

Policy on unannounced visits to INAB Accredited Organisations

PS6

1) Purpose

This Statement outlines the Irish National Accreditation Board's policy for conducting unannounced visits to accredited Conformity Assessment Bodies.

2) Definition

A Conformity Assessment Body (CAB) is body that performs conformity assessment services and that can be the object of accreditation, for example, laboratory, inspection body, product certification body, management system certification body and personnel certification body (ISO/IEC 17000 and ISO/IEC 17011 refer).

3) Background

In accordance with section 1 of "R1 Regulations for INAB Accredited Organisations", INAB carries out a number of unannounced visits to its accredited conformity assessment bodies (laboratories, certification bodies, inspection bodies etc.) each year in order to monitor the ongoing effectiveness of the implementation of the quality system of conformity assessment bodies in the INAB accreditation programmes.

4) Policy

- 4.1) Unannounced visits are additional to the scheduled annual surveillance visits and every INAB accredited conformity assessment body can expect to receive unannounced visits at various times throughout the period of its accreditation.
- 4.2) Conformity assessment bodies are selected for these unannounced visits in order to implement the INAB unannounced visit programme and are not selected because there is some concern about their compliance with the accreditation standard.
- 4.3) Since these visits are carried out without prior notice INAB wishes to minimise its disruption of the conformity assessment body's normal work activities on the day of the visit. In this regard these unannounced visits comprise an audit which focuses primarily on the quality system components of the accreditation criteria. These unannounced visits are normally carried out over a period of approximately 4 hours by INAB officers who will usually be accompanied by an INAB assessor. INAB will normally only require access to the conformity assessment body's documentation and records and will undertake these audits even when key personnel are not available at the time of the visit to assist with the audit.

4.4) Conformity assessment bodies are not charged for these unannounced visits and if non-compliances are raised these are treated in the same way as for scheduled visits.

5) Contact

Your co-operation with these unannounced visits is appreciated however if you have any queries or require further clarification please contact an INAB officer at **The Irish National Accreditation Board**.

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