



IHAF/RD-MRA 001:2017

IHAF Multi-Lateral Recognition Arrangement (MRA)

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IHAF General Assembly

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Halal Multi-Lateral Recognition Arrangement (MRA) has been established in accordance with the International Halal Accreditation Forum (IHAF) Bylaw and specifies member obligations that form the basis for mutual recognition and support. Compliance with this MRA will provide a demonstration of compliance with the IHAF MRA requirements.

2 AMENDMENT

- 2.1 Any amendment of the text of this MRA shall be approved by the IHAF General Assembly.

3 ARRANGEMENT

- 3.1 The parties to this MRA are the accreditation bodies on whose behalf the MRA has been signed.

4 STRUCTURE OF THE IHAF MRA

- 4.1 The IHAF MRA is structured to enable linking with the IAF MLA and ILAC MRA structure using five (5) levels.

IHAF MLA Structure							
IAF/ILAC Levels	Level 1	ISO/IEC 17011					
	Level 2	Product Certification	Inspection	Management Certification	System	Testing	Person
	Level 3	ISO/IEC 17065	ISO/IEC17020	ISO/IEC 17021-1	ISO/IEC17025	ISO/IEC 17024	
Schemes	Level 4	Halal endorsed Schemes	Halal Schemes	Halal Schemes	Halal Schemes	Halal Schemes	
Standards	Level 5	GSO 2055-1 GSO 993					

Note: Schemes may have additional requirements for Levels 1, 2 and 3

- Level 1 ISO/IEC 17011 specifies the criteria for an accreditation body. Level 1 may also include additional requirements for the application of ISO/IEC 17011 to a specific type of accreditation activity or endorsed scheme.
- Level 2 Is a **description** of the type of accreditation activity for example 'Accreditation of Management Systems Certification Bodies'.
- Level 3 Identifies the generic accreditation criteria (i.e. criteria for CABs) applicable to a 'framework' Multi-Lateral Recognition Arrangement (MRA) i.e. main-scope of MRA, where CABs accredited by signatory ABs to such MRA are recognized as being **equally reliable**.
- Level 4 Identifies the accreditation criteria, in addition to the Level 3 generic accreditation criteria, which is applicable to a sub-scope of a 'framework' MRA (main-scope of MRA), where CABs accredited by signatory ABs to such sub-scope are recognized as being **equally reliable**.
- Level 5 identifies the conformity assessment standards (e.g. certification standard) applicable to a sub-scope of a 'framework' MRA (main-scope of MRA), which enable the conformity assessment results issued by CABs accredited by signatory ABs to such sub-scope are recognized as being **equivalent**.

5 PRINCIPLE OBLIGATIONS

The main obligations for IHAF MRA membership are as follows:

- 5.1 Abide by the International Halal Accreditation Forum (IHAF) Bylaw, rules and procedures developed by IHAF and maintain conformance with the list of normative documents contained in the endorsed schemes.
- 5.2 Ensure that it meets the relevant requirements for Accreditation bodies in the endorsed scheme., and have carried out and granted at least one accreditation covering both Requirements of Technical Nature (RTN) and Requirements of Halal Nature (RHN) in each endorsed scheme under the MRA for which it applies.
- 5.3 Specify the references it uses for the development of any guides or interpretations to (RHN) of the Halal schemes.

Note: ABs can cover the obligations in 5.2 and 5.3 by an agreement with an IHAF Recognized Halal AB to cover the (RHN) requirements.
- 5.4 Ensure that all accredited conformity assessment bodies conform to the relevant normative documents contained in the endorsed schemes.

- 5.5 Have demonstrated experience in operating an accreditation body, and have access to technical expertise in all aspects of its accreditation activities.
- 5.6 Promote the acceptance and equivalence of accredited conformity assessment certificates issued with the endorsement of a signatory within the scope of this IHAF MRA.
- 5.7 Have ongoing processes for actively promoting the MRA with major stakeholders.
- 5.8 Promote the world-wide acceptance and equivalence of accreditations granted by signatories to the IAF MLA and ILAC MRA.
- 5.9 Contribute actively to the work of the IHAF MRA Committee and co-operate with other accreditation bodies so that the IHAF MRA may be extended.
- 5.10 Respond positively to requests from the IHAF MRA Committee for the provision of suitable peer evaluators for the peer evaluation of IHAF MRA signatory members and applicants.
 - 5.10.1 The IHAF MRA Committee is responsible for ensuring that all accreditation bodies contribute equitably to peer evaluation teams.
 - 5.10.2 If an accreditation body is unable to provide a peer evaluator from its internal resources, it shall accept responsibility for contracting and paying for a sub-contract peer evaluator to perform the evaluation on its behalf.
 - 5.10.3 The IHAF MRA Committee shall maintain a list of suitably qualified sub-contract peer evaluators for this purpose.
 - 5.10.4 During the peer evaluation process, Refusal to respond positively to an IHAF MRA Committee request for corrective actions may be found to be grounds for suspension from the MRA.
- 5.11 Investigate all complaints initiated by a participating body resulting from certificates of conformity issued by the bodies it has accredited within its accreditation program.
- 5.12 Notify all other participating bodies as soon as possible of any significant changes that have occurred or will occur in its status, in the operational practices of its system or in its accreditation programs.
- 5.13 Participate actively in the meetings of the IHAF's committees, sub-committees and working groups, as appropriate.
- 5.14 Use all information in a confidential and professional manner.

- 5.15 If, in accordance with the relevant rules and procedures, it is agreed that an additional accreditation body that operates a system may participate in the MRA, an MRA Signature Sheet F45:2017 shall be signed by the new accreditation body and duly authorized by the IHAF Chair, or in the absence of the IHAF chair, the IHAF Vice Chair.
- 5.16 The new signatory shall be added to the General Letter Advising MRA Signatories (IHAF-xxxxx). The same procedure shall be followed if it is agreed that a participant to the MRA may extend its accreditation programs.
- 5.17 Pay IHAF membership fees and other expenses agreed to by the General assembly in a timely manner including reimbursement of peer evaluation expenses incurred by peer evaluation team members.
- 5.18 It is recognized and accepted by each of the signatories that this Arrangement does not create any rights, liabilities or obligations that would have binding effect in domestic or international law. This Arrangement by itself does not provide any recognition or accreditation under any law or regulation in the economy of any signatory. However, the signatories commit to promote to their governments the use of this Arrangement in support of recognition arrangements in the Halal regulated sector.

6 BALLOTING OF IHAF DOCUMENTS

- 6.1 IHAF Secretariat will not seek endorsement of an IHAF General document or IHAF MRA document without first gaining the support of the IHAF Board of Directors (BoD) or the IHAF MRA Committee respectively for the relevant document.
- 6.2 Members are to return all ballots in a timely manner. Members risk suspension if they miss more than 66% of ballots in a year.

7 BALLOTING OF IAF and/or ILAC DOCUMENTS

- 7.1 Members will be advised if the IHAF BoD, IHAF MRA Committee or IHAF Technical Committee recommends voting in a particular way on an IAF and/or ILAC document. When such a situation arises, members are encouraged to consider submitting ballots in support of the advice received.

8 MEMBERS WISHING TO WITHDRAW FROM THE IHAF MRA

- 8.1 If a participating body wishes to withdraw from this MRA, that body shall notify the Chair of the MRA Committee in writing through the IHAF Secretariat not later than three months in advance of its intention to withdraw.
- 8.2 Upon withdrawal of a body, the body's MRA Signature Sheet F45:2017 shall be withdrawn.

9 IHAF ENDORSED NORMATIVE DOCUMENTS

- 9.1 Appendix A identifies the normative documents that shall be used in the performance of accreditation. IHAF normative documents consist of the normative documents listed in the schemes endorsed by the IHAF MRA committee.
- 9.2 All IHAF members are required to adopt all of the normative documents applicable to their scope of activities.

Appendix A

List of IHAF Approved Normative Documents

Level 1 –Criteria for an AB

IHAF MLA requirements for an accreditation body (AB)

IHAF-MRA-001 IHAF Multi-Lateral Recognition Arrangement (MLA)

Generic criteria for an AB

ISO/IEC 17011:2004	Conformity assessment - General requirements for accreditation bodies accrediting conformity assessment bodies.
ILAC/IAF criteria	- Applicable ILAC and IAF Mandatory document (A series, MD docs,) - Applicable ILAC and IAF Resolutions

Level 2 - Description of the scope of accreditation

Accreditation of Halal Certification Bodies

Level 3 - Scope specific criteria for a Halal CB

ISO/IEC 17065: 2012	Conformity assessment -- Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services
ISO/IEC 17021-1: 2015	Conformity assessment - Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems – Part 1: Requirements
ISO/IEC TS 17021-3: 2013	Conformity assessment – Competence Requirements for auditing and certification of Quality Management Systems (valid until 31 March 2019)
ISO/IEC 17021-3: 2017	Conformity assessment – Competence Requirements for auditing and certification of Quality Management Systems
ISO/TS 22003: 2013	Food safety management system – Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of food safety management systems

Level 4 - Scheme specific conformity assessment standards

UAE Scheme

UAE.S 2055- 3: 2016	Halal products - Part three: General Requirements for halal accreditation bodies accrediting halal certification bodies
UAE.S GSO 2055- 1: 2015	HALAL FOOD - Part 1: General Requirements
UAE 2055-2:2016	Halal products — Part two: General Requirements for Halal Certification Bodies
UAE.S 2055- 4: 2014	Halal Products- Part 4: Requirements for Cosmetics and Personal care
UAE.S GSO 2469: 2015	Halal foods - Management system requirements for warehousing and related activities
UAE.S GSO 2470: 2015	Halal foods - Management system requirements for retailing
UAE.S GSO 2468: 2015	Halal foods - Management system requirements for transportation of goods and/or cargo chain services