**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS REGARDING THE TRANSITION FROM MTL TO CTF**

**1. What is meant by that “all tests in the scope”?**

**Is my interpretation correct if I “translate” as follows:**

**“when selecting the tests to be witnessed, the NCB should ensure that each test listed in the CTF scope should be witnessed at least once over a period of 36 months and if a test in the CTF scope has not been witnessed over that period, the NCB shall carry out additional on-site witness testing or perform comparison testing.”**

Answer:

This interpretation is correct.

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**2. Does an exception apply to tests that have not been conducted at all (neither with nor without testing)?**

Answer:

There are currently no exceptions.

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**3. With reference to clause 12 of OD-2048 concerning the maintenance of recognition for CTF Stages 2, 3 and 4.**

**If the criteria set out in clause 12 are fulfilled for only part of the scope of the CTF, is it possible to reclassify the CTF to a lower stage for the tests in question and to maintain the stage for the scope where the criteria for maintaining recognition are fulfilled?**

Answer:

For the sake of clarity, reproducibility and efficient CB report handling by NCB B, it should be avoided that one and the same CTF is registered and working in different Stages for different tests of the same standard.

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**4. Is the “closest CTF” referred to in D2, Annex D of OD-2048 CTF1 for TMP and CTF4 for SMT?**

Answer:

Yes, although SMT can be either Stage 3 or Stage 4, depending on the current mode of operation of that MTL.

Current TMP à CTF Stage 1

Current WMT à CTF Stage 2

Current SMT à CTF Stage 3 or CTF Stage 4

Current RMT à CTF Stage 4 (there currently are no RMT laboratories)

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**5. A TMP lab should reach stage CTF1 or CTF2 before progressing to higher stages.**

Answer:

According to 11.3, progression to Stage 3 is only possible after successful operation at Stage 2.

According to 11.4, progression to Stage 4 is only possible after successful operation at Stage 3.

Direct progression from Stage 1 to Stages 3 or 4 is not possible.

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**6. Once a TMP lab has applied for CTF, the NCB performs a CTF stage 1 qualification assessment**

**The NCB can, at the same time, assess additionally whether the criteria listed in cl 11.2 of OD-2048 are met so that the lab would be eligible for CTF2**

**The NCB then performs an IA and fills the IAR.**

**The following steps covered by D.2 in Annex D of OD-2048.**

Answer:

These statements are correct.

**7. To which activities does “annual summary report of CTF activities” refer to (in clause 17.3 of OD-2048)?**

**Shall the report include all types of CTF assessments:**

**-       IA,**

**-       Annual assessment (re-validation of IA results),**

**-       follow-up assessments,**

**-       on-going visits,**

**-       re-assessments**

**or is the report limited to part of these activities?**

Answer:

The summary report to the IECEE shall contain all types of activities carried out and reported by use of the form sheet in Annex C.2 of OD-2048.

The type of activity is to be listed in the 2nd column (middle column) of the 3rd table of this Annex.

Details of the quality processes reviewed/audited shall be given in the 3rd column.

The summary report is not limited to part of the activities listed in the inquiry.

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**8. For CTF, is the normal assessment routine as follows:**

**For stage 1 and 2: Initial assessment, re-validation yearly.**

**For stages 3 and 4: Initial assessment, assessment yearly (and possible follow-up assessments), full re-assessment every third year.**

**I am asking because in OD-2048 cl 10.1 (CTF Stages 1 and 2) there is no mention of a full re-assessment of CTF.**

**However, according to OD-2048 cl 10.2, a full re-assessment must be carried out every three years for stages 3 and 4.**

Answer:

For stages 1 and 2, an initial assessment is needed, using the report form OD-2025-A.

After that, if the CTF is used by the NCB during the course of a year, no full re-assessment is needed.

However, in case there are no testing activities over the course of a year, then a full assessment, using report form OD-2025-A, is required.

For stages 3 and 4, an initial assessment is needed, using the report form OD-2025-B.

After that, annual assessments are required.

A full re-assessment must be carried out every three years.

In case of stage 4, an initial assessment by the IECEE is required, and thereafter, a re-assessment by IECEE every 3 years.

Required assessments by the NCB can be combined with the required IECEE assessments.

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**9. For CTF stage 1 and stage 2, what is meant by “re-validation of the initial assessment”?**

Answer:

Re-validation" means assessment of those parameters and conditions that may vary over time (i.e. since the last assessment), such as equipment calibration, environmental conditions or - in case of stage 2 - the qualification of CTF's own staff.

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**10. In the CTF programme, when a CTF operating at stage 2 applies for upgrade to stage 3,**

**can the NCB proceed as follows to conduct the Initial Assessment (see clauses 11.3 and 10.2 of OD-2048):**

**Evaluate the elements of an “initial Assessment” using the form OD-2025-B:**

**- For the elements which are common to both OD-2025-A and OD-2025-B, re-validate the results of the latest IAR (which was based on OD-2025-A)**

**- For the elements that are specific to OD-2025-B and were not covered by earlier assessment, conduct an assessment ?**

Answer:

This could be done, however, at the end of the day, there has to be a OD-2025-B completely filled in for Stage 3.

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**11. Are there any conditions when doing so ?**

Answer:

In case information which is covered by an earlier assesssment report (OD-2025-A) is used within the new OD-2025-B,

a comment should be made that the respective information is based on re-validation rather than assessment.

Apart from that, the progression conditions from Stage 2 to Stage 3 are listed in clause 11.3:

 - the CTF can at least be maintained in Stage 2

 - Successful completion of 5 complete test programs at Stage 2 or

 has successfully maintained Stage 2 status for a minimum of two years, prior to a recommendation being made.

 - recommendation is made by qualified staff of NCB, CBTL or LTR

 - participation in PTP is effective

 - it has been qualified as per sub-clause 10.2

 - final decision is made by the NCB based on the evidence provided

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**12. When a CTF accepted at stage 1 applies for progression to stage 2, is it possible to make use of the already existing IAR (issued when granting stage 1)?**

Answer: In principle, yes

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**13. In other words, can the NCB/CBTL use the “stage 1 IAR”, revalidate results and complete the gap by assessing the missing elements which were not covered during the Stage 1 IAR?**

Answer: Yes

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**14. Are there conditions under which the elements assessed in the IAR for stage 1 should be assessed anew (date for instance)?**

Answer: Yes, that would be "Re-validation" which means assessment of those parameters and conditions that may vary over time (i.e. since the last assessment), such as equipment calibration, environmental conditions or - in case of stage 2 - the qualification of CTF's own staff.