the Scope**

During assessments by the SLAB, the accredited Inspection Body shall demonstrate that it complies with all accreditation criteria regarding the entire scope and that it has complied with these criteria from the date on which accreditation was granted. If an Inspection Body is of the opinion that parts of the scope no longer conforms to the accreditation criteria, it is expected that the Inspection Body will withdraw the relevant part of the scope itself. If during an assessment it becomes clear that it is necessary to withdraw accreditation for parts of the scope, the SLAB will also review the validity of the remaining accredited scope.

In order to demonstrate that an Inspection Body has complied with and is complying with the criteria for the complete scope of accreditation, the Inspection Body shall be able to provide records of the activities carried out. During SLAB assessments, these records shall demonstrate that the procedures for carrying out specific activities have been applied correctly by qualified personnel in the past year.

The concerned part of the scope shall be withdrawn if records do not demonstrate this. If this means that the entire scope is withdrawn, then the entire accreditation is withdrawn. However the Inspection Body concerned can again be granted accreditation for the Standard and the scope involved, under the same registration number, if a new application is sent to the SLAB within two years after the withdrawal.

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## 5.5 Extension of Scope

At any given moment, the Inspection Body can request an extension of the scope. To this end, a written application shall be sent to the SLAB. An assessment for extension of scope will not be initiated, if nonconformities are currently open in related parts of the scope or in the general management system of the Inspection Body.

The SLAB distinguishes between extension within and extension outside the scope already accredited. Extensions of the scope that fall within the framework of the same accreditation standard will be considered Extension within the scope and if not, it will be considered otherwise. Requests for accreditation involving a different accreditation standard shall be treated as a new application.

Depending on the size and nature of the extension requested, the extent of the assessment needed for the extension will be determined by SLAB on a case by case basis. All costs for extension of scope will be charged to the Inspection Body.

## 5.6 Transfer of Accreditation

If the ownership or name of an accredited Inspection Body changes, the accreditation may be transferred to the new owner or to the new name if the Inspection Body involved make such requests in writing. For such a transfer the following pre-conditions apply:

- The Inspection Body remains operating within the legal and regulatory framework of the country in which it operates;
- The policy and management system remain unchanged;
- The management and key personnel remain unchanged;
  
- The former owner does not remain active in the same sphere of activity or a similar area under the old name or a related name;
- The general composition of the Inspection Body's personnel remains the same;
- The basic infrastructure and other facilities are not compromised.

The Inspection Body shall provide the SLAB with the necessary documents showing that the above conditions are met. The costs for reviewing the documents/ conducting onsite review will be charged to the Inspection Body.

If all requirements are met, the new Inspection Body retains the registration/accreditation number and receives the new accreditation documents. The surveillance and re-assessment schedule will remain unchanged.

## 6. OBLIGATIONS

### 6.1 Inspection Body

#### 6.1.1 General

An Inspection Body shall always comply with the relevant regulations and accreditation criteria. This not only applies to accredited Inspection Bodies but also to Inspection Bodies whose accreditation has been suspended.



### 6.1.2 Co-operation

The Inspection Body shall provide the SLAB assessment teams with all the necessary support in order to carry out their work efficiently, safely and honestly, whereby:

- It shall be possible to check the compliance of the Inspection Body's management system within the criteria;
- It shall possible to gain insight into the relationship between the documented system and the Standard via an up-to-date review;
- It shall be possible to observe the activities at the Inspection Body.
- The Inspection Body shall provide the assessment team with the necessary safety instructions and safety equipment;
- If requested, the Inspection Body shall provide access to all relevant locations, dossiers and documents;
- In case the assessment of SLAB requires the participation of clients or other related bodies of the Inspection Body, the Inspection Body shall take measures to assure this participation; in particular Inspection Bodies shall have enforceable arrangements with its clients holding an accredited certificate, to ensure SLAB access to witness the Inspection Bodies' audit team performing an audit at the Inspection Body's client's site.
- Assessors of SLAB shall not be put in a position where their independence and objectivity could be compromised.

### 6.1.3 Logo

Accredited Inspection Bodies have the right to use the applicable accreditation logo. As such, on grant of accreditation, the Inspection Body may use SLAB logo on letterheads, brochures and any other material issued to its clients including the certificates. However such usage shall be confined within the scope of Accreditation. The guidelines for using SLAB logo is given in the document "Terms & Conditions for use of the Accreditation Symbol" (AC-RG(P)-01).

Misuse of the logo by accredited Inspection Bodies may lead to suspension or withdrawal of the accreditation. If non-accredited Inspection Bodies use the logo, the SLAB can resort to legal action.

### 6.1.4 Reporting Changes

The Inspection Body shall inform the SLAB immediately of every change that can have considerable impact on the activities covered by the scope. Such changes may be of following nature:

- Changes in the legal, commercial or Inspection Body's organizational status;
- Changes in the sphere of activities or economic activities of the Inspection Body
- Change in management and in structure;
- Policy changes;
- Changes in personnel that fill key positions, such as managers and decision-makers and personnel with specific and unique expertise for the Inspection Body;
- Changes in location and other resources that can have a significant influence on the accredited activities carried out;
- Significant changes in working procedures.

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If an Inspection Body expects the changes to have a temporary negative effect on the accredited activities, then the Inspection Body can request a voluntary suspension. In case of that the SLAB possesses the right to carry out extra assessments to ensure that the Inspection Body again complies with the accreditation criteria before lifting the suspension. If during a periodical assessment of SLAB it is found that SLAB was not informed about changes may decide to extend the assessment to review the changes and their impacts.

### 6.1.5 Financial Obligations

The Inspection Body will receive an invoice for all the assessment activities carried out by the SLAB. The amount invoiced will depend on the number of man-days worked; the applicable fee and other costs be found in IB-RG-01 & IB-RG-07. An Inspection Body shall always pay the invoices before the final payment date specified on the invoice. If an Inspection Body does not make payment on time, the SLAB sends a reminder. If payment still does not take place then, the suspension procedure will begin. If there are payments outstanding during the initial phase of the accreditation process, the SLAB has the right to halt the accreditation process until payment is done.

## 6.2 SLAB

### 6.2.1 Behavior of Assessment Teams

The assessment team will limit its assessment activities to an investigation of whether the Inspection Body complies with the applicable criteria. In doing so, Assessors will make use of the relevant criteria documents, scope-related documents (including standards, descriptions of methodology, diagrams etc.) and generally accepted interpretations. Assessors may not accept any gifts, presents etc. from Inspection Bodies that may compromise their neutral role in assessments. Assessors shall follow the safety instructions of the Inspection Body being assessed.

### 6.2.2 Confidentiality

The SLAB protects the confidential nature of the assessment findings unless legally obligated to do so otherwise. If the Inspection Body provides third parties with access to the assessment report, it shall provide access only to the complete assessment report. Assessors and all other persons who, work for the benefit of the accreditation by the SLAB, shall have access to the Inspection Body's files only after they sign and handover confidentiality statement to the particular Inspection Body. Besides this all the assessors shall sign a confidentiality agreement (GN-FM-01) with SLAB before they could be taken into the Assessor Pool.

### 6.2.3 Changes in Criteria and Interpretations

The SLAB informs the Inspection Bodies about changes in the various accreditation criteria and their interpretations. The Inspection Bodies are given sufficient time to adapt their system to the changes (also see section 5.4).

## 7. SUSPENSIONS AND WITHDRAWALS

Issues regarding Suspensions and Withdrawals will be dealt in accordance with the Procedure AC-PR-09 – Procedure for Suspension, Withdrawal and Reduction of Accreditation.

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## **7.1 Suspensions**

### **7.1.1 General**

During the suspension period, the Inspection Body may not make use of the accreditation mark or in any other way actively refer to the accredited status. Inspection Bodies may not accept any new certification requests for issuing accredited certificates. Existing certification contracts shall be respected, which means that the Inspection Body continues to carry out the necessary surveillance activities.

A suspension is lifted if an additional assessment shows that the reason for the suspension no longer exists. If the suspension period ends without this being the case, the SLAB implements the withdrawal procedure. In exceptional cases, the Director/CEO, SLAB may extend the period for further period of six months.

### **7.1.2 Voluntary**

An Inspection Body may request a voluntary suspension from the SLAB if it is temporarily unable to comply with the accreditation criteria. In such circumstances, the Inspection Body is not permitted to make use of the logo or refer to the accredited status. It is not possible to submit a request for a voluntary suspension during the period that an SLAB assessment is being carried out.

### **7.1.3 Imposed by SLAB**

If an Inspection Body not demonstrably eliminates one or more nonconformities within the applicable period, or the Inspection Body fails to fulfill its obligations related to the accreditation, the SLAB suspends the accreditation for a period of at most six months. The Inspection Body is informed of this in writing. A suspension is put into effect by the Director/CEO, SLAB on the recommendations (AC-FM-14) made by the Accreditation Committee.

### **7.1.4 Publicity**

SLAB will notify the interested parties and the public through SLAB web site and /or newspaper .

## **7.2 WITHDRAWALS**

### **7.2.1 General**

The accredited Inspection Body and the SLAB can withdraw an accreditation and thus cancel the accreditation agreement. From the moment of withdrawal, the Inspection Body will have to refrain from using the accreditation symbol or otherwise referring to the accredited status. In such situations the certificates issued under SLAB-accreditation shall also have to be withdrawn.

### **7.2.2 Voluntary**

If Inspection Body wishes, for whatever reason, to end its accreditation, it shall submit a request to the SLAB for voluntary withdrawal in writing. Withdrawal may apply to a part of the scope or the entire scope. The SLAB confirms the withdrawal in writing.

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### 7.2.3 Imposed by SLAB

If SLAB determines that a suspension has not been removed within the applicable period or if evidences are found to substantiate that the Inspection Body brings the Accreditation into grave disrepute, the SLAB will impose the withdrawal. SLAB informs the Inspection Body of the withdrawal in writing. After a withdrawal, the SLAB will not accept an application for accreditation from the same Inspection Body within a period of six months. When the new application is processed, the Inspection Body receives a new registration number (AC-PR-14).

### 7.2.4 Publicity

SLAB will notify the interested parties and the public through SLAB web site and /or newspaper.

## 8. DISPUTES, COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

### 8.1 Disputes

The SLAB defines a dispute as difference of opinion between the accredited Inspection Body or the Inspection Body to be accredited and the SLAB with regard to:

- The interpretation of a requirement of a standard;
- The working procedure of the SLAB.

The Inspection Body can report the existence of such dispute to the Director/CEO, SLAB in writing. The Director/CEO, SLAB will consult with the parties involved and with the Technical Advisory Committee and takes a decision. The decision will be communicated to the parties in writing.

### 8.2 Complaints

The SLAB distinguishes two types of complaints:

- Complaints about the SLAB and its Assessors.
- Complaints about registered or accredited Inspection Bodies.

In both these cases Director/CEO, SLAB or the panel appointed by him/her will investigate the complaints.

Complaints shall be submitted in writing. The SLAB will confirm the receipt of the complaint. The complaints will be handled in accordance with the Complaint handling Procedure (GN-PR-08). If a complaint is not submitted in writing, if it is not motivated or if the complainant and the party complained about are not clearly indicated, the SLAB will treat the complaint as it sees reasonable and proceed with the complaint handling accordingly.

### 8.3 Appeals

Inspection Bodies are free to make appeals against decisions taken by the SLAB such as appointment of assessors, grant of accreditation, reduction/ expansion of scopes, suspensions/ withdrawal etc. All such appeals will be dealt with in accordance with the SLAB Appeal procedure AC-PR-09.

Cost associated with the processing and handling the appeals are charged are charged to the Inspection Body.

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## **9. PUBLICITY**

SLAB shall publish at least once in a year the details of scope of accreditation & accreditation status of the accredited Inspection Bodies along with their contact addresses and withdrawal of accreditation, suspension of accreditation and termination of accreditation status in SLAB web site and /or newspapers .

## **10. LIABILITY**

SLAB shall not be responsible for any damages, which the Inspection Body may suffer as a result of any action or negligence by those who are carrying out the tasks on behalf of SLAB and any failure to the grant of accreditation or abeyance / suspension / forced withdrawal of the accreditation, and neither shall SLAB be held responsible for any damage whatsoever, caused to any party by the acts of Inspection Body.

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# Appendix 1

## SCOPES OF ACCREDITATION OF INSPECTIONS

### Fields of Inspection

1. Pressure Vessels & Lifting equipment
2. Tanks carrying dangerous goods
3. Electrical Systems
4. Welding Plants
5. LP Gas Cylinders and Repairs
6. Non Destructive Testing
7. Electro Magnetic Compatibility
8. Vehicle Emission Inspection
9. Food and Agricultural Products
10. Environmental Protection and Pollution Control
11. Building Construction and Maintenance
12. Amusement Rides & Devices

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