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***Guidance for assessors/experts and technical experts conducting or supporting assessments for Emirates National Accreditation System (ENAS)***

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## 1 Foreword

Accreditation by ENAS demonstrates the competence, impartiality, integrity, conformity and performance capability of conformity assessment bodies (CABs), reducing the need for suppliers to be assessed by each of their customers. ENAS' involvement in international mutual recognition groups and agreements helps to provide trust, confidence and reduce trade barriers. As the national accreditation body, ENAS has a responsibility to operate in the public interest and for the benefit of UAE industry.

ENAS carries out assessment for its customers (CABs) by employing a range of assessors (both internal and external –contracted-) and experts to assist in assessment activity. The assessment team will normally consist of assessors/experts with different technical competence to cover the scope that it has been applied for. The task of an assessor/expert is to evaluate the documentation and implementation of the applicant's management system, premises, equipment, technical competence and methods for relevant conformity assessment standards such as ISO/IEC 17025, ISO 15189, ISO/IEC 17021, ISO/IEC 17020 and etcetera, guides and applicable ENAS requirements.

## 2 Purpose

2.1 This document aims to provide ENAS lead assessors, quality assessors, technical assessors and technical experts (collectively referred to as 'assessors/experts and experts' within this document) with guidance for the conduct of assessments for and on behalf of ENAS.

## 3 Definitions

Definitions and conceptions in this document are in accordance with the definitions used in ISO/IEC 17020, ISO/IEC 17025, ISO 15189, ISO/IEC 17021, ISO/IEC 17065 and UAE.S 2055-2 Standards.

### 3.1 ENAS Assessors and Experts

The roles of assessors and experts vary slightly within the assessment team and full details are provided in the table below. However, each role is vital in ensuring ENAS competence to fulfil its role as the national accreditation body.



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Table 1 – ENAS Assessors and Experts.

Assessment Role				
Lead Assessor (LA)	Technical Assessor (TA)	Quality Assessor (QA)	Technical Expert (TE)	Halal Islamic Affairs Expert (HIAE)
Task/Activity/Feature Description				
<p>An individual with expertise in quality and management requirements of a given area of conformity assessment, trained and authorized by ENAS to lead assessment teams during assessment of CABs against accreditation standards. Assessors are expected to conduct assessment as planned, encourage team assessment work and assure proper communication with the customer.</p>	<p>An individual with expertise in a given technical area of conformity assessment, trained and authorized by ENAS to assess technical requirements against accreditation standards and able to conduct assessments either independently or as part of a team. Assessors are expected to write their own reports and raise nonconformities with the customer as required</p>	<p>An individual with expertise in quality and management requirements of a given area of conformity assessment, trained and authorized by ENAS to assess quality management against accreditation standards and able to conduct assessments either independently or as part of a team. Assessors are expected to write their own reports and raise nonconformities with the customer as required.</p>	<p>An individual with expertise in a given area of conformity assessment, who, in conjunction with an authorized lead assessor, supports the evaluation of conformity assessment activities through the provision of specialist knowledge to the team. Experts will produce a report and raise any nonconformities in conjunction with their accompanying assessor</p>	<p>A Muslim with profound and comprehensive knowledge of the requirements of Halal in Islamic Sharia, authorized by ENAS to take part in assessments as per Halal Products and Services Accreditation Scheme (UAE.S 2055-2 Standard) on the basis of his efficiency and scientific knowledge established through academic certificates, courses, research and training courses in this field. The HIAE shall provide expertise related to the halal product/service requirements under consideration</p>

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## **4 ENAS Accreditation**

### **4.1 ENAS Scope of Work**

4.1.1 ENAS grants accreditation to a defined scope of conformity assessment activities, against internationally agreed standards (e.g. ISO/IEC 17021, ISO/IEC 17025, ISO/IEC 17020), normative documents, other UAE national standards (e.g. UAE.S 2055-2) and specific ENAS requirements and policies.

### **4.2 ENAS Accreditation Cycle**

4.2.1 ENAS accreditation cycle is three years. It begins at the effective day of the accreditation granting decision.

4.2.2 ENAS normally conducts a surveillance assessment within 12 month after initial assessment and within 12-18 months after first surveillance assessment. ENAS defined its Accreditation cycle to be 3 years. A CAB's scope of accreditation is available at ENAS website.


### **4.3 ENAS Accreditation Requirements**

4.3.1 CAB seeking ENAS accreditation shall comply with ENAS requirements defined in its accreditation schemes which include international conformity assessment standards, national relevant regulations, ENAS technical requirements and policies.

### **4.4 Accreditation Process**

4.4.1 ENAS first-time accreditation aims to painstaking assessment of quality management system, premises, equipment and the personnel's technical competence of the CAB under assessment. The following general stages make up the first-time accreditation process:

- Accreditation application by CAB.
- Application and resource review by ENAS PM.
- Review of documentation submitted by the applicant (findings to be reported to the CAB).
- Pre-assessment to CAB's premises when required.
- Assessment planning and preparation (this includes assessment team selection, task distribution and arrangement of assessment dates).
- On-site initial assessment.
- Preparation and submission of assessment deliverables.
- Closure of assessment findings.
- Peer review and decision making.
- Accreditation Certificate issuance and update public information available on ENAS website.
- Surveillance assessment.
- Re-assessment where renewal of accreditation is requested by CAB.

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## 5. ENAS Assessor/Expert duties

### 5.1 Records and availability

5.1.1 Assessors/experts shall maintain up-to-date records to evidence and maintain prove of their competence and continual personal development.

5.1.2 Assessors/experts shall maintain up-to-date information on their availability for ENAS, to prevent double-booking or missing a scheduling opportunity.

### 5.2 Conducting an assessment

#### 5.2.1 General


- a. Each application for accreditation from ENAS customers is managed by a Program Manager (PM) who is a permanent member of ENAS staff. The PM shall appoint the members of the assessment team for the specific assessment.
- b. Assessor/expert assigned for specific accreditation activity shall consider and refer to the proper up-to-date ENAS accreditation requirements.
- c. When contacted about conducting an assessment, the assessor or expert should conduct a risk assessment for the assessment area and consider any conflicts of interest that may be as stated by ENAS Policy EP01. Upon agreement with ENAS PM, the assessor/expert shall acknowledge assessment assignment within 3 days of notice receipt from PM.
- d. By accepting ENAS assessment, the assessor/expert shall be committing to ENAS policy EP01.
- e. Assessor/Expert shall refer to ENAS website whenever they are allocated to an accreditation activity for updated information, requirements and media to prepare documented information.
- f. The responsibility for conducting the assessment shall remain with the appointed and confirmed lead assessor (LA) until assessment is completed.

#### 5.2.2 Assessment Planning and Preparation

- a. Communication for assessment arrangements is undertaken by ENAS PM with the CAB and not directly between the CAB and assessor or expert.

#### 5.2.3 Performing review of documented information

- a. On receipt of the assessment plan and related documentation from ENAS PM, assessors/experts are expected to review it applying a risk-based approach. The management system documentation shall be suitable to:
  - understand the applicant's operations and to prepare assessment activities;
  - prove the applicant meets and performs up to ENAS and accreditation scheme requirements.

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- b. It is the responsibility of the assessor and expert to liaise with ENAS if specific additional information is required with time in advance before assessment visit.
- c. A report on findings from the CAB document review shall be prepared by the assessment team before assessment visit and sent to the CAB by ENAS PM. Date(s) for on-site assessment visit may be conditioned by those findings whenever previous corrective action is required from the CAB.

#### 5.2.4 Assessment Visit

- a. Assessment visit shall be conducted according to the terms defined in document ACF 06-03, Contract between ENAS and Assessor/Expert, and policy EP01.
- b. Observers may accompany the assessment team with approvals from the LA and CAB, if required. LA will ensure observers shall not influence or interfere with the conduct of the assessment.
- f. Assessors and experts shall conduct the assessment visit for accreditation by covering the steps described next:

##### 5.2.4.1 Opening meeting

- a. Attended by the customer representative and members of the ENAS assessment team. The meeting is chaired by the LA. The length of these meetings varies depending on the size of the team and the issues to be discussed, but on average they last around 20-30 minutes.


Note: Prior to this meeting the assessment team may have had a catch up to discuss priorities or emerging issues that have occurred since the visit plan was issued.

- b. The role of the assessor or expert at the opening meeting is to introduce themselves to the CAB representatives, to brief them about assessment process, milestones throughout the accreditation cycle (e.g. time period between assessments), solve initial doubts and to obtain any clarification required to conduct the assessment (for example; which technical staff will be available during the visit, timings of planned breaks and who the assessor or expert needs to talk to about specific technical issues).

If the assessment is a surveillance before reassessment (second surveillance assessment within an accreditation cycle), the LA shall inform the CAB specifically that they should apply for renewal on ENAS system at least 4 months before expiry date.

##### 5.2.4.2 The Assessment

- a. It aims to determine competence and organization's conformity with the relevant ENAS requirements, national and international standard(s).
- b. Assessor/Expert should record factual observations in their own notes, draw their own conclusions and use their professional judgement to determine whether the activity was performed competently, is fit for purpose, and meets the required standards.
- c. Reports from assessor/expert shall contain sufficient details of why they do/do not consider the activity to have been competently performed or fit for purpose.

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- d. Timely completion of assessment activities is expected in accordance with the visit plan. Assessments should proceed ensuring continuous good communication between all parties, so that there are no surprises regarding conformity and competence for the organization at the final meeting.
- e. Assessor/Expert is expected to complete assessment forms during the course of the visit and not during the private meeting.
- f. Should be observed during the assessment that the system is not implemented in significant areas, or if it is other serious shortages that will make the assessment purposeless, the assessment may be interrupted. The organization shall be informed about the reason for this decision.

#### 5.2.4.3 The Assessment Report

- a. Only the template(s) which have been issued by ENAS specifically for each visit shall be used.
- b. ENAS system to sort findings allows findings to be raised in one of three categories as described in EG02.
- c. Where the assessment team cannot reach a conclusion on a finding and/or its category, the team shall refer back to ENAS program manager for clarification.
- d. The non-conformity report shall contain only factual observations about lack of compliance with a specific clause in the applicant's own procedures or in ENAS's requirements or the relevant clause in the Standard.
- e. The LA assisted by the assessment team shall collect all identified nonconformities prior to the final meeting.
- f. Comments in assessment reports such as "satisfactory", "good" or "poor" need substantiation or followed by evidence. Conclusions need to be drawn concerning technical competence and conformity with the related Standard. Technical assessors and experts need to provide the LA with the information necessary to determine conformity of both technical activities and the administration of the management system.
- g. Where the Assessment Report is not provided at the time of the assessment, TA/TE shall provide the report within 5 working to LA. LA shall prepare and submit to ENAS and CAB final report within 10 working days from the date of assessment.

#### 5.2.4.4 The Private Meeting

- a. Internal meeting among the assessment team, after they have finished their individual assessment tasks. Based on the assessor's impression and findings a report shall be worked out **including recommendation** to ENAS regarding the accreditation. For reporting, ENAS dedicated forms shall be used.
- b. The assessment team shall agree on effort required to review evidence submitted for closure of findings. The effort shall be in proportion to the expected level of evidence to be supplied; the final decision on effort required rests with the LA.

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- c. Transferring reports electronically is generally by agreement between the assessor or expert and LA but can be via encrypted memory stick or secure Wi-Fi, e-mail or Bluetooth applications. Any assessor or expert notes should be made available to the LA, and may be requested to supplement the reports and aid the decision-making process.

#### 5.2.4.5 The Closing Meeting

- a. To finish ENAS assessment. Chaired by the LA and attended by the CAB under assessment representatives and members of the ENAS assessment team. The purpose is to conclude the assessment, thank the CAB under assessment, provide a summary of areas of strength and weakness, a view on progression since the previous assessment (if applicable) and to agree the next steps. Any controversial findings and any issues regarding potential suspension must have been discussed in advance of the meeting.
- b. During the closing meeting the LA shall agree with the CAB about the time limit that shall be put into the NCR sheet.
- c. If a report on the outcome of an assessment needs to be changed or amended so that it differs from the outcome delivered at the close of the assessment, the LA shall prepare new report, with updated issue date, highlight the changes in the new version of the report with different font color and provide suitable explanation on the changes.


#### 5.2.5 Post Assessment Activities

- a. Each assessor/expert shall evaluate within 10 working days from dispatch actions submitted by the CAB to correct non-conformities raised by them.
- b. The assessor shall evaluate whether the improvement action evidence clears the findings raised (i.e. confirms conformity of activities with the standard in question), and also whether the description of improvement action taken meets the expectations of the assessor or expert when evidence has not been requested, and why. Concerns regarding validity or effectiveness of cause analysis itself may result in the need to seek clarification with the submitting organization via the relevant PM.
- c. Feedback needs to indicate if there are any changes to the recommendation for accreditation.
- d. If there are several cycles of evidence, submission and review, any changes to the extension or suspension shall be reiterated on the final feedback form to ensure that scopes of accreditation can be accurately updated by the PM.

#### 5.2.6 Health and Safety

- a. During the assessment, the assessor/expert is qualified to identify if there is any risk significant to require action to be taken. ENAS should be notified of the risk; however, the decision of whether to proceed remains within the assessment team.
- b. Assessors and experts are expected to use up-to-date Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), hold relevant safety certificates and training and cooperate where security checks or security clearance are a requisite.



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## **6. Other Types of Assessment**

### **6.1 Surveillance**

6.1.1 Assessment performed within the 3-year accreditation cycle to check if accredited CABs continue to meet the accreditation requirements. ENAS PM shall give information about specific areas that shall be evaluated if necessary.

6.1.2 Assessors shall refer to ENAS applicable procedure (ACP 15) on assessment sampling to define required activities to be covered during the assessment.

### **6.2 Extension of Scope**

6.2.1 If a CAB applies to add to or change any part of their accreditation scope, ENAS shall assess this using the extension to scope process.

6.2.2 Extensions to an organization's scope of accreditation can be assessed either alongside the annual assessment visit or as a separate assessment. ENAS does not normally accept application for extension that are requested in the opening meeting of an assessment. If this occurs the PM should be consulted.

6.2.3 When assessing an extension to scope it is only necessary to assess those parts of the organization's management system that are new or have changed.

### **6.3 Renewal and complete assessment**

6.3.1. Process finished at the latest 3 years after first time granting of accreditation, or after the last renewal. In principal the process will be as comprehensive as for the first-time accreditation.

6.3.2. Suspension of the accreditation shall be evaluated if non-conformities of category 1 have been found and/or if it is found a large number of nonconformities of category 2.


6.3.3 If the LA during surveillance or renewal visit recommends suspension of the whole or parts of the accreditation, this shall be reported to the CAB and be regarded as a warning about suspension.

6.3.4 If there is a serious issue, which the LA/TA/TE recommends that can affect the quality of results, then suspension can be given during surveillance/renewal.

### **6.4 Witnessed Assessments**

6.4.1 Assessment of CABs in areas related with inspection and certification to determine through observation the competence of the CAB's systems and processes including the allocation of a competent evaluation team, against the requirements of the applicable accreditation Standard.

6.4.2 ENAS assessment team shall, in no way, get involved in the evaluation being performed and must not discuss, disrupt or influence any aspects of the evaluation with the CAB or their

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client whilst the evaluation is progressing. All those aspects shall be made clear to the CAB team at a brief private meeting before starting the witnessed assessment.

6.4.3 Whenever possible, ENAS assessor shall get from the CAB team copies of documentation and their conclusion on areas evaluated once they have finished reviewing them.

6.4.4 ENAS assessor shall obtain agreement from the CAB as to the findings and what action they intend to take. However, ENAS assessor shall be mindful that the personnel present may not be empowered to agree the findings raised, in which case it will be the responsibility of ENAS PM to ensure that these are subsequently agreed with the CAB.

## **7. Invoicing**

7.1 CABs have to provide travelling arrangements, hotel accommodation for the assessment team in addition to assessment fees. The PM for that particular CAB will ensure this arrangement is done.

7.2 ENAS shall not assume responsibilities for costs incurred by Assessor/Expert with respect to insurance for travel, accident insurance and medical bills; compensation in the event of hospitalization, death, disability or illness of Assessor/Expert in connection with the services provided where such death, disability or illness is caused by the assessor/expert's negligence; loss or damage to personal properties; training and personal development, and other unforeseen expenditures.

7.3 ENAS shall pay remunerations as per established ENAS payment policy. Fees on account of assessment activity provided by Assessor/Expert on behalf of ENAS shall be payable once assessment process is completed (after accreditation decision has been made).

## **8. Training, Workshops and Maintaining Competence**

### **8.1 Initial Training and Authorization**


8.1.1 Prior to authorization to perform assessments unsupervised, a contracted assessor must first complete the requirements regarding records, training, observation during assessments and monitoring as per ENAS management system.

### **8.2 Continual Personal Development (CPD)**

8.2.1 Assessors/experts and experts are expected to conduct CPD as appropriate to their sector to maintain their competence to conduct the assessments for which they are contracted.

8.2.2 Details of any CPD conducted which is relevant to the assessor/expert skills and knowledge used for assessment shall be provided to ENAS by request to assist in continued authorization. CPD information will be requested annually by the ENAS TO, normally in January.

8.2.3 Assessors and experts are expected to attend assessor harmonization workshops (where training and communication on ENAS policies and requirements are provided). Where an assessor or expert does not keep up to date with Standard or ENAS process/policy changes this may lead to amend/termination of the contract with ENAS.

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### **8.3 ENAS Assessors/experts Harmonization Workshops**

8.3.1 To ensure harmonizing of performance and to review changes in the documentation and practice. Regular participation an obligation for being used as a ENAS-assessor.

8.3.2 Assessors/experts shall not be remunerated for participation in the assessor's days.

### **8.4 Assessment resources**

8.4.1 Assessors/Experts are expected to provide the tools (including copies of relevant conformity assessment standards, computer software and hardware) required to be able to efficiently and effectively conduct the assessments activities for which they are contracted. Assessors/Experts are expected have an email account which can be used for ENAS related work.

### **8.5 Competence Monitoring**

8.5.1 ENAS monitors the performance of assessors and experts regularly as per its management system procedure ACP06. A formal on-site monitoring of the assessor or expert's performance is conducted at least once every three years, and once a year formal evaluation of assessor reports is carried out.

### **8.6 Familiarity with ENAS/ILAC/IAF/APLAC/ARAC Policies**

8.6.1 ENAS assessors/experts should familiarize themselves with the requirements and policies of ENAS. The assessors/experts should also visit [www.enas.gov.ae](http://www.enas.gov.ae) frequently to know if any new policies have been introduced by ILAC/IAF/APLAC/ARAC regarding technical requirements.

## **9. Representing ENAS in other Forums**

9.1 ENAS may require contracted assessors/experts to sit on forums and committees that may be relevant to the work they conduct for ENAS. Assessors/experts and experts must not purport to represent ENAS or ENAS' views when attending such events. In these cases, briefings will be reported by assessor/expert. Reimbursement of fees and expenses for attendance at such activities will be agreed on a case by case basis.

## **10. Impartiality, Confidentiality and Information Security**


10.1 ENAS's assessors/experts are obliged to formalize ENAS contractual arrangements (ACF 06-03 and ACF 24-01 forms), as well as be strictly observant of ENAS Policy EP01.

10.2 ENAS's assessors/experts are obliged to strictly avoid consultancy to the CABs that they assess.

10.3 Assessors/experts must inform ENAS of their association with the CABs, which could affect impartiality.

## **11 Assessor's kit**

11.1 Relevant updated ENAS-documents, forms, etc. are distributed by use of ENAS's website or ENAS Technical Officer.

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## 12 References

- ISO/IEC 17011 Standard – Conformity assessment -- Requirements for accreditation bodies accrediting conformity assessment bodies.
- ENAS Management System rules and procedures.
- ACP 6 – Resource Requirement.
- Documents published by ENAS are available on Internet: [www.enas.gov.ae](http://www.enas.gov.ae)
- Documents published by ILAC are available on Internet: [www.ilac.org](http://www.ilac.org)
- Documents published by IAF are available on Internet: [www.iaf.nu](http://www.iaf.nu)
- Documents published by APLAC are available on Internet: [www.aplac.org](http://www.aplac.org)
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