



**SNAS**

SLOVENSKÁ NÁRODNÁ AKREDITAČNÁ SLUŽBA

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**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 of object, 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 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 the appropriate level of the witness assessment the following criteria are considered:

- scope of required accreditation
- required range of technical statements of inspectors
- total number of inspectors
- frequency of each types 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 of the entire scope of accreditation is performed during the period of validity of accreditation, while the choice of assessing objects of inspection is performed on the basis of sampling:

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

Note:

*Relative number means equal distribution of the witness assessments objects 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.*

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

- a) accreditation - all items of inspections at all sites,
- b) re-accreditation – all items of inspections at all sites except those, , which were assessed by witness assessment during the accreditation cycle assessments and if serious deficiencies have not been identified,
- c) extension of accreditation – all items of inspection covered extension at all 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 at all individual sites.

**4.7** If are in the scope of accreditation in part Kind of inspection and scope of requirements closer specified more items of inspections, one item is witnessing and other items are assessed expert interviews with inspectors and vertical audits of files.

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

- competence of inspector
- authority of inspector
- 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 in practice
- records of inspector
- suitability of equipment used

- sample handling
- evaluations of the findings by inspector
- elaboration of the report from inspection, etc.

**4.9** The findings from the witness assessment are recording into the form “Other findings” or directly into “Summary report”.

**4.10** If accredited inspection body is not able to ensure for the purposes of witness assessment some object 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).

**4.11** 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
- physical capacity of staff
- risks and complexity of the inspection activity
- place of workplace (location)
- legal requirements
- object of inspection
- the frequency of inspections carried out
- level of need to carry out professional judgments

**4.12** 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 representative number of inspectors.

Note:

*The interview is preferentially performed with an inspector, who is not witnessed. 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 object of inspection.*

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

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