



SNAS

SLOVENSKÁ NÁRODNÁ AKREDITAČNÁ SLUŽBA

METHODICAL GUIDELINE FOR ACCREDITATION

WITNESS ASSESSMENT OF INSPECTION BODIES

MSA–I/03

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1 INTRODUCTION

This methodological guideline defines the procedure for witness assessment of inspection bodies. The guideline is obligatory for SNAS, applicants for accreditation and accredited organizations.

2 ABBREVIATIONS USED

MSA	Methodical Guideline for Accreditation
SNAS	Slovak National Accreditation Service

3 RELATED DOCUMENTS

ISO/IEC 17020	Conformity assessment. Requirements for the operation of various types of bodies performing inspection
MSA – I/01	Scope and scope specification of accreditation of inspection bodies
MSA – I/02	Guideline for application of ISO/IEC 17020
MSA – 04	Procedure for the accreditation

4 WITNESS ASSESSMENT PROCEDURE

4.1 The witness assessment is a part of the accreditation process in inspection bodies. The aim of the witness assessment is the evaluation of compliance of documented procedures in practice and the assurance that the inspection results are reliable.

4.2 The content of the witness assessment is the witnessing of operational performance of the inspection field (sub-field) , which is declared in the scope of accreditation.

4.3 The scope and the character of the witness assessment shall be determined by the scope of accreditation, number and complexity of groups of the fields (sub-fields) of accreditation of inspection body. During the witness assessments the increased emphasis is put to those inspections that are more difficult and/or more serious in terms of their performance, safety, health or environmental protection.

4.4 When determining _____ of a witness assessment the following criteria are considered:

- scope of _____ accreditation
- required range of technical statements of inspectors
- total number of inspectors
- frequency of each type of inspection
- number of locations of the inspection body
- history of service performance during the accreditation cycle
- personnel certification or other confirmation of competence of inspectors
- training system of the inspection body
- effectiveness of internal monitoring of inspectors
- organizational stability and awareness of risks of activities of the inspection body
- other statutory requirements

4.5 The entire scope of accreditation is subject of witness assessments. The witness assessment is performed during the period of validity of accreditation, while the choice of assessing fields (sub-fields) of inspection is performed on the basis of sampling:

- a) accreditation - all fields (subfields) of inspection
- b) re-accreditation - all fields (subfields) of inspection except those, which were assessed by witness assessment (surveillances, extension of accreditation) during the accreditation cycle assessments and if deficiencies have not been identified
- c) extension of accreditation - all fields (subfields) of inspection which the extension is concerning of
- d) surveillance - relative number of fields (subfields) of inspection from their total number (defined in the surveillance card)

Note:

Relative number means equal distribution of the witness assessments fields (subfields) of inspection so that it cover the entire scope of accreditation during in one accreditation cycle. Accreditation cycle consists of surveillance and re-assessment. When is re-accreditation, can be assessed and those subject of inspection, have already been assessed in the surveillances and accreditation extension.

If the case, they are similar principles or inspection methods within the field of inspection, only one witness assessment may be made.

With a large number of inspection body sites and a large number of sub-fields, sampling procedures may be used based on the risk associated with the activities or sites.

4.6 Where an applicant or accredited body has more individual sites, witnessing of the inspection shall be based on sampling :

- a) accreditation - all sites and all fields (subfields) of inspection,
- b) re-accreditation – all fields (subfields) of inspections and all sites, that all sites and fields/subfields of inspection are assessed using sampling procedures and the risk associated with the activities or sites, except those that have been assessed during the surveillance and extensions of the accreditation during accreditation cycle and where no deficiencies have been identified. All requirements of ISO / IEC 17020 are assessed during re-accreditation.

c) extension of accreditation – all fields (subfields) of inspection covered extension and relevant sites,

d) surveillance - performed under surveillance card. Witnessing in the Surveillance Card is planned so as to be within the accreditation cycle assessed all items of inspection and all sites.

4.7 There are assessed all fields/subfields and all sites during initial accreditation, except specific sub-fields with the same principle or inspection methods, where only one witness assessment per these subfields may be performed.

4.8 During re-accreditation and surveillance, if are in the scope of accreditation in part field of inspection closer specified more subfields of inspections, one subfield is witnessing and other subfields are assessed expert interviews with inspectors and vertical audits of files. Based on previous assessments and the risk associated with activities or sites, SNAS may also witness a more of witness subfield assessments within a single field of inspection.

4.9 If there are more than one site for accreditation and extension of accreditation within one sub-field of inspection, the witness assessment may be carried out by inspector/s from one site and all other sites shall be assessed by interview of inspectors from those other sites.

4.10 During the witness assessment the assessment group, for example, pays attention on following:

- whether the inspector has all necessary and up-dated methods, procedures, forms
- whether the inspector performs the inspection impartially, non-discriminatory, without prejudice
- keeping documented methods and procedures
- records of inspector
- suitability of equipment used
- sample handling
- competence of inspector during evaluations of the findings
- elaboration of the report from inspection, etc.

4.11 If accredited CAB is not able to ensure for the purposes of witness assessment some sub-fields of inspection to demonstrate its actual performance, it is possible to witness performance of simulated activity. However, this has to be performed as real inspection on a particular object and at the particular customer, regardless that some activities and/or procedures in relation to the customer are not performed (e.g. order).

4.12 SNAS determines the inspector who will be assessed by witness assessment at inspection. The choice and representative number of inspectors to be witnessed depends on the demonstrated stability of the services of the inspection body. When deciding which inspector will be assessed, account will be taken of:

- a new inspector
- qualification and experience
-

- the frequency of inspections carried out

Note:

When selecting an inspector, SNAS decides according to the following rules:

- 1) problem inspectors of the sub-field;
- 2) new inspectors of the the sub-field;
- 3) witness non-assessed inspectors in the the sub-field;
- 4) inspectors less witnessed in the sub-field or less experienced in inspecting the sub-field

4.13 If the inspection body has a large number of inspectors, not all the inspectors have to be assessed by witness assessment. In such a case their competence is verified based on sampling by technical interview, which will be performed by assessment group. The interview can also be done in a group with a selected number of inspectors.

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In the case of finding out the deficiencies in the interview, doubts about the competence of the inspector or doubts about the established management system, the number of conducted interviews will be increased at least to one more inspector for the given field (sub-field) of inspection.

4.13 CAB is obliged to ensure the entry for SNAS assessors to the premises, where the witness assessment will be performed.
