

# **AS02-ASSESSMENT PROCEDURE**

**ABC Accreditation Body**

**Revision 1**

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## **1.0 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 The purpose of this procedure is to describe the responsibility and actions required for the conduct of assessments by assessment teams.
- 1.2 This procedure highlights all necessary actions and records to be maintained for an effective assessment, including conduct of opening, and closing meetings, methodology of assessment to be employed, findings and their review and classification, assessment reporting and its follow up.

## **2.0 SCOPE AND APPLICATION**

- 2.1 This procedure applies to all assessments including pre-assessment, assessment, and re-assessment.
- 2.2 This procedure should be read in conjunction with the relevant published policy and procedure documents governing ABC's Accreditation Programs.

## **3.0 REFERENCES**

- ABC Quality Manual
- Terms and Conditions for Accreditation
- ISO/IEC 17025 - General requirements for the competence of calibration and testing Laboratories
- ISO 15189 - Medical Laboratories – Particular requirements for quality and competence
- ISO/IEC 17020 - General criteria for the operation of various types of bodies performing inspection
- ISO/IEC 17065 – Conformity Assessment - Requirements for bodies certified products, processes, and services
- ISO 17034 - Conformity Assessment – General requirements for the competence of reference material producers
- ISO/IEC 17043 - Conformity Assessment – General requirements for proficiency testing
- ISO/IEC 17024 - Conformity Assessment – General requirements for bodies operating certification of persons
- ISO/IEC 17021 - Conformity assessment -- Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems

## **4.0 GENERAL CONDUCT OF AN ASSESSMENT**

### **4.1 Background**

4.1.1 The main function of an assessment is to determine whether the conformity assessment body (CAB) such as a testing/calibration lab or inspection body complies with the general, technical and specific accreditation criteria and ABC requirements.

4.1.2 Assessors should be aware that the problems encountered in assessment will be many and varied, and the procedures provided in this document only cover general issues. It will always remain the duty of the individual assessor to weigh all the evidence available before a judgment is made. Where the assessment team cannot reach a conclusion about a finding, they should refer to ABC Program Manager for clarification.

4.1.3 Assessments should be conducted with objectivity, courtesy, and tact, but with sufficient rigour to ensure that the assessor obtains access to all information necessary to form a balanced judgment about the CAB. Assessors should always be open-minded and prepare to accept novel solutions to age-old problems.

4.1.4 The information that assessors acquire during assessment visits is confidential to the CABs and ABC; and must not under any circumstances, be divulged or referred to, when visiting other CABs or to any other party. All assessors should have signed letters of undertaking of confidentiality and Impartiality and Assessor Code of Ethics before embarking on an assessment.

## **4.2 Application Review and Pre-Assessment**

4.2.1 ABC staff review all applications. A written report on the application review will be provided to the applicant who will then make the necessary adjustments, if any, required by AB.

4.2.2 Normally progression from application review to pre-assessment and/or assessment can only be done when required adjustments, including corrective actions, if any, have been carried out. However, under special circumstances, such as in cases of minor issue detected during an application review and/or pre-assessment, progression to the next step can be made without waiting for a formal response from the CAB. Under this situation, the ABC Staff should consider those pertinent matters during assessment planning. This will also be made clear during the opening meeting and will be verified or assessed during assessment.

4.2.3 A pre-assessment is essentially a simple examination of the implemented quality system of the CAB. Such implementation is examined by reviewing documents, observing facilities, and discussing with relevant CAB personnel. It does not normally include technical examination and is much the same as an application review in this regard, except it is conducted on site. A pre-assessment is normally conducted solely by a lead assessor and will rarely take more than one-day onsite.

4.2.4 While an application review establishes the existence of a quality system and required supporting procedures, a pre-assessment normally acquires evidence of five required conditions to allow the CAB to progress to its initial assessment:

- Have the CAB's tests and calibrations been sufficiently validated and determined to be fit for purpose by the CAB staff? This includes uncertainty of measurement.
- Does the CAB meet the traceability requirements given in the ABC Traceability Policy?
- Has the CAB participated in PT sufficiently to meet the requirements of the ABC PT Policy?
- Has the CAB formally documented its management system?
- Has the CAB conducted an internal audit and management review?

4.2.5 All of these conditions must be met before ABC can proceed to an assessment.

## **4.3 Assessor Document Review and Agreeing Logistics for All Assessment Activities**

4.3.1 ABC Staff examines the requested scope of accreditation and comes to agreement with the CAB on the exact contents of the scope before the team has been formed. ABC Staff contacts the CAB and the proposed lead assessor to determine the most appropriate dates for the conduct of the assessment. At this stage, all logistics surrounding participation and availability of assessment resources are agreed between the CAB and the ABC Staff.

4.3.2 The lead assessor reviews the documentation submitted by the CAB to prepare for the assessment activity. All quality system documentation are required to be reviewed by the entire assessment team. As well, all technical documentation pertinent to all of the tests on the requested scope of accreditation must be reviewed by the applicable technical assessors.

4.3.3 Under normal circumstances, the document review is an examination of assessment documents against reference documents, such as the applicable standard or agreed method or pertinent ABC requirement.

4.3.4 Assessors normally make use of the applicable checklist to capture the results of the document review and better prepare themselves for the onsite assessment.

## **4.4 Assessment (and Pre-Assessment) Overview**

4.4.1 The assessment visit begins with an opening meeting between the assessors and representatives of the CAB. This is followed by a tour of the facilities and the detailed onsite examination of the workings of the CAB. Each assessor is normally accompanied by a member of the CAB staff assigned by CAB management and having responsibility for the particular section of work being assessed.

4.4.2 The visit ends with a further meeting between the assessors and representatives of the CAB, at which the assessment team presents their findings and the lead assessor sums up the findings of the team as a whole. Prior to this, the team should meet in private to prepare for this closing meeting. For assessments lasting longer than one day, the assessors should also hold a brief review meeting at the end of each day to compare notes and discuss any changes to the assessment schedule that may have become necessary.

4.4.3 The next phases of the assessment are the review of methods and procedures used within the CAB which is carried out separately. During these assessments, assessors will observe the CAB implementing their documented management system and technical procedures:

- in their own administrative and CAB areas,
- in the actual conduct of conformity assessment activities (testing, calibration, inspection, certification, etc), and
- the CAB's participation in any needed proficiency testing / ILC programs and CAB's own quality control programs etc.

4.4.4 There is no difference in approaches to be used in the conduct of a pre-assessment and an assessment. The only real difference is the scope of the activity. A pre-assessment examines only the quality system using only an LA, while an assessment covers all aspects of the operation of the CAB, including the conduct of conformity assessment activities and includes appropriate numbers of TAs.

4.4.5 The following sections are applicable to both assessments and pre-assessments except that in pre-assessment, no proposal for accreditation will be made. The decision at the end of a pre-assessment would be that the application may, or may not, progress to a full assessment.

4.4.5.1 During reassessment, the assessment team must pay particular attention to the following issues. These issues must be assessed by the assessment team, including the review of applicable records:

- Actions taken on findings identified during previous assessment,
- PT/ILC program participation, results, and related activities,
- Measurement uncertainty evaluations.
- Witnessing conformity assessment activities, (tests, calibrations, inspections, etc.),
- Witnessing of on-site (at their client location) of conformity assessment activities (if any).
- Customer complaints, disputes and appeals, handling and resolution.
- Internal audits and management review and follow up of conclusions resulting from internal audits and reviews.
- Continual improvement of the management system through review of preventive and corrective actions taken
- Implementation of risk-based thinking within the management system, and
- The effectiveness of the CAB's operations regarding attainment of corporate and quality objectives.

4.4.5.2 ABC may be called upon to conduct the assessment of a CAB that delivers its conformity assessment services to a client location, such as an onsite calibration laboratory, an inspection body, or a management system certification body.

4.4.5.3 In all these instances, the assessment planning must include provision for the assessment team to witness sufficient conformity assessment activity of the CAB at the client site to determine whether these activities conform to requirements and demonstrate competence in the activity for which accreditation is being sought. This will add time to the actual assessment of the CAB.

## **4.5 Assessment Techniques**

### **4.5.1 The assessment of a CAB can be emotional for CAB personnel:**

- A CAB may be resentful that an outsider is looking at their activities in a critical fashion - Aggression.
- A CAB may be very apprehensive that an "expert" is likely to reveal all their known deficiencies - Nervousness.

In truth, most CABs realize that an assessor has a job to do but it is nevertheless important that the assessor remains polite, positive, and helpful. He/she is not there to "score points" but for the clear aim of gathering evidence to support the CAB's effort in obtaining accreditation.

### **4.5.2 An assessor requires the following experience in conformity assessment activities:**

- At least five years' experience in the conduct of the conformity assessment activities and specific technical fields they are assessing,
- knowledge of assessment methods as defined in this document and in ISO 19011,
- knowledge of the accreditation standard, the relevant CAB policy and procedure documents, and

- experience in Management Systems used in the specific technical fields they are assessing.

#### **4.5.3 The behavioral qualities of and assessor includes:**

- wisdom and alertness,
- ability to deal with different types of people, and
- perseverance and an ability to analyse conditions.

#### **4.5.4 A weak assessor may be:**

- ignorant about CAB operations,
- unprepared,
- not punctual or not dressed professionally, and/or
- ignorant of the accreditation standard and relevant ABC policy documents and procedures.

### **4.6 Roles & Responsibilities of Assessors**

#### **4.6.1 Characteristics of Assessors**

- Assessors are the only persons who can establish the credibility of the ABC accreditation programs. It is therefore essential that all categories of assessors are well-informed of their role and responsibilities to provide a professional assessment service first to the CAB being assessed and ultimately to ABC.
- All assessors should hold appropriate technical and professional qualifications and should have recent experience.
- Regardless of background, experience or qualifications, all potential assessors should undergo intensive training directly by ABC or undergo a five-day intensive assessor-training course recognized by ABC.

#### **4.6.2 Responsibilities of Lead Assessors**

The following listing includes additional roles to be performed by lead assessors while leading a team with one or more team members.

- Review applicable assessment documents against the assessment standard.
- Plan the assessment.
- Prepare working documents, forms, logs etc. to be used during the assessment.
- Assess the requirements of each assessment activity and his/her own area of competence.
- Remain within the assessment scope and exercise objectivity.
- Compile and analyze evidence that is material, relevant, necessary, and sufficient for the assessment and the resulting conclusions and inform the assessed organization (assessee).
- Remain alert for any indications of evidence that may impact assessment results and exercise discretion where more intensive (in-depth) or extensive (wider coverage) assessment work may be required.
- Conduct themselves ethically.
- Coordinate with assessment team members, for the identified scope of testing/calibration/inspection work needed to witness during the assessment and to communicate the same to the assessed organization.
- Report to CAB top management of any major hindrance in performing the assessment.
- Coordinate and manage all phases of an assessment.
- Make final decisions regarding the conduct of the assessment, any assessment findings and decisions on the outcome of the assessment.
- Represent the assessment team.
- Represent the ABC only in areas where they are authorized and knowledgeable.
- Prepare and submit assessment reports promptly.
- Play both the role of senior (lead) assessor and technical assessor in a CAB with a small scope of testing that is within their area of technical competence. For a CAB with few tests, a single individual who is a technically competent lead assessor may be expected to perform the entire assessment alone.
- Introduce members of the assessment team members to the CAB top management at the opening meeting.

- Provide guidance to trainee assessor(s). Assessor findings in assessment finding forms should present a short, concise, and clearly focused finding statement where the failure occurs and referring to location, test method, equipment, and related documentation etc.
- When called upon to do so, provide feedback to ABC on the performance of trainee assessor(s).

#### 4.6.3 Responsibilities of Technical Assessors (team members & Trainees)

The following listing includes additional roles to be performed by team members when performing assessments under the leadership of a lead assessor.

- Review applicable assessment documents against the assessment standard.
- Plan assessment activities in their capacity as a team member and be aware of the nature and type of planning undertaken by the Lead Assessor.
- Prepare working documents, forms, logs etc. to be used during the assessment.
- Assess the requirements of discipline within their own area of competence,
- Remain within the assessment scope and exercise objectivity.
- Compile and analyze evidence that is material, relevant, necessary, and sufficient for the assessment and the resulting conclusions and inform the assessed organization (assessee).
- Remain alert for any indications of evidence that may impact assessment results and exercise discretion where more intensive (in-depth) or extensive (wider coverage) assessment work may be required.
- Conduct themselves ethically.
- Coordinate with assessment team members, for the identified scope of testing/calibration/inspection work needed to witness during the assessment and to communicate the same to the assessed organization.
- Report to Lead Assessor of any major hindrance in performing the assessment.
- Make recommendations to the Lead Assessor regarding the conduct of the assessment, any assessment findings and decisions on the outcome of the assessment.
- Prepare and submit assessment reports promptly.
- Assessors and team members are to introduce themselves to the CAB management as ABC assessors only during the assessment and not to hold themselves as performing their work for any other organization.

## 5.0 DETAILED ASSESSMENT PROCEDURE

No	Procedure / Action	Responsibility
<b>5.1</b>	<b>Opening Meeting and Agenda</b>	
5.1.1	<p>The on-site assessment shall commence with an opening meeting involving the top management of the CAB. Its purpose is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• confirm the objectives of the assessment and the scope of testing/calibration/inspection activities to be covered.</li> <li>• confirm the assessment plan including witnessing of testing/calibration/inspection (<u>Please refer to clause 6.0 on policies for witnessing</u>);</li> <li>• make arrangement for reporting the outcomes of the assessment in the form of both the individual findings and summary report.</li> </ul>	<b>Lead Assessor</b>
5.1.2	<p>The opening meeting is held on arrival and immediately before the assessment commences. It is intended to enable the team and the CABs' representatives to become acquainted, and to clear up any difficulties or confusion about the purpose of the assessment and what is expected of the CABs during and at the end of the visit. It is chaired by the lead assessor and will cover the following points:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introductions and thanks</li> <li>• Assessment scope and objectives</li> </ul>	<b>Lead Assessor</b>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agreement on scope and objectives – emphasize, “facilitating their demonstration of conformance”</li> <li>• Scope and objectives understood by CAB and CAB staff</li> <li>• Reiterate the “official” links between CAB staff and assessors</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agreement on the planned approach (Site Visit Agenda)</li> <li>• Respond to necessary adjustments to this plan</li> <li>• Confirm arrangements for logistics and resources</li> <li>• Confirm arrangements and timings for subsequent meetings (Interview with key CAB staff, etc)</li> <li>• follow up on findings raised in any previous assessment</li> <li>• Confirm arrangements for the end of the assessment</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Assessment methods and procedures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clearly explain investigation activities</li> <li>• Be open about the process and emphasize its transparency</li> <li>• Confirm the definitions of assessment findings</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Confidentiality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confirm assessment team’s responsibilities</li> <li>• Confirm CAB’s responsibilities</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Respond to questions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be prepared to handle questions from CAB staff – focus on the benefits of the approach and the transparency of the activities.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Depart for the tour of the facility.</li> </ul> <p>Note: The lead assessor should ensure that attendance lists for opening and closing meetings are completed using AF06 <i>Attendance List</i>.</p>	
<b>5.2</b>	<b>The Assessment</b>	<b>LA / TA</b>
5.2.1	The next stage of the assessment will involve detailed evaluation of the administration of the CAB’s actual operations. This involves a process of discussions and interviews with the CAB staff. Specific witnessing of testing/calibration/inspection will also be carried out to assessment competence of CAB personnel.	
5.2.2	During the course of the assessment, it may become apparent that the CAB is not really in a position to achieve or maintain accreditation certain areas within the applied or accredited scope. In such cases, the lead assessor shall bring this matter up at an Interim meeting and/or the final closing meeting with the CAB’s senior management to suggest a suitably reduced or redefined scope, within which the CAB has satisfactory resource or competence.	

<b>No</b>	<b>Procedure / Action</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
5.2.3	The most important part of the assessment consists of on site findings of the CAB going about its normal business. Assessors need to form a general impression of the CAB's capability, and in particular of the suitability of the equipment for the work in hand and its state of maintenance and calibration. Equally, they need to assess the competence of the staff and effectiveness of the management system in ensuring that errors are not allowed to appear in recording, analyzing, and reporting results.	
5.2.4	The assessment team shall go about its assessment by following the assessment plan or the agreed modified plan.	
5.2.5	Following the assessment plan, each assessor investigates CAB's ability to perform one or more types of test/calibration/inspection, or, in the case of a CAB, may concentrate on a particular geographical location. He/she might select a specific test, whether it is currently being performed or not, and ask to see the apparatus involved (and the manufacturer's manuals), and enquire into its state of calibration. He/she may select items of work in progress, witness measurements and examine documentation concerning test items. He/she might trace back results from previously issued test reports to the original entries in the CAB's notebooks.	
5.2.6	Aspects which require evidence from some other areas of the CABs before they can be settled may be noted down for further investigation, or they may be referred to an assessor colleague dealing with the area concerned.	
5.2.7	Any findings noted must be fair and must also be seen to be fair. They must therefore be based on objective evidence of deficiencies in equipment or operating procedures, evidence which can be logged and verified. To secure the greatest possible agreement on the facts, and to avoid subsequent dispute, assessors are provided with Assessment Report Assessment finding form for making an agreed record of any occurrence or finding which may indicate a failure to comply with the accreditation criteria and requirements.	
5.2.8	Assessors should bear in mind that their responsibilities for assessing a CAB's compliance with accreditation criteria and other relevant requirements under the scheme do not extend beyond investigating and reporting what they learn directly from observing the work of the CAB.	
<b>5.3</b>	<b>Recording Observations and Findings</b>	<b>LA/TA</b>
5.3.1	Findings Report Forms shall be used to record instances where the CAB's arrangements do not comply with the accreditation criteria or the CAB's documented system, test methods, calibration/inspection procedures. These will form part of the evidence on which the lead assessor's proposal on accreditation to ABC will be based.	
5.3.2	Assessors should, in the first instance, complete only the "Findings" section of assessment finding forms. As far as possible (bearing in mind the need to maintain the momentum of the assessment) findings should be recorded on the finding Form or on Assessment Report or his/her own Assessment Checklist at the time they are encountered.	Assessment finding forms Assessment Report Form Assessor Monitoring Form
5.3.3	Individual finding should be recorded on a separate Form. It is also acceptable to record a series of findings on similar	

	elements on one form. The entry on the form should be a factual statement of the finding made. It should state the fact, not the proposed remedy. It should be objective, not critical, emotive or wooly. The recorded finding should be legible, grammatical, articulate and concise. A single sentence should normally be sufficient to cover a single finding. Black ink / ball-point pen should be used in order to ensure that subsequent photocopies of the finding forms remain as clear as the originals.	
5.3.4	Findings should be traceable, that is they should give a serial number or other unique identification of the equipment, document or other item(s) concerned.	
5.3.5	The assessor should, as far as possible, use the wording of accreditation criteria and requirements, in phrasing the finding. This will confirm to ABC and indeed to the CAB, that the CAB is being assessed against written requirements as opposed to the assessor's own personal views. The entry on Forms should contain purely factual findings related to possible non-conformance with a specific clause in the accreditation criteria or CAB's documented system.	
5.3.6	<p>The following information should be included in assessment finding forms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• when (date) and where the finding was made.</li> <li>• the system or subject or test under discussion.</li> <li>• any documents involved.</li> <li>• a record of the factual finding.</li> <li>• the name(s) of the person(s) with whom the matter was discussed.</li> <li>• related clause number in the accreditation criteria etc.; and</li> <li>• the signature of the assessor and the representative of CAB.</li> </ul>	
5.3.7	The classification of non-conformance is done by the lead assessor as a separate exercise, aided by advice from the assessment team, before formal presentation to the CAB's management. Where a team of assessors is involved in the assessment, the classification will be done by the lead assessor in consultation with his/her team. The assessors will need access to a separate room for this exercise, so that the findings and their categorization may be discussed away from the CAB's staff.	
5.3.8	Exchange of information on matters such as the allocation of non-conformance is an important reason for holding a brief meeting of the assessment team at the end of each day, if possible.	
5.3.9	A definition of the different categories of non- conformances and should be understood by all assessors.	<b>See Appendix</b>
<b>5.4</b>	<b>Wash up Meetings for CAB Management (Optional)</b>	<b>Lead Assessor</b>
5.4.1	<p>Depending on the number of the assessment days, the lead assessor may hold a interim wash up meetings to CAB's top management on the progress of the assessment. It usually covers the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• review of any observations raised during the assessment, any of which may become findings depending on the discussion by the entire team;</li> <li>• discuss any corrective action proposed by the CAB.</li> <li>• ensure that each observation is understood by the CAB staff</li> </ul>	

	<p>to signify agreement of fact.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to suggest a suitably reduced, or redefined scope, within which the CAB has satisfactory resource competence or coverage, if it has become apparent that the CAB is not really able to achieve accreditation in certain areas within the originally conceived scope.</li> </ul>	
5.5.5	The Summary Report should not simply be a reiteration of the contents of the detailed assessment finding forms. It should correlate individual non-conformances which indicate a general weakness in the system, within a particular area of testing/calibration/inspection or for the CAB as a whole. As with a findings form, the Summary Report should avoid biased or emotive statements.	
5.5.6	If, in the opinion of the assessor with specialized experience, there is any reason to doubt the CAB's competence to perform any of the types of test / calibration / inspection for which accreditation is sought, for example, through lack of experienced staff or faulty apparatus, this should be noted in the Summary Report with a proposal for remedial action.	
5.5.7	The Summary Report Form may be completed in legible handwriting or in typed version.	
<b>5.6</b>	<b>Closing Meeting and Agenda</b>	<b>Lead Assessor</b>
5.6.1	The purpose of the final meeting (closing meeting) is to enable the lead assessor to present the CAB with a summary of the results of the assessment, to inform the CAB of his/her conclusion and proposals and to point out any corrective action that may be called for as a condition of accreditation / maintenance of accreditation.	
5.6.2	Assessor should make it clear in his/her opening remarks that the object of the assessment is to assess the work of the CAB on behalf of ABC and not to score points. Where non-conformances exist, the object is to provide the CAB with all of the appropriate information to allow them to address the non-conforming condition and meet the accreditation criteria, not to amass enough evidence to extra work. If the finding forms and the summary report are properly completed during the assessment, there should be no need for any further report on the proceedings for presentation at the closing meeting.	
5.6.3	During this closing meeting, the lead assessor should normally follow this agenda. Note how close the following agenda corresponds to the opening meeting agenda presented above.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introductions and thanks</li> <li>Assessment scope and objectives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reiterate scope and objectives (facilitation of conformance)</li> </ul> </li> <li>Assessment methods and procedures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reiterate investigation methods</li> </ul> </li> <li>Confidentiality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Confirm assessment team's responsibilities – leave all documents with auditee</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confirm responsibilities</li> <li>• Present the Assessment Report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Present the Findings, if any, that have been raised and ensure that they are fully understood by the CAB staff and note a disclaimer that there might be unrecorded findings in areas that were not discovered during this assessment.</li> <li>• Explain the significance of categories of findings</li> <li>• Present the requirements for laboratory response</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Respond to questions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be prepared to handle questions from the lab. Focus on the benefits of their continued demonstration of competence.</li> <li>• Advise the CAB on the methods to dispute any findings contained in the report, or appeal any accreditation decisions made by ABC, by referring to ABC Disputes and Appeals Procedure</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Close the Meeting</li> </ul> <p>Ensure one copy of the report remains with the CAB and one copy is forwarded to the Accreditation Body (ABC). See AB02-Assessment Procedure and AF06-Assessment Report of the <b>Assessor Tool Kit</b> for the procedures on the formats to return to ABC staff.</p>	
5.6.4	The lead assessor will not comment on the likely recommendation of the ABC Technical Committee or on the possible outcome of their deliberations.	
5.6.5	In presenting the summary report, the assessment team should not be drawn into debating the validity of their conclusions or proposals. If there are questioned, the lead assessor may, however, enumerate the individual non-conformance which justifies the conclusion or proposal in question and point out the combined effect of the findings on his/her assessment. If the CAB is still unwilling to accept the conclusion or proposal or contest of the overall assessment, the lead assessor should advise the CAB to take up the matter with ABC, following the ABC Disputes and Appeals Procedure.	
5.6.6	The efficient conduct of the closing meeting will leave a lasting impression of the professionalism of the assessment team and of the value of the assessment procedure. It must therefore be conducted with impartiality and with a professional approach.	
<b>5.7</b>	<b>Factors Affecting Recommendation for Accreditation</b>	<b>Lead Assessor</b>
5.7.1	<p>The lead assessor considers the following in making this recommendation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the number and seriousness of the major non-conformances found during the assessment.</li> <li>• the adequacy of control of the CAB's management to operate testing / calibration / inspection / certification; and</li> <li>• the range of knowledge, expertise, and experience of the assessed CAB relevant to the scope of accreditation sought.</li> </ul>	
5.7.2	Where competence is established and only minor non-conformances are found, the lead assessor will normally propose accreditation or maintenance of accreditation	

	<p>conditional upon the satisfactory completion of the agreed corrective action at an agreed period and the CAB provides ABC with evidence that the non-conformances have been corrected.</p> <p>Depending upon the nature of any non-conformances, evidence that the corrective action has been taken may be provided either by posting the necessary documents to ABC or through a further partial assessment or verification assessment, as the case may be, by assessor(s).</p>	
5.7.3	The period allowed for correcting non-conformances should be specified. The period allowed will depend on the category of finding.	
5.7.4	<p>When the CAB does not submit appropriate corrective actions to ABC within the agreed time, ABC may require a full re-assessment to obtain the necessary assurance that the management system of the CAB at the assessment can meet ABC accreditation requirements.</p> <p>For ABC to maintain its credibility and to fulfill the requirements of the ILAC MRA, ABC reserves the right to withdraw a CAB's current accreditation under such circumstances.</p> <p>The following are the relevant criteria for ABC to undertake such action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• competence is not established,</li> <li>• the number of major non-conformances found, and their seriousness are such that the whole of CAB's management system, people, or its organization is demonstrably inadequate, the lead assessor's proposal will be that accreditation is refused. If this occurs during a reassessment, this will lead to suspension of a part or the whole accreditation.</li> </ul>	
5.7.5	Considering the above, the assessment report shall indicate to ABC what action is required on the part of the CAB, and what verification is required before ABC make any decision on accreditation.	

## **6.0 WITNESSING SPECIFIC CONFORMITY ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES**

<b>6.1</b>	<b>Witnessing to establish competence</b>	<b>LA / TA</b>
6.1.1	<p>The key aspect to determine CAB competence is the competence of CAB personnel. This aspect can be assessed through witnessing of CAB personnel performing tests and calibrations.</p> <p>Different test/calibration/audit/inspection activities are witnessed in every assessment.</p>	<b>LA / TA</b>
<b>6.2</b>	<b>General Sampling Criteria</b>	<b>LA / TA</b>
6.2.1	<p>Where it is not practicable to witness all the test/calibration/inspections performed by the CAB, ABC proceeds in the following priority:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• most frequent activities are witnessed,</li> </ul>	<b>LA / TA</b>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• most complex activities are witnessed,</li> <li>• multiple similar activities are witnessed,</li> <li>• rarely conducted activities are witnessed</li> </ul>	
<b>6.3</b>	<b>Witness Records</b>	<b>LA / TA</b>
6.3.1	<p>During the witnessing of conformity assessment activities, the following aspects are checked and recorded by the assessor. The form provided for this purpose is the Test and Measurement Checklist Form.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification of CAB staff observed</li> <li>• Identification of the conformity assessment technical activity observed</li> <li>• Identification of Equipment, Calibration &amp; Traceability</li> <li>• Identification of any PT/ILC applicable to the witnessed activity</li> <li>• Identification of any Reference Materials and Standards applicable to the witnessed activity</li> <li>• Identification of any samples and sampling</li> <li>• Identification of any method validation/verification of methods applicable to the witnessed activity</li> <li>• Evaluation or estimation of applicable measurement uncertainty,</li> <li>• Identification of data sheets and reports applicable to the witnessed activity</li> </ul>	<b>LA / TA</b>

## ANNEX: GRADING OF ASSESSMENT FINDINGS

1. **Non-Conformances:** any condition which is contrary to a stated specification, standard, procedure, policy, or instruction
  - 1.1 **Major:** Non-Conformance wherein the condition adversely affects the ability of the CAB to produce valid conformity assessment results.
  - 1.2 **Minor:** Non-Conformance wherein the condition does not adversely affect the ability of the CAB to produce valid conformity assessment results.
2. **Potential Non-Conformances:** A condition that may become a non-conformance in the future.
3. **Opportunity for Improvements (Comments):** A condition which improvement might enhance the CAB ability to produce valid conformance assessment results.