



**GUIDELINES FOR SHARING ASSESSMENT
PERSONNEL AMONG APLAC MEMBER
ACCREDITATION BODIES**

PURPOSE

A survey conducted in early 2007 showed that most APLAC members have a need to use assessors and technical experts from other economies. At its meeting in December of the same year, the Training Committee decided to draft this document to provide guidance on sharing of assessors and technical experts among member accreditation bodies.

AUTHORSHIP

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FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information about this document, contact the APLAC Secretariat at:

NATA
71-73 Flemington Road
North Melbourne VIC 3051
Australia
Tel: +61 3 9329 1633
Fax: +61 3 9326 5148
Email: aplac@nata.com.au
Website: www.aplac.org

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1. INTRODUCTION

Under certain circumstances, an accreditation body may have a need to use a foreign assessor or technical expert. Some examples are: when a local candidate having the required technical expertise is not available, when conflict of interest is perceived between the organisation to be assessed and the only suitable local assessment personnel, when it is necessary to harmonise local practice with international practice; when using foreign assessment personnel is desirable or required. Using foreign assessment personnel involves difficulties in identification of suitable candidates, and complicated logistics for engaging them.

This document provides broad guidance on how APLAC member accreditation bodies can assist one another in using foreign assessment personnel by sharing their own pools of assessors, technical experts and related information. It also explains what should be done by an accreditation body having a need to use foreign assessment personnel (requesting accreditation body) and by an accreditation body receiving such a request for assistance from another accreditation body (source accreditation body). The responsibility of both accreditation bodies and guidance on the release of information are also covered.

It is recognised that accreditation bodies may make their own agreements between one another and this document is only intended as guidance and is not mandatory in any manner.

- Note:
1. The sharing of assessment personnel among accreditation bodies within the same economy is not covered in this document.
 2. The assessment personnel to be shared may be engaged by the source accreditation body in any form, e.g. as full-time employees, part-time employees or subcontractors.

2. PROCEDURE

- 2.1 When an accreditation body has a need to use foreign assessment personnel, it should analyse the work to be carried out and determine the academic qualifications, experience, areas of expertise, and other qualities that a suitable candidate must possess. If necessary, it should also determine from which economy the candidate should come.
- 2.2 A suitable person from the requesting accreditation body should then invite a source accreditation body to introduce a suitable candidate in writing to its designated representative to the APLAC General Assembly, unless other prior arrangements already exist. The request should describe the details of the work to be carried out, including the duration of on-site time, the approximate date and place of doing the work, and detailed qualification requirements, such as the language the assessor should know. The requesting accreditation body should raise such a request to a source accreditation body well in advance, i.e. at least several months before the scheduled date of

work. Because complicated logistics could be involved, sufficient flexibility in the date should be allowed. The requesting accreditation body should also note that third party information, such as the identity of the organisation to be assessed, should only be provided to the source accreditation body after proper authorisation has been obtained.

- 2.3 Upon receiving a request to introduce assessment personnel, the source accreditation body should check whether it has a suitable candidate within its pool of assessors and technical experts. Where necessary, it should clarify the requirements with the requesting accreditation body. If a suitable candidate is found, it should contact the candidate to see whether (s)he is interested in carrying out the work. Upon his/her agreement, the source accreditation body should provide his/ her name, contact details and whether (s)he is an assessor or technical expert to the requesting accreditation body. The source accreditation body need not provide any other details of the candidate to the requesting accreditation body. If a suitable candidate is not available for whatever reason, the source accreditation body should reply to the requesting accreditation body accordingly. It is not necessary to give a reason. The source accreditation body assumes no responsibility for not nominating a candidate for whatever reason.
- 2.4 APLAC encourages its accreditation body members to assist one another but it is recognised that an accreditation body has complete freedom in determining whether to provide assistance to a requesting accreditation body. APLAC also respects the rights of an accreditation body in the deployment of its own pool of assessors and technical experts.
- 2.5 To reduce the potential workload on source accreditation bodies, requesting accreditation bodies should raise the request with one potential source accreditation body at a time. When a source accreditation body has replied that it cannot assist or when the candidate introduced by the source accreditation body is found not to be suitable, the requesting accreditation body may then invite another accreditation body to assist.

3 RESPONSIBILITY

- 3.1 When the requesting accreditation body has obtained the name of a suitable candidate, it should contact the candidate directly to confirm his/ her interest in the work, and to obtain his/her CV. It should also negotiate directly with the candidate on the terms and conditions for providing the service. Any remuneration or other payment should be paid or given by the requesting accreditation body directly to the candidate without involving the source accreditation body. The source accreditation body should not be involved in such negotiations

and is not a party to any agreement or contract between the candidate and the requesting accreditation body, unless the source accreditation body chooses to do so. The requesting accreditation body needs to inform the source accreditation body in writing whether the nominated candidate has been employed for the work but does not need to provide details of the terms and conditions for the provision of service, unless otherwise agreed between both parties.

- 3.2 The requesting accreditation body is solely responsible for ensuring that the work is carried out in accordance with its own requirements. For example, it should determine whether the candidate is suitable for the work to be carried out, and is acceptable to the organisation to be assessed. It should also appoint the candidate as an assessor or technical expert in accordance with its own requirements and procedures. Any potential conflict of interest between the candidate and the organisation to be assessed should also be handled in accordance with laid-down procedures. The requesting accreditation body should also determine whether the candidate requires training before (s)he can carry out the work, eg training in the assessment and reporting procedures, and provide the necessary training. If an interpreter is required for doing on-site assessments, or if translation of documents is required to enable the foreign assessor or technical expert to carry out the work, the requesting accreditation body should make the necessary arrangements. The requesting accreditation body is also responsible for all logistics involved in travel and accommodation, including any visa, where applicable, and insurance arrangements.
- 3.3 Foreign assessors or technical experts cannot be expected to be familiar with local conditions or the detailed accreditation criteria of the requesting accreditation body. In this case, it is recommended that the requesting accreditation body assign one of its lead assessors or staff members to lead the assessment or accompany the foreign assessor or technical expert during the performance of the work, and to provide advice as necessary.
- 3.4 The requesting accreditation body should also contact the foreign assessor or technical expert directly without involving the source accreditation body for any follow-up action, for example, clearing of non-conformities or any follow-up assessments.
- 3.5 The requesting accreditation body should appraise the performance of the foreign assessor or technical expert in accordance with its own procedures after the work has been completed. The outcome of the performance appraisal should not be released to the source accreditation body unless the source accreditation body has so requested it, and the assessor or technical expert has explicitly agreed to the provision of the information.

- 3.6 Recognising that the source accreditation body has priority in using its own assessors and technical experts, for any engagement of the same assessor/expert subsequent to the first one, the requesting accreditation body needs to contact the source accreditation body to seek its agreement before contacting the foreign assessor or technical expert directly. The requesting accreditation body and the source accreditation body may also agree on other arrangements for such subsequent engagements.
- 3.7 Unless otherwise stated in any agreement between the requesting and source accreditation bodies, the requesting accreditation body is fully responsible for the results of the work carried out by the foreign assessor or technical expert under its supervision, and for any liability arising from it. The source accreditation body is not in any way responsible for such results and is not liable for the suitability of the nominee to carry out such work.

4 RELEASE OF INFORMATION

- 4.1 The requesting accreditation body may release to third parties the fact that it has used foreign assessment personnel in its work. The information released should not state or imply that the source accreditation body is in any way involved in the work and should not name the source accreditation body unless prior agreement from the source accreditation body has been obtained. However, the fact that the assessor or technical expert to be used is from a foreign accreditation body may be released to the organisation to be assessed.
- 4.2 A source accreditation body should not release the identities of accreditation bodies that have requested it to introduce assessment personnel without obtaining prior agreement to do so from them.

5 DISPUTE RESOLUTION

- 5.1 In general, any dispute between foreign assessment personnel and the requesting accreditation body shall be settled between themselves without involving the source accreditation body. However, the requesting accreditation body and the source accreditation body may agree on other arrangements.
- 5.2 Any dispute arising from a requesting accreditation body and a source accreditation body relating to sharing of assessment personnel shall be settled amicably between themselves without involving APLAC.