



SNAS

SLOVENSKÁ NÁRODNÁ AKREDITAČNÁ SLUŽBA

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Policy

PL-27

**SNAS POLICY FOR ACCREDITATION OF
PROFICIENCY TESTING ORGANIZERS**

Approved by: **Mgr. Martin Senčák**
Director

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PURPOSE:

This document determines the SNAS policy for accreditation of proficiency testing organizers.

Note: The term proficiency testing in the context of this policy means all interlaboratory comparisons for evaluation of the outcomes of comparisons in terms of the proficiency of the participating conformity assessment body.

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Verified by: **Ing. Karol Richter, CSc.**

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Proficiency testing (PT) through interlaboratory comparisons is used by conformity assessment bodies (CAB) within quality assurance systems as a proof of proficiency in the concerned area of activities and also as evidence of the comparability of their own results with the results of other conformity assessment bodies. In specific cases PT is used as one of the possible methods to ensure traceability results of measurements, tests and calibrations.
- 1.2 In relevant cases SNAS uses PT programs in the process of assessment of competence of conformity assessment bodies to conduct specialized activities for which an accreditation is required or granted. The PT outcomes are an important element complementing the overall picture of the performance of the conformity assessment body.
- 1.3 Where appropriate for the concerned type of specialized activities, the SNAS assessors are obliged, in every type of assessment, to verify the outcomes of proficiency testing in which the conformity assessment body had previously participated. The outcomes from accredited PT organizers are accepted with preference and, after due review, the outcomes from other organizers, possibly outcomes of interlaboratory comparisons between CABs as well.

2 POLICY

- 2.1 When assessing entities in the Slovak Republic or abroad which seek accreditation for the area of proficiency testing organization, SNAS generally assesses meeting of the requirements of the Standard ISO/IEC 17043 “Conformity assessment - General requirements for proficiency testing” and relevant documents related to the scope of accreditation issued by SNAS.
- 2.2 Where appropriate and needed, at assessment of the competency to organize proficiency testing, also requirements and recommendations of relevant standards, documents or guidelines such as ISO 13528 “Statistical Methods for Use in Proficiency Testing by Interlaboratory Comparisons” and other documents related to ensuring continuation of measurements and other specialized activities related to PT organizing are taken into account.
- 2.3 SNAS consistently pays attention that applicants for accreditation in proficiency testing meet requirements for impartiality, openness, objectiveness and non-discrimination as well as avoiding conflicts of interest (ILAC P-13). The policy and procedures of the applicants shall include all factors that may influence their competence, impartiality and integrity (ownership relations and interests, organizational aspects, decision-making procedures, financial matters, personnel, etc.).
- 2.4 SNAS accredits PT organizers who have accredited laboratories or who have non-

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accredited laboratories or who have no laboratories or who have outsourced laboratory services. In the case when organizer has non-accredited laboratories or laboratory services has outsourced is obliged to ensure and have relevant evidence of proving that the relevant requirements of the ISO/IEC 17025 Standard are met. In the event of all the above mentioned alternatives, the organizer shall make sure that the laboratories not only meet requirements of the ISO/IEC 17025 Standard but also specific requirements of an organizer for the needs of proficiency testing, which means relevant requirements of the ISO/IEC 17043 Standard which are related to laboratory activities.

- 2.5 The conformity assessment body taking part in organizing proficiency testing may participate in the testing but the results of its assessment are acceptable only if they were not influenced through its participation in the PT preparation and relevant evidence shall be available to the competent conformity assessment body or the organizer.
- 2.6 SNAS grants accreditation for proficiency testing organizations only to entities which already organize or have organized specific comparisons of that type and can prove this through submitting documented procedures about how the testing was organized and in the form of records and reports on a minimum of two activities conducted in the area. Accreditation is granted only for areas in which those programs were already conducted.
- 2.7 For organizers who already have accreditation in another accreditation scope, the competence is assessed in accordance with the requirements of the ISO/IEC 17043 Standard while the results of assessment of system elements from other accreditation scopes are also taken into account.
- 2.8 SNAS grants accreditation to PT organizers for five years. Intervals of surveillances are performed according to MSA-04th. For that reason more than two surveillances may be planned in a single accreditation cycle in specific cases.
- 2.9 SNAS, when conducting surveillances, always checks the meeting of requirements for internal audits and management reviews and other relevant issues that were communicated to it prior to or during the surveillance. Records of the implemented PTs, primarily in the period since the last on-site assessment in the organizer's premises, are reviewed.
- 2.10 During the accreditation validity period the organizers shall carry out a minimum of two PTs, and in the event of several items of the accreditation scope a minimum of one PT in the respective area of proficiency testing organization, during the time of the accreditation validity.
- 2.11 The existence of accredited proficiency testing organizers may not prevent SNAS from organizing measurement audits or bilateral testing in order to:
- Assess laboratories and, where relevant, inspection authorities prior to granting of accreditation;
 - Supervise the continuing competency of accredited conformity assessment bodies.

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3 RELATED DOCUMENTATION

ISO/IEC 17011:	General requirements for accreditation bodies accrediting conformity assessment bodies.
ISO/IEC 17043:	Conformity assessment – General requirements for proficiency testing.
ILAC P13:	Use of the standard ISO/IEC 17011 for the accreditation of PT providers.
MSA-04:	Procedure for the Accreditation.

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