




## WEST AFRICAN ACCREDITATION SYSTEM (SOAC)

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### SOAC Policy on Transfers of Accreditation

Approbation		Effective date
Date	16/10/19	17/10/19
Signature		

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## 1 Purpose and scope

This instruction applies to all conformity assessment bodies established in the Member States covered by SOAC, fully or partially accredited by foreign accreditation bodies. It specifies the modalities for the transfer of these accreditations to SOAC, in the application of the Regulation No 03/2010/CM/UEMOA, relating to the scheme of harmonization of the activities of accreditation, certification, standardization and metrology in UEMOA or any national regulations deriving from this Community Regulation.

## 2 References

- C01- Accreditation Rules
- P06- accreditation process management
- APLAC MR 010

## 3 Distribution list

All services concerned.

## 4 Effective date and review

This document is applicable from the date specified on the cover page. It will be updated as necessary.

## 5 Summary of changes

Version 00: creation.

Version 01: revision to some sections and update of the table of modifications.

## 6 Terms and definitions

- **Transfer of accreditation:** the transfer of accreditation is defined as the recognition of accreditation issued by another accreditation body to an operational conformity assessment body, with the objective of issuing SOAC accreditation to the latter.
- **AFRAC :** African Accreditation Cooperation ;
- **CAB :** Conformity Assessment Body ;
- **IAF :** International Accreditation Forum;
- **ILAC :** International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation;
- **MLA:** Multilateral Agreement;
- **MRA:** Mutual Recognition Arrangement ;
- **UEMOA:** West African Economic & Monetary Union

## 7 Process description

### 7.1 Minimum requirements for accreditation transfer

#### 7.1.1 Eligibility criteria for the transfer of accreditation to SOAC

**The transfer applies only to accreditation programs covered by SOAC.**

Only accreditation delivered by an AFRAC IAF ILAC MRA / MLA signatory accreditation body shall be eligible for transfer without reassessment; this provision only applies for

an accreditation scope covered by the MRA/MLA. Accredited Conformity Assessment bodies holding an accreditation that has not been delivered by an AFRAC IAF ILAC MRA / MLA signatory accreditation body shall be submitted to a SOAC initial assessment.

If the CAB is due for a reassessment in the same calendar year that it is applying for a transfer, SOAC will carry out a full reassessment.

Only a valid accreditation shall be transferred. Accredited CAB which is known to be suspended shall not be accepted for transfer.

In cases where accreditation has been granted by an accreditation body that has ceased activities or whose AFRAC ILAC IAF MRA / MLA recognition, the CAB shall be treated as a new client.

### 7.1.2 Pre-Transfer Review

The pre-transfer review application for the Transfer of Accreditation of the CAB should be submitted at least 6 months before the next scheduled assessment.

SOAC shall have a consistent process for obtaining sufficient information in order to make a decision on accreditation transfer. SOAC shall carry out a review of the accreditation of the transferring CAB. This review shall be conducted by means of a documentation review.

SOAC shall determine the competence criteria for personnel involved in the pre-transfer review. The review shall be conducted by a team of one or more persons. The individual or group conducting the pre-transfer visit shall have the same competence that is required for an assessment team appropriate for the scope of accreditation being reviewed.

The review and its findings shall be fully documented. The review shall cover the following aspects as a minimum:

- confirmation that the CAB accreditation falls within one of the existing SOAC accreditation schemes;
- that the site or sites concerned by the accreditation transfer are covered by the current accreditation of the CAB;
- evidence that the scope to be transferred is accredited by an accreditation body that is a signatory to AFRAC, ILAC or IAF;
- the Quality Manual or equivalent documentation;
- the internal audit programme established by the CAB;
- internal audit records and management review minutes since the two last assessments;
- evidence of satisfactory Proficiency Testing participation;
- the initial accreditation assessment report or most recent accreditation

reassessment report, and the latest consecutive assessment report; the status of all outstanding nonconformities that may arise from them and any other available. If these assessment reports are not made available or if the consecutive assessment or reassessment has not been completed as required by SOAC procedures, then the CAB shall be treated as a new client (initial accreditation assessment);

- complaints received and action taken, when relevant;
- Any current engagement by the transferring CAB with regulatory bodies relevant to the scope of the accreditation in respect of legal compliance;
- The CAB financial statute;
- Any other information required during the review of the application.

When the review of documents and records listed above are not satisfactory, especially **when there are outstanding major nonconformities**, a pre-transfer visit shall be organized prior to the transferring CAB to confirm the validity of the accreditation. Responses to any findings noted during the visit shall be completed and submitted to SOAC within 30 days.

Note: The pre-transfer visit is not an assessment.

### 7.1.3 Transfer of accreditation

SOAC shall not issue an accreditation certificate to the CAB if the review of documents and records requested above are not satisfactory, notably:

- the implementation of corrections and corrective actions in respect of all outstanding major nonconformities; and
- availability of the CAB action plans for correction and corrective action for all outstanding minor nonconformities.
- If it owes fees to its current accreditation body.

Any difference between the requested scope of accreditation and the previous scope is subject to evaluation.

When the pre-transfer review (document review and/or pre-transfer visit) identifies issues that prevent the completion of the transfer, SOAC shall treat the transferring CAB as a new client.

The justification for this action shall be explained to the transferring CAB and shall be documented by SOAC and the records maintained.

The normal accreditation decision-making process in accordance with P06 shall be followed including that the personnel making the accreditation decision be different from those carrying out the pre-transfer review.

If no problems are identified by the pre-transfer review, the accreditation cycle shall be based on the SOAC accreditation cycle and SOAC shall establish the assessment

programme for the remainder of the new accreditation cycle of the CAB.

When SOAC has had to treat the client as a new client as a result of the pre-transfer review, the certification cycle shall begin with the accreditation decision.

SOAC shall take the decision on accreditation before any consecutive assessment or reassessments are initiated.

#### 7.1.4 Cooperation between SOAC, the previous accreditation body, and the transferring CAB

The effective cooperation between the transferring CAB and SOAC is essential for the effective process for transfer and the integrity of accreditation. To this end, when requested, the CAB shall provide to SOAC all the documents and information required by this instruction. Thus, the conformity assessment body is expected to provide full disclosure of its status with its current accreditation body, including any non-conformities not yet “signed off”. It should not use a claim of “confidentiality” unreasonably to avoid providing full and correct information. Where it has not been possible to communicate effectively with the CAB, SOAC shall record the reasons and make every effort to obtain necessary information from other sources.

The CAB shall authorize that the previous accreditation body provides the information sought by the SOAC.

SOAC may contact the accreditation body which has previously accredited the CAB when the CAB has not provided the requested information.

Once SOAC has issued the accreditation, it is published on its website.

## 8 Related documents

No	Title	Code
1	General Information Questionnaire	F01P06
2	Technical Information Questionnaire	F02P06
3	Management of Standards and reference	F12P07
4	CIL Participation Program	F11P07
5	Evaluation and Accreditation Agreement	F04P06
6	Documents / Information to be provided for the examination prior to the transfer of accreditation	F01I03P06

## 9 Table of modifications

No.	Source	Modification in brief (Relevant changes)
I03P06.00- 16 October 2019		
Creation		
I03P06.01- 17 October 2019		
1		Code updated as well as cover page (approval & effective date)
2	§ 6	The words “abbreviation” (title) has been replaced by “Terms” (title)
3	§ 8	This section has been updated and the addition of one form