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4.4 Preparation for assessment

4.4.1 General

4.4.1.1 The various aspects to be considered while preparing for the assessment are detailed in our procedures **MAURITAS P1, P2, A8, A9, A13, A14, A16, A18, A23, A24, A26 A27 and A30** which govern our assessment process. MAURITAS will carry out only one document review and only one preliminary visit per application.

Prior to the assessment, MAURITAS informs the CAB of the names of the members of the Assessment Team and the organisation they belong to sufficiently in advance to allow the CAB to object to the appointment of any particular Team Leader, Assessor, Technical Expert or MAURITAS Staff with supporting justification. In case the CAB objects to any member of the Assessment Team, and the reasons provided are valid, MAURITAS will appoint new Assessors/Technical Experts. If the reason given is not considered to be valid by MAURITAS, and local Assessors/Technical Experts are not available, the CAB will have to bear the cost of using foreign Assessors/Technical Experts.

4.4.1.2 The aspects related to the assessment process include and are not limited to the:

- Scheduling of an optional preliminary visit (**MAURITAS A8, A9 and A30**);
- Assessment Team selection (**MAURITAS A8, A9, A18 and A30**);
- Impartiality and objectiveness of Assessors (**MAURITAS A8, A9, A18 and A30**);
- Review of the assessment programme including risk assessment with respect to activities, locations, personnel (**MAURITAS A8, A9, A18 and A30**);
- Development of an assessment plan to indicate activities, locations, personnel, assessment techniques and review of previous non-conformities raised. Need for assessment to be conducted based on assessment plan (**MAURITAS A8, A9, A18 and A30**);
- Agreement of CAB to Assessment Team and possibility for CAB to object to any particular team members with supporting justification (**MAURITAS A8, A9, A18 and A30**);
- Determining suitability of Conformity Assessment Scheme (**MAURITAS A31**);
- Sampling of scopes (**MAURITAS A8, A9, A24 and A30**);
- Sampling sites, Collection points, Assessment sites and Witnessing Sites (**MAURITAS A8, A9, A18, A24 and A30**);
- Sampling of personnel and Technical Signatories, where relevant (**MAURITAS A8, A9, A18, A24 and A30**);
- Scheduling of initial assessment, assessment, re-assessment and extension dates (**MAURITAS A8, A9, A18 and A30**);

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- Provision of all documentation and previous assessment records to the assessment team (**MAURITAS A8, A9, A18**)
 - Document review and its outcome (**MAURITAS A8, A9, A18 and A30**);
 - Initial assessment, assessment, re-assessment and extension visits carried out through a combination of assessment techniques such as, but not limited to, horizontal assessment, witnessing, vertical assessment, file review, review of performance in proficiency testing and other interlaboratory comparisons, measurement audits and interviewing, where relevant; the circumstances in which they are used and rules for determining assessment durations. All these assessment techniques will provide confidence to MAURITAS that the CAB is in conformance with the relevant accreditation criteria (**MAURITAS A8, A9, A18 and A30**);
 - Assessing laboratories for their in-house calibration (**MAURITAS A8**);
 - Identification of non-conformities, time limit for corrective actions, provision of root cause analysis of the non-conformities and specific actions taken or planned to be taken to resolve the non-conformities (**MAURITAS A8, A9, A18 and A30**);
 - Assessment report and reporting assessment findings to the CAB (**MAURITAS A8, A9, A18 and A30**);
 - Decision making process for granting, maintaining, extending, reducing, suspending and withdrawing of accreditation by competent person(s) or committees not involved in assessment. Accreditation decision process not requiring independent decisions (**MAURITAS P1**);
 - Accreditation information as detailed in the Accreditation Certificate and Schedule (e.g. name of the accredited CAB and name of the legal entity, if different; effective date of accreditation; reference to the accreditation standard) (**MAURITAS A13**)
 - Extension of accreditation; selection of assessment techniques taking into consideration risks associated with the activities or locations (**MAURITAS A8, A18 and A30**);
 - Extraordinary Visits (**MAURITAS A23**)
 - Remote assessments (**MAURITAS A27**)
 - Suspension, reduction and withdrawal of accreditation; criteria for lifting suspension of accreditation; in cases of fraudulent behaviour or false information provided by CAB or concealing information, withdrawal of accreditation to be initiated. (**MAURITAS A14**).
 - Complaints: Process to include reception, evaluation and decision-making. Handling process to be available to any interested parties. All complaints received by MAURITAS have to be justified and then processed without undue delay (**MAURITAS P2**);
 - Appeals to be processed as per MAURITAS legislation and to be available to any interested parties (**MAURITAS P2**).
 - Records on CABs: It is the Policy of MAURITAS to keep accreditation records and documents pertaining to accredited CABS for the current cycle and at least for the two previous accreditation cycles (**MAURITAS P6**).

4.4.1.3 All Accreditation reports include at least:

- a unique identification of the CAB;
- date(s) of the on-site assessment;
- name(s) of the Assessor(s) and/or Technical Experts involved in the assessment and the organisation they come from;
- unique identification of all locations assessed;
- scope of accreditation that was assessed;
- the assessment report;
- a statement on the adequacy of the internal organization and procedures adopted by the CAB to give confidence in its competence, as determined through its fulfilment of the requirements for accreditation;
- information on the satisfactory resolution of all non-conformities;
- where applicable, any further information that may assist in determining the competence of the CAB as determined through conformity with requirements;
- where appropriate, a recommendation as to the accreditation decision for the proposed scope.

4.4.1.4 MAURITAS is responsible for the content of the accreditation report, including non-conformities, even if the team leader is not a permanent staff of MAURITAS.

4.4.1.5 MAURITAS will endeavour to make an accreditation decision without undue delay. MAURITAS will inform without undue delay, in writing, of the accreditation decision taken including justification, where applicable.

4.4.1.6 Effective date of accreditation of the CAB is based on the accreditation decision taken by the Accreditation Committee. This date is reflected on the accreditation certificate and/or schedule.

4.4.1.7 The MAURITAS accreditation cycle has been defined as a four-year cycle. MAURITAS will develop an assessment programme to indicate when it will carry out its annual assessments and the re-assessment. MAURITAS will take into consideration the associated risks when developing or reviewing the assessment programme in case of extensions. The re-assessment will be also be planned and performed taking into consideration the information gathered from assessments performed over the whole cycle. (MAURITAS A8, A9, A18 and A30)

4.4.1.8 MAURITAS has developed a procedure (MAURITAS A26) to manage Certification Bodies in cases of extraordinary events/circumstances. The procedure allows Certification Bodies to define their alternate potential short-term methods of auditing certified organisations to verify continuing effectiveness of their management systems following the extraordinary events/circumstances.

4.4.1.9 For accredited Conformity Assessment Bodies, in case of extraordinary events/circumstances, MAURITAS may consider extending the validity of the current accreditation in case of renewal and postponing/rescheduling/planned/due on-site assessments as applicable in line with Variation Permit procedure (MAURITAS P12).

4.4.2 Cross References

4.4.2.1 MAURITAS P1, P2, P12, A8, A9, A13, A14, A16, A18, A23, A24 A26, A27, A30 and A31.

Appendix A: Amendment Table

SN	Section	Amendment
Issue 1, Rev 5		
1.	4.4.1.1, 4.4.1.2, 4.4.1.7, 4.4.2.1	Reference to A30 & A31 have been made
Issue 2, Rev 5		
1.	Throughout the document	Reference to A19 has been removed
Issue 3, Rev 5		
1.	Throughout the document	Reference to A18 has been made where extension of scope is mentioned
Issue 4, Rev 5		
1.	Throughout the document	Reference to A15 has been removed
Issue 5, Rev 5		
1.	4.4.1.2	i. At line 2, bullet for Accreditation Information, “and name of the legal entity, if different;” has been added