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NAB-MALTA

TECHNICAL GUIDE

ATG15 - Performance of in-house calibrations Policy of the NAB-MALTA

Revision 0 February 2011

 NAB-MALTA		NAB-MALTA POLICY		ATG 15
Page No.	1	of	3	Performance of In-house Calibrations The Policy of the NAB-MALTA
Revision No	0			
Date	08-02-2011			

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 This technical policy statement outlines the requirements for conformity assessment bodies carrying out in-house calibrations.
- 1.2 This policy applies to laboratories and inspection bodies that are carrying out in-house calibrations in support of their measurement activities
- For their own use within their own facilities; or
 - As a facility carrying out calibration for other accredited sections within their own organisation that have the same senior management and management system.

2. RELATED DOCUMENTS


- 2.1 ISO17025 Cl. 5.6.2.

3. INTRODUCTION


- 3.1 It is recognised that conformity assessment bodies accredited for calibration, testing or inspection activities may choose to carry out some calibration activities in-house to support their measurement activities rather than seek the services of an external accredited laboratory.
- 3.2 It is essential that in-house calibration activities in support of accredited measurement activities are carried out competently in line with recognized international standards and provide traceability, with determined measurement uncertainty.
- 3.3 NAB-MALTA publication ATG11, *Policy on Measurement Traceability*, sets out the NAB-MALTA requirements for traceability of measurements.

4. NAB-MALTA POLICY

- 4.1 This policy applies to calibrations in support of measurements e.g. balance calibration, temperature calibrations but excludes activities that could be used as a verification check on instrument performance before use, such as the calibration of chromatographs etc.

 NAB-MALTA		NAB-MALTA POLICY		ATG 15			
				Page	2	of	3
Revision No.	0	Performance of In-House Calibrations The Policy of the NAB-MALTA					
Date Issued	08-02-2011						

- 4.2 Conformity Assessment Bodies carrying out in-house calibration are required to ensure that the traceability of their calibrations meets the requirements of ATG11 and the relevant requirements of ISO/IEC 17025.
- 4.3 In all cases Conformity Assessment Bodies need to ensure that the equipment used has a measurement uncertainty adequate for the required measurement.
- 4.4 For all instruments calibrated in-house the following must be in place:
- a) an appropriate environment for carrying out the calibration in relation to the expected metrological performances;
 - b) appropriately trained personnel to both carry out and check the calibrations;
 - c) reference standards, certified reference materials or reference measuring instruments that are traceable with appropriate measurement uncertainties. Reference standards, certified reference materials or reference measuring instruments are to be for exclusive use in in-house calibration and they have to be owned by of the conformity assessment body.
 - d) a documented validated procedure for each type of calibration, also including the evaluation of the results (even by using software);
 - e) an appropriate and validated means of recording and reporting the data and results of any calculations; and
 - f) a measurement uncertainty budget and procedure for calculating same (an uncertainty of measurement for the in-house calibrated equipment shall be calculated based on that uncertainty budget).
- 4.5 Conformity Assessment Bodies carrying out in-house calibrations in support of their accredited activities are required to maintain details of these calibrations. Conformity Assessment Bodies are required to:
- include in-house calibrations in their audit programme.
 - provide the NAB-MALTA with a list of instruments calibrated in-house.
 - provide the NAB-MALTA with a list of the reference standards and/or reference instruments used for in-house calibration.

 NAB-MALTA		NAB-MALTA POLICY		ATG 15			
				Page	3	of	3
Revision No.	0	Performance of In-House Calibrations The Policy of the NAB-MALTA					
Date Issued	08-02-2011						

4.5.1. The NAB-MALTA will use this information to ensure that the appropriate expertise is included in the assessment team to assess these activities.

4.6 Wherever possible the assessment of in-house calibrations will be covered as part of the traceability and calibration aspects within normal assessment/surveillance activities.

4.7 Where significant additional assessment time or additional assessors are required, there will be an additional cost associated with this activity.

4.8 Specialist calibration assessors will be used if the in-house calibration is outside the area of expertise of the assessment team already involved in the assessment of the accredited activities. The assessment procedures used will include document review and on-site witnessing as appropriate.

Note: On-site witnessing of in-house calibration activities can be expected at least at initial assessment and reassessment visits.

4.9 The ability to perform in-house calibrations will not be included in the published schedule of accreditation.

4.10 A Conformity Assessment Body may be required to participate in measurement audits for the in-house calibration activities if it is determined that:

- an assessment has identified concerns about the performance of, or deficiencies in, conducting in-house calibration; or
- the Conformity Assessment Body has identified nonconforming work in its accredited measurement activities (e.g. poor performance in a proficiency test) and it is reasonable to suspect that the in-house calibration may have contributed to the poor performance.

5) Further Information

5.1 Guidance documents on the application of ISO/IEC 17025 equipment calibration and traceability requirements to particular items of equipment and forms of measurement and on the evaluation of uncertainty of measurement are available from the EA website www.european-accreditation.org.

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