



SADCA REPORT TO THE PAC PLENARY MEETINGS HONG KONG, JUNE 2012

1. INTRODUCTION

During the period under review the Southern African Development Community Cooperation in Accreditation (SADCA) set out to achieve six objectives, namely to:

- Prepare a comprehensive Business Plan;
- Draft policies and procedures aligned to the requirements of relevant ILAC/IAF A-Series documents;
- Submit wording on SADCA for the revised Technical Barriers Technical (TBT) Annex to the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Trade Protocol;
- Formalise and appoint the Chairs of the Technical and Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA) Committees;
- Qualify and register peer evaluators.

The SADCA Secretariat also reviewed its resources in order to effectively perform its increasing responsibilities as Secretariat for both SADCA and the African Accreditation Cooperation (AFRAC). The SADCA Secretariat, hosted by SANAS, thus welcomed another member to the team, Dr Elsabe Steyn.

2. SADCA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The 16th SADCA General Assembly was held on 22 March 2012 in Lilongwe, Malawi.

A total of 23 resolutions were adopted, and the main matters arising from the General Assembly were:

- SADCA approved the SADCA Five Year Business Plan for the period 2012/13 – 2016/17 and requested the EXCO to manage the implementation thereof.
- SADCA noted with appreciation the significant achievements made by SADCAS during the financial year 2011/2012 having accredited an additional three facilities bringing the total accredited facilities to six, and encouraged Member States to utilise SADCAS' accreditation services and to support SADCAS directly in order to ensure its future sustainability as a matter of urgency.
- SADCA elected Mr Ron Josias of South Africa as the SADCA MRA Committee Chair for a term in accordance with the SADCA Bylaws.
- SADCA elected Mr Davlin Chokazinga of Malawi as the SADCA Technical Committee Chair for a term in accordance with the SADCA Bylaws.
- SADCA welcomed Dr. Elsabe Steyn as the incoming SADCA Regional Coordinator.

3. SADCA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The SADCA Executive Committee (EXCO) held two meetings in October 2011 and February 2012.

4. SADCA BUSINESS PLAN AND FUNDING

Highlights include the EXCO aligning the SADCA Bylaws to the TBT Annex to the SADC Protocol on Trade. The SADCA EXCO also finalised the draft five-year Business Plan at its February 2012 meeting. The plan sets out the strategic direction towards the operationalisation of SADCA Cooperation and the MRA. The Business Plan was tabled at the SADCA General Assembly in March 2012 and was approved.

5. POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND THE TBT ANNEX

The EXCO has aligned the SADCA Bylaws to the TBT Annex to the SADC Protocol. The drafting of the various policies and procedures to the requirements of the applicable ILAC/IAF A-Series documents are at various stages and we hope to finalise this process in the new financial year.

6. SADCA COMMITTEES

In order to establish and roll-out the SADCA MRA between accreditation bodies, SADCA needs to operationalise its MRA. During the period under review, the Secretariat developed various draft terms of reference for these Committees. The appointment of the Chairs of these Committees was tabled at the SADCA General Assembly in March 2012, and the General Assembly elected the MRA and Technical Committee Chairs for a period of two years.

7. QUALIFYING AND REGISTERING PEER EVALUATORS

In 2009/10, eight (8) SADCA peer evaluators were trained and it is envisaged an additional 10 may be required. Of the eight trained peer evaluators, five underwent a pre-peer evaluation of the South African National Accreditation System (SANAS) in 2009/10. The trained peer evaluators will be qualified and registered over the next few years as they participate in the SADCA MRA pre-peer evaluations and initial peer evaluations under the guidance of qualified recognised Regional Cooperation's peer evaluators.

8. EAC, COMESA AND SADC

SADCA was invited to participate in a new tripartite alliance between East African Community (EAC), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Technical Meeting on Standardisation, Metrology, Accreditation and Conformity Assessment in October 2011 held in Lusaka, Zambia. The tripartite alliance aimed at establishing of Free Trade Area between these sub-regional groupings and represents 26 countries across Africa. TradeMark Southern Africa (TMSA) supported the meeting of regional experts working groups (SQA/SQAM/SQMT) to develop plans for the implementation of activities in scientific and industrial metrology, legal metrology, accreditation and conformity assessment.

The discussion on accreditation concluded that a meeting of accreditation bodies in the tripartite needs to take place for them to consider a tripartite model for accreditation. The meeting took place from 16 – 17 May 2012. The recommendation from the Accreditation expert working group that met in May 2012 is that in order to avoid duplication of efforts within the tripartite arrangement and a stretch on the limited accreditation resources, no new accreditation structures should be formed, and that AFRAC in the long term must be used as a platform for accreditation issues in Africa.

9. TRAINING

The SADCA Secretariat submitted a project proposal for the mentoring, monitoring and evaluation of the SADC Accreditation Service (SADCAS) assessors in May 2011 to the Physikalisch Technische Bundesanstalt (PTB) Germany for consideration under the €1.5million bridging fund to SADC SQAM activities. In 2009/10 eighty (80) experts were trained as assessors under the auspices of the SADC/EU SQAM project. Of these eighty, fifty-five (55) proceeded to mentoring nineteen (19) of whom were qualified whilst the rest were recommended for further mentoring. The SADCA Secretariat submitted a project proposal for the mentoring, monitoring and evaluation of SADCAS assessors in May 2011 to PTB Germany for consideration under the €1.5million bridging fund to SADC SQAM activities.

One of the critical success factors towards the achievement of SADCAS' mission of providing credible and cost effective accreditation services is that more assessors are qualified and registered to undertake assessments on behalf of SADCAS. The PTB have agreed to fund the training of the 47 unqualified SADCAS assessors from 2005 and 2009/10 on the various key accreditation standards.

In conclusion, the SADCA Secretariat continues to provide the appropriate secretarial support, training and leadership in the implementation of the regional accreditation infrastructure. The Secretariat also wishes to thank the Department of Trade and Industry (**the dti**), the InterAmerican Accreditation Cooperation (IAAC) and the Physikalisch Technische Bundesanstalt (PTB) who have contributed financially and in kind to SADCA's activities,

10. SADCAS

Six facilities were accredited during the period under review under a partnership between SADCAS and the South African National Accreditation System (SANAS) following the signing of the SADCAS/SANAS Twinning Partnership Arrangement (TPA) in December 2009. This marks a milestone in the short history of SADCAS.

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