



**HOW DOES ACCREDITATION BENEFIT
GOVERNMENT AND REGULATORS?**



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INTRODUCTION

The South African National Accreditation System (SANAS) is recognised by Government as the sole national accreditation body for conformity assessments in South Africa; through the Accreditation for Conformity Assessment, Calibration, and Good Laboratory Practice Act (Act No. 19 of 2006).

The role of SANAS is to serve the national and public interest by facilitating the provision of reliable calibration, measurement, testing, verification and inspection infrastructure for the South African government, industry and the wider community.

Accreditation is a much-used word. In SANAS vocabulary, however it means the assessment and recognition of the technical competence and integrity of conformity assessment bodies such as testing and calibration laboratories, and inspection and certification bodies to carry out their specific tasks. SANAS accredits conformity assessment bodies in accordance with national or international standards and guides.

SANAS provides internationally recognised accreditation services to conformity assessment bodies in support of government initiatives and the South African industry, and provides for the appropriate participation of stakeholders in the regulatory and voluntary areas.

The objectives of SANAS, as contained in the Accreditation Act, includes to:

- Accredit testing and calibration laboratories;
- Accredit inspection, verification and certification bodies; and to
- Monitor for GLP compliance purposes as the South African compliance monitoring authority.

In many economies, the use of accreditation to assist governments to protect the public and the environment is gaining momentum. Accreditation has become “mandatory” in many regulated areas as more and more regulators appreciate the benefits that accreditation brings in assisting governments to meet their obligations and responsibilities to safeguard the public and the environment.



In South Africa, various regulators and government departments such as the department of Labour, Health, Tourism, Energy, Trade and Industry and Environmental Affairs are already using accreditation.

PARTNERING WITH REGULATORS AND GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS TO BUILD TRUST AND REDUCE RISK

- Do you operate in a high-risk domain where the safety and health of the public and the protection of the environment are paramount?
- Do you need a reliable system to verify the **technical competence** of in-house and external inspectors test and calibration laboratories or verification and certification bodies?
- Do **local and international obligations** require you to carry out more complex conformity assessment activities and seek better trained personnel?
- Do you mistrust **test and inspection reports** or calibration, certification or verification certificates?
- Are you worried about allowing external organisations to evaluate important conformity assessment systems?

When SANAS partners with you, its specialists will make sure that they understand your **risks, problems** and **needs**. This brochure will explain how **SANAS** - as a reliable and competent partner that was created by government - can help you address the issues that concern you through accreditation.

Partnering with SANAS has **five** major **benefits** for regulators.

BENEFIT 1

SANAS helps you verify technical competence and reduce risk

As a regulator, one of your greatest responsibilities is to protect the health and safety of the public and the environment. You need to minimise risk by using technically competent laboratories, inspection, certification, and verification bodies.

Accreditation is internationally recognised as a reliable and transparent method of establishing whether a conformity assessment body is technically competent. In formal



terms, accreditation by SANAS provides formal recognition that laboratories, certification, inspection, and verification bodies as well as GLP test facilities are competent to carry out specific tasks.

Specialist technical assessors conduct a thorough assessment of the conformity assessment body using international and/or national standards. The assessments are conducted on-site by an assessment team consisting of one lead assessor and one or more technical assessor. Once accredited, conformity assessment bodies undergo regular assessments to ensure that they maintain their competence and compliance with the accreditation criteria.

BENEFIT 2

SANAS assists you to enhance public confidence in your system

Accreditation has become a preferred mechanism for ensuring public confidence in the reliability and integrity of activities that have an impact on health, safety and the environment.

Regulators and government departments in many countries around the world are beginning to realise how their national accreditation bodies can help them create confidence in their conformity assessment systems. SANAS can help you to do the same!

Where a laboratory, verification or inspection activity is required in the context of government legislation or regulation, accreditation is a means of providing higher levels of confidence in the outputs that might otherwise be possible without third party verification.

BENEFIT 3

SANAS makes you a stakeholder

SANAS welcomes your active participation in its specialist technical committee (STC's).

The STCs determine the application of criteria and the expertise that is required and used in assessments. SANAS needs you to get involved in the STC's as this provides confidence that the entire process is carried out according to your needs.



Your involvement with SANAS is a partnership and the organisation is confident that, together with you, a mutually supportive relationship can develop.

BENEFIT 4

SANAS shares the benefits of its international recognition

SANAS has worked hard to make it possible for a regulator to accept, with confidence, test reports or certificates that were issued in other countries. This is possible because SANAS is a signatory of the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) Arrangement that promotes the acceptance of accredited test and calibration data among the signatories. The aim of this arrangement is to reduce or eliminate the need for retesting in the importing country. The ILAC Arrangement now has 73 signatories, representing 61 economies.

SANAS enjoys similar arrangements with the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) where multilateral arrangements are in place for recognising signatories' certifications.

The above mentioned arrangements are possible as each accreditation body is thoroughly peer-reviewed to establish whether or not it meets the criteria of ILAC or IAF for competence. Regulators around the world are beginning to accept reports and certificates from laboratories, certification, verification and inspection bodies that are accredited by ILAC/IAF arrangement signatories against an appropriate schedule of accreditation, without conducting their own reviews.

BENEFIT 5

SANAS offers training

Many regulators and government departments have attested to how important training is. SANAS has a well-earned international reputation for its training and offers a number of courses pertaining to the accreditation of facilities. These include systems courses, technical assessing techniques, internal auditing courses, how to document your system and certification.



SANAS HELPS YOU REDUCE COSTS AND SAVE TIME

Additional to confidence, SANAS accreditation provides those who administer regulations and specifications for the following:

- A resource to resolve disputes relating to laboratory, inspection, certification and verification services; and
- An ability to outsource to an independent, objective authority the monitoring of laboratory, inspection, certification and verification body performance.

ACCREDITATION COST

SANAS charges for its accreditation programmes. There are charges for application, initial assessment and changes to accreditation. Accredited facilities also pay an annual fee that covers all the costs of on-going administration, re-assessments and surveillance visits.

As stated before, SANAS as a public entity have a role that is important to the national and public interest. It is a position of significant responsibility and it is therefore essential that SANAS maintains its fees and charges with an appropriate balance between a robust accreditation system but a cost that is not a significant burden on the accredited bodies and their customers. Accreditation cost is generally proportional to the amount of assessment effort required. This in turn is generally dictated by the scope of the body's activities rather than the size of the body.

SANAS fees are published on the website: www.sanas.co.za





WHAT SANAS ACCREDITATION IS NOT

It is important to clarify what SANAS accreditation is not, as there is often misconceptions and misunderstandings:

- It is not merely a means of registering or listing someone or something;
- It is not a management system review dressed up with some scientific and technical elements;
- It is not the recognition of future capabilities;
- It is not the recognition of an individual's qualifications; and
- It is not a broad approval of everything a body might do.

WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION

SANAS has a single national office from which all activities are performed. The address and contact details is as follows:

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