



**SNAS**

SLOVAK NATIONAL ACCREDITATION SERVICE

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**METHODICAL GUIDELINE FOR ACCREDITATION**

**WITNESS ASSESSMENT OF CERTIFICATION BODIES  
CERTIFYING PRODUCTS**

**MSA-CP/03**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Foreword

This methodical guideline regulates the procedure for witness assessment of bodies certifying products according to ISO/IEC 17065: 2012 and it is obligatory for all employees of the accreditation body and applicants for accreditation.

### 1.2 References

EA-3/12M: 2013	EA Policy for the accreditation of certification of organic production
EA-6/02M: 2013	Guidelines for the application of EN 45011 and ISO / IEC 17021 for certification according to EN ISO 3834
EA-6/04M: 2011	Guidelines for the Accreditation of product certification in the primary sector through sampling workplaces
eIDAS	Regulation (EU) No 910/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 July 2014 on electronic identification and trust services for electronic transactions in the internal market and repealing Directive 1999/93/EC
ISO/IEC 17000: 2004	Conformity assessment - Vocabulary and general principles
ISO/IEC 17020: 2012	Conformity assessment Requirements for activities of various types of bodies performing inspection
ISO/IEC 17021-1: 2015	Conformity assessment Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems
ISO/IEC 17025: 2005	General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories
ISO/IEC 17065: 2012	Conformity assessment - Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services
MSA-04	Procedure for the accreditation
MSA-CP/01	Scope and scope specification of accreditation of bodies certifying products
MSA-CP/05	Application of ETSI EN 319 403 V2.2.2 (2015-08) by assessment of CAB certifying products according to eIDAS
TD SFCS 1006: 2013	Requirements for certification bodies certifying according to PEFC International Standard for Chain of Custody

### 1.3 Definitions

Definitions in this MSA are in compliance with the definitions laid down in the References.

### 1.4 Abbreviations

CP	Certification body certifying products
EN	European Standard
GD	Guidance Document
IAF	International Accreditation Forum

IEC	International Electrotechnical Commission
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
MSA	Methodical guideline for accreditation
NO	Notified body
NBU	National Security Authority
PS	Assessment group
UNMS SR	Slovak Office for Standards, Metrology and Testing

## 2. WITNESS ASSESSMENT PROCEDURE GENERALLY

Witness assessment is an integral part of the assessment process, during which is monitored and evaluated the procedure of CP during the performance of evaluation activities of products, processes and services. Evaluations activities of products in accordance with ISO/IEC 17065: 2012 can be performed as an audit, inspection or testing.

The assessment group in the witness assessment provided by audit of production quality assurance system evaluates:

### 2.1 Preparation for the operations of evaluation of products processes and services:

- 2.1.1 Determination of duration of audit (application of the relevant parts of art. 9.1.4.1 letter a) to g) ISO/IEC 17021-1: 2015)
- 2.1.2 Sampling multiple locations (if required by the certification scheme) under art. 9.1.5 ISO/IEC 17021-1: 2015)
- 2.1.3 Planning of evaluation activities (audit plan according to art. 9.2.3 ISO/IEC 17021-1: 2015, except of audit program, and art. 9.2.3.2, letter a), b) - stating the Directive according to be audited and the purpose of the audit, letter c) to f) and art. 9.2.3.4)
- 2.1.4 Distribution of tasks within the evaluation/audit team, communication with customers
- 2.1.5 Adequacy of equipment the evaluation/audit team procedures, forms, necessary information from previous assessments/audits activities

### 2.2 Performance of assessments/audits:

- 2.2.1 Beginning of evaluation/audit
- 2.2.2 Audit performance (according to art. 9.4.2 to 9.4.7 of ISO/IEC 17021-1: 2015, whereby art. 9.4.5 to apply only in relevant extent), distribution of tasks within the evaluation team
- 2.2.3 Compliance with documented procedures/standards for the performance of evaluation/audit activities, including record keeping
- 2.2.4 Treatment with previous findings
- 2.2.5 Closing of evaluation/audit activities
- 2.2.6 Conducting of audit report (according to art. 9.4.8.2 letter a) to f), h) to k), o, p and art. 9.4.8.3 letter c) ISO/IEC 17021-1: 2015).

In the witness assessment of evaluation activities by the form of testing or inspection the assessment group values general performance criteria for the witness assessment taking into account the relevant requirements of ISO/IEC 17025 for testing and ISO/IEC 17020 for inspection.

2.3 PS evaluates the overall course of evaluation activities of products, processes or services, the effectiveness and the method of their performance (compliance with the evaluation plan, communication skills, consistency, presentation skills and personal behaviour).

2.4 During the accreditation, one witness assessment is carried out for relevant certification scheme (according to MSA-CP/01).

During the re-accreditation, the witness assessment is carried out for minimum one certification scheme except for those schemes that have been witnessed during the last assessment.

During the extension of accreditation scope, the witness assessment is carried out for each relevant certification scheme in the range of activities that are subject to the extension.

During the surveillance, the witness assessment is carried out minimum one for each relevant certification scheme.

The relevant certification scheme is one which contains evaluating activities performed by personnel of CP by the manufacturer of the product. In the case of multiple certification schemes including within the same evaluating activities, the witness assessment will be carried out for only one of them.

### **3 WITNESS ASSESSMENT PROCEDURE FOR NO UNMS SR**

3.1 If a new applicant applies for granting of accreditation for notification purpose for CP, the documentation assessment, the assessment on site and the witness assessment shall be carried out on several product groups in relevant certification schemes. This is the standard SNAS procedure on providing of accreditation services in all fields of accreditation.

3.2 Acting on requirement by regulator UNMS SR, on accreditation for notification purpose for CP, which has not a client for some product groups yet, but for reason to get this client, needs to be notified first, may be the witness audits for several product groups carried out by model way. This means the performance of evaluation's activities at the manufacturer, which are not a part of the complete certification process, but are carried out by competent personal of CP, meeting conditions of certification procedures and requirements of certification scheme.

3.3 Acting on requirement by regulator UNMS SR, on accreditation for notification purpose for CP shall be the witness assessments in one accreditation period planned and carried out for each product group in relevant certification schemes.

3.4 If during validity of an accreditation applies CP for extension of granted scope by additionally item within the frame of granted product group, at which this product group has been witness assessed in current accreditation period, there is no need to carry out a witness assessment for this item in current accreditation period. In such a case may be carried out assessment of fulfilling of accreditation requirements and competency of CP using another assessment's techniques without witness assessment, if there were founded by subject during assessment no risks or grave failures and granted scope can be extended by another item within the frame of granted product group.

3.5 If during validity of an accreditation applies CP for extension of granted scope by additionally item within the frame of granted product group, at which this product group had not been witness assessed in current accreditation period, after a deal with CP shall be carried out:

- Witness assessment for given item with relevant certification scheme, which is object of this extension (if possible) or

- Witness assessment for another item with relevant certification scheme within granted accreditation for given product group.

3.6 If during validity of an accreditation applies CP for extension of granted scope by additionally product group, the witness audit must be carried out for given product group in relevant certification schemes.

#### **4 PROCEDURES FOR PERFORMANCE OF WITNESS ASSESSMENT IN SECTORAL SPECIFIC CERTIFICATION SCHEMES**

4.1 When assessing the requirements for good agricultural practice by GLOBALG.A.P. the witness assessments shall be carried out in accordance with Art. 2.3 Integrated Farm Assurance standards, General Regulation, Part III.

4.2 When assessing the requirements for organic production according to EA-3/12, the witness assessments shall be carried out under the requirements of the policy of PL-33: EA Policy on the Accreditation of certification of organic production (EA-3/12M: 2013).

4.3 When assessing the requirements for welding processes according to EA-6/02M: 2013 there are not any additional requirements for performance of witness assessments beyond the general requirements for certification of products.

4.4 When assessing the requirements for Chain of Custody of forest products by TD SFCS 1006: 2013 there are not any additional requirements for performance of witness assessments beyond the general requirements for certification of products. In case of a client with multiple sites, it is necessary to apply the EA Guidelines for the accreditation of product certification in the primary sector by sampling of sites (EA-6/04M: 2011) published in MSA-CP/04.

4.5 When assessing the requirements eIDAS performs SNAS by CP accredited in the scheme eIDAS in 5 year accreditation cycle 2 surveillances and subsequent reaccreditation. If the accredited CP has within the scope of accreditation other product groups than eIDAS, this group will be in contrast to other product groups subject of every surveillance performed by SNAS. Witness assessments will be carried out whenever the first accreditation, reaccreditation and surveillances at least once within the accreditation cycle, performed that during one accreditation cycle fails witness assessment for the same client repeatedly.

#### **5 WITNESS ASSESSMENT REPORT**

From the witness assessment a Report from the witness assessment is elaborated. In the report, the course of the evaluation activities of products, processes and services is evaluated and their compliance with regulations valid in the CP, documented in CP's documentation.

Witness assessment report contains at least:

- number of the service
- standard according to which the accreditation is carried out,
- PS members and their functions,
- name and the address of the organization - applicant for accreditation/accredited CP,
- name and the address of the CP,
- date of the witness assessment,
- type of accreditation service, a part of which is the witness assessment,
- item of the scope of accreditation, witnessed assessed persons (members of the evaluation team) and the name and address of the applicant for certification,

- evaluation of the performance of activity (evaluation of products, processes and services) and compliance with certification procedures of CP, including the preparatory phase,
- overall conclusion of the witness assessment,
- identified nonconformities during the witness audit
- summary of the assessment..

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