ACCREDITATION RULE 19
Issue Date: 2018/07/09
Implementation Date: 2018/07/09
Supersedes: New

SUBJECT: Remote Assessments

APPLIES TO: ANAB-Accredited and Applicant Certification and Verification Bodies

PREFACE
ANAB uses remote assessment techniques to supplement the traditional on-site assessment activities when appropriate. This Accreditation Rule establishes the minimum requirements to allow use of remote assessment techniques.

Note: The terms certification body (CB) and verification body (VB) as used by ANAB and in other relevant documents, including ISO standards, shall be considered equivalent, such that requirements for CBs apply equally for VBs.

DEFINITIONS
Remote assessment: Facilitation of assessment of a certification body (CB) from a location other than the physical location of the CB.
Virtual site: Online environment allowing persons from different physical locations to execute processes.
Electronic documented information: All documented information used in demonstrating conformity to the relevant standard and/or requirements maintained and available via electronic means from any site or location, regardless of where the work is completed.

ACCREDITATION RULE
1. Reference Documents (current versions unless specified)
   1.1. ISO/IEC 17011, Conformity assessment – Requirements for accreditation bodies accrediting conformity assessment bodies
   1.2. MA 5000, ANAB Management Systems Accreditation Manual, and applicable ANAB Accreditation Rules
   1.3. IAF Informative Document 12, Principles on Remote Assessment (guidance only)
2. Remote assessment techniques can be used at ANAB’s discretion including for but not limited to the following circumstances:
   2.1. Office assessment when an ANAB-accredited CB is seeking accreditation for a new program.
   2.2. Witnessing a CB conducting a remote audit.
   2.3. Office assessment of another location of a CB.
   2.4. Complaint investigation.
   2.5. Verification of corrective action implementation.
   2.6. When timing of the assessment does not support the travel logistics required to conduct the assessment on site.
   2.7. ANAB has determined the activity has a low risk level.
2.8. An activity planned for the on-site assessment could not be completed and extending the on-site assessment is not the best resolution.

2.9. Unavoidable changes in scheduling for the ANAB assessment team and/or the CB (e.g., illness, travel challenges or restrictions).

2.10. An on-site assessment is not required for the relevant standard or scheme.

2.11. ANAB is confident that the assessment objectives can be achieved via remote assessment activities.

2.12. Special situations for which ANAB management grants approval.

3. Remote techniques cannot be used for the following circumstances:

3.1. CB’s first application to ANAB for initial accreditation.

3.2. Objectives of the assessment could not be achieved via a remote assessment.

3.3. CB has changed location and/or address.

3.4. Assessing the impact of significant personnel changes at the CB.

3.5. Remote assessments are not allowed for the standard or scheme.

3.6. Another AB is conducting an assessment on ANAB’s behalf.

4. Eligibility Requirements to Support Remote Assessment

4.1. The CB maintains readily accessible electronic documented information.

4.2. The CB has demonstrated conformity through ongoing ANAB on-site assessments.

4.3. The CB has virtual meeting capabilities, including audio (and video when used), aptitude, and resources (on-site IT, personnel, and tools).

4.4. The CB and the ANAB assessment team can competently support the remote assessment (e.g., competent to navigate an online meeting, remote personnel are competent to participate).

4.5. The CB can manage confidentiality and impartiality during the remote assessment [but note it may not be appropriate for some standards (e.g., ISMS)].

4.6. The CB has history of demonstrated performance, including efficient support of ANAB assessment processes and post-assessment activities.

4.7. The CB and the ANAB assessment team can support any differences in time zones.

4.8. The CB and the ANAB assessment team can support the language of the assessment (may include use of translator).

4.9. The CB and ANAB have a contingency plan for completing the assessment if the virtual meeting system does not support the assessment activities.

4.10. Remote assessment techniques are not prohibited by the relevant standard or scheme.

5. Remote Assessment Process

5.1. When ANAB has determined that a remote assessment activity can be completed, the remote assessment process follows the on-site assessment process, including pre-assessment and planning, conduct of the assessment, recommendation process, and post-assessment activities (e.g., reporting, NCR management). The records required for the remote assessment are the same as records required when the assessment is conducted on site.

5.2. If at any time during the remote assessment activity ANAB’s assessment team determines the assessment objectives cannot be met, the remote assessment activity will be terminated and an on-site assessment scheduled.