



Policy on unannounced visits to INAB accredited organisations

PS06

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 a body that performs conformity assessment services and that can be the object of accreditation. Examples include, but are not limited to, laboratories, inspection bodies, certification bodies, etc. (ISO/IEC 17011 refers).

3) **Background**

In accordance with INAB regulations, INAB carries out a number of unannounced visits to its accredited conformity assessment bodies each year in order to monitor the ongoing effectiveness of the implementation of the quality system of CABs 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) The programme for unannounced visits is determined annually.
- 4.3) Since these visits are performed 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 assessment that focuses primarily on the quality management system. These unannounced visits are normally carried out over a period of approximately 4 hours by the lead assessor. On occasion a technical expert/assessor will accompany the lead assessor if there is a specific requirement for technical expertise. The technical expert/assessor will be the same as that for the scheduled annual surveillance. INAB will normally only require access to the conformity assessment body's documentation and records and will undertake the audit 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-conformities are raised these are managed and resolved according to the normal process, with a decision by the manager of INAB.

5) **Contact**

Your co-operation with these unannounced visits is appreciated. However if you have any queries or require further clarification please contact your assessment manager at the Irish National Accreditation Board.

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