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Your contributions are welcome

Help us to make this a true assessor newsletter by sharing your experiences, case studies, technical articles, photos and jokes.

You can e-mail your contributions to:
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(Please use *A-news* as the reference)

Letter from the CEO

It is time for the 2012 second edition of *The A-news*, jam-packed with the latest news relevant to all our SANAS assessors.

But firstly, I want express our great sadness when we learnt of the passing of Bart van Oostrom, a SANAS Assessor and retired metrologist. Bart will be remembered for his contribution to both the accreditation and metrology sectors in South Africa. Bart was a SANAS calibration and testing assessors lead and technical assessor from 1997 until his untimely death.

Following are some important updates on issues that impact on you as assessors:

- It is important to note that the F15 Witnessing Form underwent some much needed changes. We believe that the additional information now required will ensure a more harmonised reporting approach and a consistent review of the capabilities of conformity assessment bodies; and
- Some changes were also implemented with regards to the completion of the F48 Management Requirements and F49 Technical Requirements forms. The Advisory Approval Committee found that, due to various challenges, the F49 Form is not completed in full during ISO/IEC 17025 assessments.

In this edition of *The A-news* we also give an update on the submission of assessment packs, as well as more information on the transition period for the implementation of *ISO/IEC 17020: 2012 Conformity assessment - requirements for the operation of various types of inspection bodies performing inspection*, which will close on 1 March 2015.

During the recent ILAC/IAF General Assembly the SANAS signatory status regarding the ILAC/IAF MRA was reconfirmed for another four years. In addition, SANAS became one of the first accreditation bodies to sign the newly-established MRA for Inspection under ILAC. I would like to thank you all, especially those assessor who formed part of the teams that was peer evaluated by ILAC and IAF. The ILAC peer evaluation report highlighted the professionalism and knowledge of our assessors.



Ron Josias

It is my pleasure to welcome the seven new assessors who qualified between August and October 2012, we are looking forward to a long and rewarding relationship!

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our assessors for their hard work and dedication during 2012, and wish everyone a peaceful Festive Season.

Ron Josias
Chief Executive Officer

Assessor Conclaves 2013–2014

Please take note that the Assessor Conclaves for 2013-2014 will take place on the following dates:

Thursday, 14 February 2013 - Gauteng

Monday, 18 February 2013 - Cape Town

Thursday, 20 February 2014 - Gauteng

Wednesday, 26 February 2014 - Cape Town

Why SANAS updated the Witnessing Form (F15)

Some assessors might have noticed the recent changes to the Witnessing Form (F15), which now includes dedicated spaces for assessors to comment on the following:

- Acceptability of the results of the test/method being witnessed;
- Internal proficiency testing procedures witnessed and the acceptability of the outcome;
- The external PT programme in which the lab participates and the acceptability thereof;
- Reference standards and reference materials used (where applicable);
- Comments on the uncertainty of measurement (where applicable);
- Equipment used - calibrations, maintenance up to date, etc. (where applicable);
- Validation data for method/technique/procedure and its acceptability;
- Training and competency records of staff member, witnessed under scrutiny for the test; and
- Accommodation and environmental conditions (where applicable).

You might be thinking that this is nothing new, since you have looked at these issues already. This is probably true to some extent, however, these issues are not being reported on in a consistent manner and in some cases assessors do not record anything at all regarding some of these items when witnessing a test/method. By adding the above information, SANAS aims to ensure a more harmonised approach to reporting on what assessors have witnessed. If fully completed, this improved form will give a holistic view of the capability of the conformity assessment body (CAB) in performing a particular test/method.

You might also be wondering whether these changes are not a repetition of other forms such as the Vertical Form (F44); the Technical Requirement Checklist (F49) and/or the Proficiency Testing Requirements Form (F176). The answer is a resounding no. Although some of these items are also covered in other forms, the intentions or objectives are different. As you know, witnessing is test/method specific. Thus, for each test/method witnessed, assessors

should comment based on the items listed above. For example, for a particular test, assessors should make sure that the lab is participating in a PT and that the PT results are acceptable. What about F176 (the Proficiency Testing Requirements Form), you may ask? The F176 is meant to cover the entire PT programme of the CAB, therefore assessors must list the PT schemes that the CAB is participating in and also comment on the adequacy, acceptability of the results, corrective actions taken if the results are outside the acceptable limits and any other problems that the CAB might be experiencing with their respective schemes.

In conclusion, as per clause 7.7.3 of ISO/IEC 17011, one of the accreditation body's (AB) aims during on-site assessment is to determine the competence of the CAB by witnessing the performance of its staff. Witnessing activity therefore affords the AB the opportunity to gather evidence that is valid, direct (first hand), authentic and sufficient.

Transition period: IEC 17020: 2012 Conformity assessment – requirements for the operation of various types of inspection bodies performing inspection

As balloted by ILAC in July 2012 under the title Rationale for the Proposed Period for Transition to ISO/IEC 17020:2012, the transition period for the implementation of *ISO/IEC 17020: 2012 Conformity assessment - requirements for the operation of various types of inspection bodies performing inspection* will close on 1 March 2015. At that stage, all accreditation certificates issued (as described and defined in ISO/IEC 17011) must reference the 2012 edition of this standard. Compliance will be determined during normal surveillance, reassessment activities, or as a separate activity.

In this regard, SANAS published the ISO 17020 Transition Policy (Rev 02) with the deadline of 1 March 2015 for finalisation of the implementation process. Please see the Announcements page on the SANAS website, www.sanas.co.za, for more details.

Accredited inspection bodies were required to submit their Transition Action Plans by 1 October 2012 (refer to the Transition Policy). Facilities that have not done so will be issued with non-conformances, and failure to submit satisfactory corrective actions may lead to the suspension of the accreditation of such facilities.

All inspection documents (R & TR), forms and checklists have been updated to reflect ISO/IEC 17020:2012 and inspection bodies should familiarise themselves with the updated documents. Please see the Publications page on the SANAS website www.sanas.co.za, for more information.

After 1 March 2015, inspection bodies accredited to the previous version of ISO/IEC 17020 will not be recognised under the ILAC Arrangement.

SANAS welcomes newly qualified assessors

SANAS is proud to announce that the following new assessors qualified between August and October 2012:

- **Andrea Sheldon** - Medical Technical Assessor;
- **Molefe Tsele** - Testing Technical Assessor;
- **Ilse Simpson** - Testing Technical Assessor;
- **Tiny Hlokwe** - Veterinary Technical Assessor;
- **Reneé Pieterse** - Veterinary Technical Assessor;
- **Tjaart Labuschagne** - Calibration Technical Assessor; and
- **Nyiko Valoyi** - Testing Lead Assessor.

Congratulations and welcome to the SANAS team! We look forward to a fruitful and beneficial relationship.

INSPECTION UPDATE:

Submission of assessment packs

Inspection assessors are reminded of the following issues:

1. The **Schedule of Accreditation** needs to be annotated on the day of the assessment indicating the following:
 - a. Date of assessment;
 - b. Signatories and scopes sampled;
 - c. Cross-referencing of the above with the Witnessing (F15) and Vertical Assessment Forms;
 - d. Signatures of the lead assessor and/or technical assessor, as well as the nominated representative of the facility, indicating that changes are agreed upon; and
 - e. Changes have to be made on the hard copy supplied in the assessment pack.
2. **Vertical Assessment Forms:** The technical assessor must complete the Personnel section for both the inspector doing the inspection as well as the person signing the report.
3. **Electronic records:** A procedure must be in place describing the facility's record keeping system. Please refer to ISO/IEC 17020: 2012 Clause 7.3 Inspection Records: "7.3.1 The inspection body shall maintain a record system (see 8.4) to demonstrate the effective fulfilment of the inspection procedures and to enable an evaluation of the inspection". If an assessor cannot evaluate the inspection, the record system is not suitable. This must result in a major non-conformance.
4. When **suspension** is to be recommended, the lead assessor must inform the SANAS Field Manager, Linda Grundlingh, as soon as possible, but definitely before the closing meeting.
5. **Conflict of interest:** Assessors are reminded that they must declare any conflicts of interest (or potential conflicts) via e-mail to the field manager as soon as an assessment has been confirmed and complete this on the F22 Form at the assessment, even though this might have already been declared to SANAS. This was a concern raised by the Peer Evaluation Team in August 2011.
6. **Timelines:**
 - a. Please return assessment packs to SANAS within one (1) week of assessment. Packs must be returned to the Inspection Administrator, Mpho Mavhunga;
 - b. Facility corrective actions sent to assessors for review *must* be

returned to the administrator within *five (5) working days*. If this timeline cannot be met, the field manager must be informed; and

- c. Please inform the field manager if an assessment pack has not been delivered at least *four (4) weeks* prior to the scheduled assessment date.

Recommendation Reports (F04 forms): Assessment teams are reminded that only the following recommendations are allowed (refer to P06):

- 7.1. Initial assessment
 - a. Unconditional accreditation status to be granted (Where no findings have been raised and all accreditation requirements have been met);
 - b. Accreditation status to be deferred until non-conformances have been cleared (Where non-conformances have been raised, but are of such a nature that the facility is able to clear them and provide evidence of corrective action taken); or
 - c. Accreditation not recommended (Where the team concurs that the facility does not comply with the requirements for accreditation).
- 7.2. Six month follow-up, surveillance and re-assessment
 - a. Unconditional maintenance of accreditation status (Where no findings have been raised and all accreditation requirements have been met);
 - b. Conditional maintenance of accreditation subject to satisfactory clearance of the non-conformances within the stipulated timeframe of 25 working days (Where non-conformances have been raised, but are of such a nature that the facility is able to clear them and provide evidence of corrective action taken);
 - c. Conditional maintenance of accreditation, subject to an on-site clearance of the non-conformances within a period of three (3) months (Where the finding(s) either do not necessarily warrant immediate suspension, but are serious enough to impact the credibility of CAB results if not addressed quickly; or findings can only be cleared by means of physical verification of evidence rather than an assessor's desk review; or the team has no confidence in the organisations' management system to carry out an effective clearance of findings,

as manifested by the nature of the findings and the history of clearing them in the past); or

- d. Suspension of accreditation status or of part of the scope not found to be compliant (Where the team concurs that the facility does not comply with the accreditation requirements).

Note: An on-site clearance of findings cannot be recommended during a pre-assessment or initial assessment. The lead assessor must indicate on F04 that the on-site clearance of findings shall be at the cost of the facility.

- 7.3. Clearance of findings
 - a. All corrective actions have been implemented (Where all corrective actions are effective and have been satisfactorily implemented); or
 - b. Corrective actions have not all been implemented (Where any or all of the corrective actions have not been cleared and implemented).
- 7.4. Re-instatement assessment after a period of suspension
 - a. Re-instatement of accreditation status recommended (Where the issues that resulted in the suspension have been satisfactorily cleared and any corrective actions taken have been effectively implemented);
 - b. Re-instatement of accreditation subject to satisfactory clearance of the non-conformances within the stipulated timeframe of 25 working days (Where non-conformances have been raised, but are of such a nature that the facility is able to clear them and provide evidence of corrective action taken); or
 - c. Re-instatement of accreditation status not recommended (Where the issues that resulted in the suspension have not been adequately addressed and there is no evidence of implementation of any or all of the corrective actions taken).

Assessment teams must refrain from making any recommendations other than those listed above.

8. **Inspection contact details:**

Inspection Field Manager:
Linda Grundlingh lindag@sanas.co.za
Inspection Team Assistant:
Mabatho Malepe mabathom@sanas.co.za
Inspection Administrator:
Mpho Mavhunga Mphom@sanas.co.za

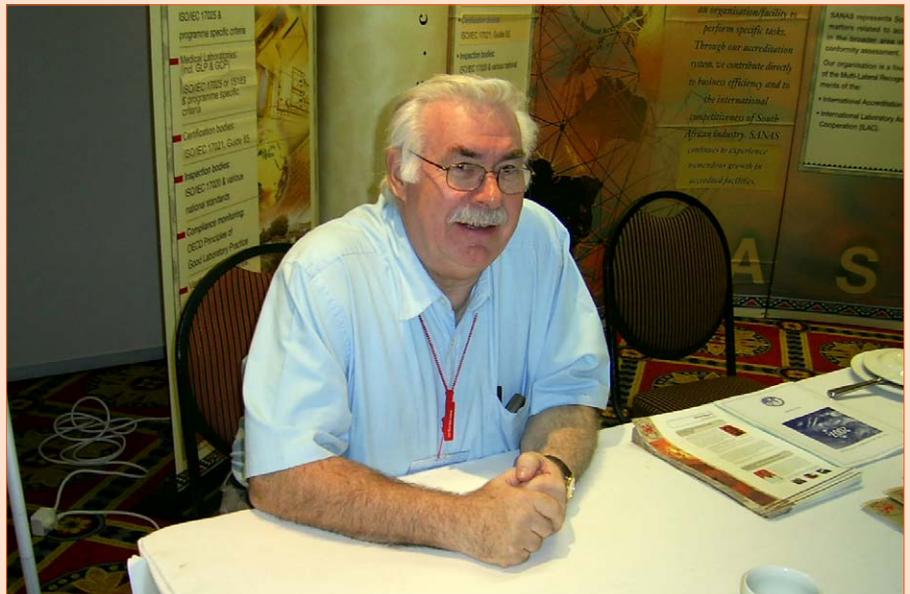
In memoriam – Bartholomeus van Oostrom (1945–2012)

On Friday 12 October 2012, whilst on holiday in the Kruger National Park, Bart van Oostrom, SANAS Assessor and retired metrologist, suffered a heart attack and subsequently passed away. It was with deep sadness that the accreditation and metrology community in South Africa heard of Bart's passing, and SANAS has received many tributes from far and wide.

Bart was born in 1945 in the Netherlands and attended the De Ambachtschool in The Hague. He then joined the Royal Dutch Navy and attended the School of Avionics where he received a Diploma in Aircraft Instrumentation and Systems.

In 1967 Bart, together with his wife, relocated to South Africa where he joined the Atlas Aircraft Corporation (later Denel Aviation), rising to the position of Metrology Manager. It was during his time at Atlas that Bart became acquainted with the National Calibration Service (NCS), the organisation that eventually became SANAS. During this time, Bart also received a number of awards, including the Metrology Interest Group (MIG) Award in 1986 and 1988, and the SANAS Chairman's Efficiency Award in 1990.

After guiding the Atlas Aircraft calibration laboratory to accreditation in 1983, Bart became extensively involved in accreditation activities and became both a SANAS lead and technical assessor. His



experience as a metrologist, which covered many disciplines, was invaluable. Bart contributed to the activities of SANAS as an active member of various STC committees, and through the SANAS Approval Committee.

Bart remained at Denel Aviation until 1996, when he accepted a position as an Electrical DCLF Metrologist at the National Metrology Laboratory (NMISA), where he remained until his retirement in 2005.

After his retirement, Bart spent much of his free time working for SANAS as an assessor,

doing what he enjoyed. The laboratories visited by Bart often commented on his friendly, demure manner and his ability to add value to their testing and calibration activities through the assessment. He received many awards in the past few years for his contribution as a SANAS assessor.

Bart will be remembered as a true friend and colleague whose willingness to assist wherever possible was always appreciated. He leaves behind his wife, children and grandchildren.

Completion of F48 and F49 forms during assessments under ISO/IEC 17025

Feedback from Advisory Approval Committee (AAC) meetings indicates that during most of the assessments conducted under the ISO/IEC 17025 accreditation standard, the Technical Requirements Form (F49) is inadequately completed, if at all.

It is expected that the assessment team, especially the lead assessor, should ensure that both the Management Requirements (F48) and Technical Requirements (F49) forms are completed in full at all times.

SANAS realises that there are various reasons for the unsatisfactory completion of these forms. Firstly, these forms duplicate some information already captured in the Vertical Form (F44) and the Witnessing Form (F15). Secondly, there is never enough time during

the assessment for the technical assessor to complete the F49, F44 and F15 forms.

In order to address this challenge, it was decided that the lead assessor must complete both the F48 and F49 to evaluate the fulfilment of requirements, i.e. policy and procedures, while the technical assessor will focus on the implementation of the F49. Evidence can be gathered through the adequate completion of F15, F44 and reference can be made thereto by the lead assessor.

SANAS believes that this will eliminate the concerns regarding duplication which have been brought to its attention.

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