IAAC Guide for maintaining Metrological Traceability during the COVID-19 pandemic

CLASSIFICATION

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IAAC Guide for maintaining metrological traceability during the COVID-19 pandemic.

1. Objective:

Provide a guide for Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs) to ensure appropriate considerations are made when **establishing or extending** the calibration intervals of their measurement and test equipment due to temporary closures of National Metrology Institutes (NMI), calibration laboratories, reference material producers or other sources of metrological traceability as a result of the by the COVID-19 pandemic.

2. Scope:

This document applies to the conformity assessment activities carried out by any CAB that is required to have metrological traceability of their measurements. This includes: Calibration Laboratories, Testing Laboratories, Medical Laboratories, Inspection Bodies, Reference Materials Producers, Proficiency Testing Providers, Certification Bodies, and any other CAB schemes specific to each country that include the requirement to ensure the traceability of their measurements.

3. Introduction:

IAAC held a forum for the exchange of experiences due to the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak in the region. The forum included participation of Accreditation Bodies (AB), stakeholders and members of the Inter-American Metrology System (SIM). Concerns were raised about maintaining metrological traceability of measurements due to temporary closures of National Metrology Institutes (NMIs), calibration laboratories, reference material producers or other sources of metrological traceability. The concerns raised at this forum dictated that IAAC create a guide to assist its member bodies and stakeholders in ensuring metrological traceability during this pandemic.

4. Requirements:

If temporary closures impact the CABs' ability to obtain their normally scheduled service/products to maintain metrological traceability, CABs should take measures to evaluate and adjust (as necessary and appropriate) calibration intervals of the CAB's measurement instruments. An evaluation should include a risk analysis to evaluate the impact that an adjustment to calibrations intervals would have on the conformity assessment activities provided by the CAB (calibration/test results, inspections, etc.).

Extensions of calibration intervals may require additional Quality Control measures to be put in place to monitor the performance of the measuring instruments during the period that the interval has been extended. These additional measures may impact the risk and that

impact should be factored into the risk analysis. The results of this additional monitoring should be recorded to justify the extension of the calibration interval and to demonstrate that metrological traceability has been maintained.

The evaluation and adjustment of calibration intervals should be conducted per the guidance in ILAC / OIML *Guidelines for determining calibration intervals for measuring instruments*, **ILAC-G24 / OIML D 10.** This evaluation and the conclusion that supports the adjustment of the calibration interval should be recorded and should include the risk analysis performed.

Note: If regulation or law requires specific calibration intervals then you may not be able to adjust those intervals without special permission from the applicable regulator or governmental authority.

- **References:**

ISO/IEC 17025:2017: *General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories*

ISO 15189:2012: *Medical Laboratories – Requirements for Quality and Competence*

ISO/IEC 17020:2012: *Conformity Assessment – Requirements for the Operations of Various Types of Bodies Performing Inspection*

ISO/IEC 17043:2010: *Conformity Assessment – General Requirements for Proficiency Testing*

ISO 17034:2016: *General Requirements for the Competence of Reference Material Producers*

ISO/IEC 17065:2012: *Conformity Assessment – Requirements for Bodies Certifying Products, Processes and Services*

ILAC-G24:2007 - OIML D 10:2007*: Guidelines for determining calibration intervals for measuring instruments*