SIM Quality System Task Force: Rules of Order

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1. Introduction

The International Committee for Weights and Measures (CIPM) Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA) requires that signatory National Metrology Institutes (NMIs) and Designated Institutes (DIs) establish and maintain a quality system (QS), also referred to in this document as a quality management system (QMS). Unlike with the review of the calibration and measurement capabilities (CMCs), the MRA is not explicit on how signatory NMIs review, gain confidence and accept each other's quality management systems. It is understood that a QMS is required to ensure that an NMI or DI is able to provide reliable services consistent with their stated CMCs.

With regard to the establishment of a QMS, the text of the CIPM MRA provides guidance in establishing confidence in measurements in section 7.3.

It is the responsibility of SIM to review the QMSs operated by its member NMIs and DIs and to report on their acceptance to the Joint Committee of the Regional Metrology Organizations and the BIPM (JCRB). The JCRB in turn uses this process to help build confidence among the Regional Metrology Organizations (RMOs) by establishing transparent QMS review guidelines, which are mutually acceptable among all RMOs.

2. SIM Quality System Task Force General

The SIM General Assembly established the SIM Quality System Task Force (QSTF) to meet the requirement that SIM review all member quality systems by passing the following Council Resolution in 2005:

> **Resolution CR04/05**: A task force will be set up to review QS implementations in SIM members for the purpose of the CIPM MRA, which will be formed by CIPM-MRA signatories. The chairperson of the QSTF will be appointed by the Council.

The SIM bylaws state the responsibility and membership of the SIM QSTF.

- The SIM QSTF is responsible for reviewing and approving the quality management system(s) of any SIM member or associate upon request, even non-signatories of the MRA;
- A meeting of the QSTF to review the QMS of NMIs will be held at least once a year;

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- The meeting will be open to all SIM members and observers from other RMOs, and will provide the opportunity for discussion and comments;
- SIM QSTF decisions will be made by the representatives of the SIM signatories to the CIPM MRA;
- The QSTF will assess whether or not the quality management system of each NMI conforms with the requirements of the CIPM MRA;
- The SIM QSTF approval is required prior to submission of CMC claims to the JCRB.

3. Quality System Review Guidelines

The SIM QSTF must satisfy itself that, through its review process, the quality management system operated by the NMI or DI is effective, conforms with the requirements of the CIPM MRA and the applicable requirements of ISO/IEC 17025 and/or ISO Guide 34, or subsequent versions, as appropriate.

The SIM QSTF may request additional on-site peer review be undertaken, in order that the NMI or DI may demonstrate confidence in their ability to deliver their claimed CMCs.

Quality systems that have been approved must be fully re-evaluated and re-approved within five years. In the event a system is not re-approved, the SIM QSTF Chair will inform the Executive Secretary of the JCRB that the relevant CMCs are no longer supported by an approved quality management system.

4. SIM QSTF Reports to the JCRB

All RMOs are required to report on their quality management system review process and the status of such reviews annually. The SIM report on quality management systems to the JCRB aims to provide information on the status of QSTF approval of the quality management system for each NMI and DI within SIM (including CMCs covered). The summary will highlight any changes affecting the delivery of CMCs.

The Chair of the QSTF is responsible for reporting the approval status of the quality systems supporting existing and proposed CMCs to the Executive Secretary of the JCRB and the SIM Technical Committee Chair.

The Chair of the QSTF serves as one of the SIM delegates to the JCRB.

5. Rules of Procedure

5.1. Members

The SIM QSTF is composed of one voting delegate from each SIM member NMI, which is also a signatory to the CIPM MRA. Each delegate represents his/her NMI as well as any designated institutes associated with the NMI (quality management systems of designated institutes must be presented to the QSTF by the designated institute). Under circumstances where a country does not have a formal NMI, the organization responsible for the country's metrology system may appoint that country's official representative to the QSTF.

5.2. Chair

The Chair of the SIM QSTF is recommended by the members of the QSTF and officially approved by the SIM Council. The Chair is responsible for the operation of the SIM QSTF and is a non-voting member except in the rare instance where the breaking of a tie vote is required.

5.3. Attendees

The SIM QSTF meetings are generally open to observers from all SIM members, representatives from other RMOs, and representatives from other metrology related organizations. On occasion, the QSTF Chair may declare part of the meeting *closed* allowing QSTF delegates to discuss internal QSTF matters and formulate policy*.*

All QSTF meetings are to be held in-person, remote attendance is not permitted.

5.4. Confidentiality

Information distributed to the QSTF members in support of QMS reviews is considered confidential.

5.5. Resolutions

A quorum of 50% of the QSTF members is required to conduct business. Resolutions are made by a simple majority of the members voting either for or against a resolution. All QSTF members in attendance can vote on all motions excluding the member representing a country or economy seeking approval. The minutes of the QSTF are official records of the approval and will be made

available to the representatives of SIM in a timely fashion, and archived for at least ten years following approval.

An NMI or DI can appeal a negative decision of the QSTF regarding their QMS presentation if they received support amounting to at least 35% of the votes cast. The appeal goes to the SIM President with the QSTF Chair representing the decisions made by the QSTF members. The SIM President will first hear the results of the SIM review, deliberation, and voting from the QSTF Chair, and then will hear the opposing perspective from the NMI representative. The SIM President will render a decision within seven days.

5.6. Updating SIM 09

This document is regularly reviewed and periodically updated by the QSTF members to reflect the changing requirements on the SIM QSTF as a result of SIM Council resolutions, JCRB decisions and other factors. Changes are approved by the SIM Council and presented to the General Assembly.