

## FAQ on the Extended Surveillance Initiative

### Who is eligible?

All CABs are eligible. It is, however subjected to whether there is high risk especially in regulated areas where the confidence in the conformity assessment (CA) outcomes may be compromised. As such, medical testing laboratories, medical imaging facilities and certification bodies are exempted from this initiative for now.

The CAB will need to have first completed at least 1 full accreditation cycle, i.e. accredited for 4 years. SAC will take into consideration the current performance of the CABs as well as their past performance.

### When will this Initiative be rolled out?

SAC has rolled out this initiative from 1 April 2020 for the SINGLAS scheme (except for medical testing laboratories and medical imaging facilities) in the first phase. The second phase for Inspection Bodies was launched on 1 July 2021. The initiative would be extended to Proficiency Testing Providers on 1 January 2022.

### What are the benefits?

CABs that have been qualified and approved by the Review Committee will have 2 surveillance assessments instead of 3 surveillance assessments within the 4-year accreditation cycle. Please also note that the surveillance interval of 1.5 years is a recommendation. SAC still reserves the right to bring forward the surveillance assessments if there are lapses found.

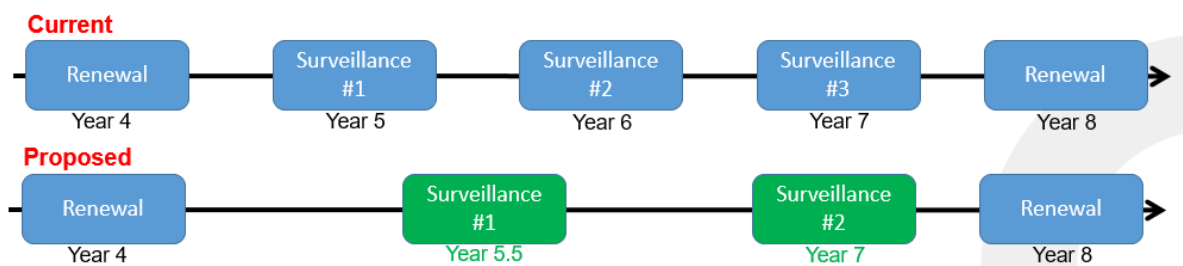


Figure 1

### Case Study (CAB with small scope)

Before	Renewal	S#1	S#2	S#3	Total
Assessment man-day fees*	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$12,000 over 4 years
After	Renewal	S#1	S#2	S#3	Total

Assessment fees*	\$3,000 + \$1,000 (additional day catered for TL)	\$3,000	\$3,000	X	\$10,000 over 4 years (Savings of \$2,000)
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\*based on 1 x Team Leader and 2 x Technical Assessor over 1 day. Excludes document review fees.

### Case Study (CAB with large scope)

Before	Renewal	S#1	S#2	S#3	Total
Assessment man-day fees*	\$8,000	\$8,000	\$8,000	\$8,000	\$32,000 over 4 years
After	Renewal	S#1	S#2	S#3	Total
Assessment fees*	\$8,000 + \$1,000 (additional day catered for TL)	\$8,000	\$8,000	X	\$25,000 over 4 years (Savings of \$7,000)

\*based on 1 x Team Leader and 3 x Technical Assessor over 2 day. Excludes document review fees.

### How can I apply?

*This is an automatic opt-in initiative. During the renewal year, your Account Manager will notify you of your eligibility to join the initiative, depending on your CAB's track record. If you do not wish to be considered for this initiative, please inform your Account Manager. The Account Manager will determine if the CAB is eligible based on the pre-screening acceptance criteria. If criteria is met, the appointed Team Leader will follow up on the qualification as part of the on-site assessment. More evidence will be sampled by the Team Leader during the on-site assessment for SAC Review Committee to make the final decision whether the surveillance can be extended.*

### When can I be assessed?

*Typically, at the renewal assessment upon completion of a 4-year accreditation cycle, i.e., Year 4, 8, 12, and so on. If granted, two surveillance assessments will be conducted as illustrated in Figure 1. If not granted, it is the discretion of the CAB to try again at the subsequent surveillance, i.e., S1. This initiative will not be assessed during S2 and S3 of the accreditation cycle.*

### How will the assessments be conducted?

*This will be done during the usual SAC renewal assessments. To facilitate the first qualification, the depth and scope of the assessment will be increased and sampling of records will be based on the past four years.*

### What is the criteria to be eligible for this extended surveillance initiative?

*SAC would expect the CAB to have consistently performed well in both QMS and technical aspects and possess a good attitude towards improving its own system and a robust risk analysis.*

*There should be no outstanding payments owed to SAC, adherence to the proper use of SAC Mark and timely submission of corrective actions (30 days).*

*The company should also not have any valid / legitimate complaints or blacklisted by any government agency in past 4 years. They should not be previously suspended or served warning letter by SAC/ESG in last 4 years.*

*In addition, only CABs which have undergone at least one accreditation cycle (i.e., 4 years) will be eligible.*

### **What happens if I qualify but fail to meet the criteria in future?**

*The CAB would be removed from the Initiative.*

*If the qualified CAB fails to meet the criteria at the subsequent assessment, the frequency of surveillance may be reverted to annual (1-year cycle). The Account Manager may also schedule for the next surveillance assessment earlier for additional monitoring.*

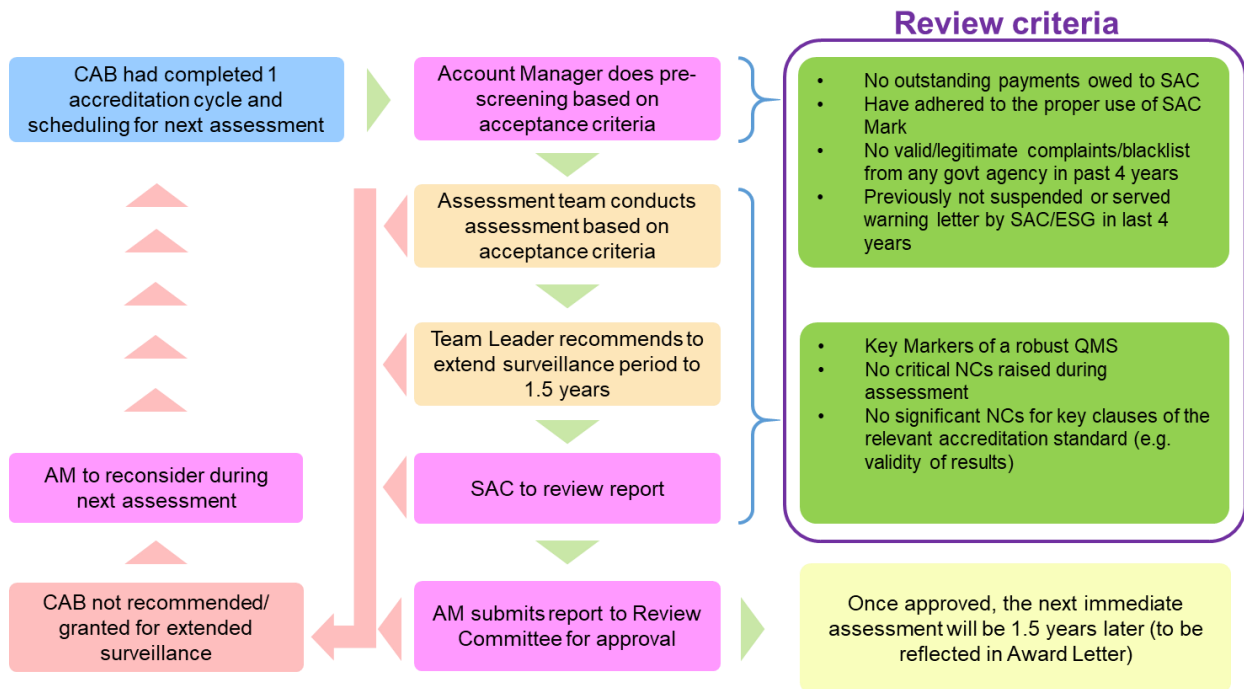
*If there are severe lapses found in the CAB, e.g., critical non-conformities issued during assessments, legitimate complaints by regulators or the public, the CAB will also revert to the SAC's routine of annual surveillances, and/or be subjected to the usual SAC terms and conditions.*

### **How long does this Initiative last?**

*If the CAB has no major findings in the routine assessments, it will continue to enjoy the privilege of this initiative for future accreditation cycles.*

*However, it is reiterated that this privilege of being in the extended surveillance initiative for the entire accreditation cycle is not guaranteed. As explained in the FAQ, SAC has in place provisions to ask for more frequent assessments of CABs should they no longer meet the extended surveillance initiative criteria.*

## What is the process of qualification?



## What are the Key Markers of a Robust QMS?

These are the markers which the Team Leader will assess the CAB on to determine if they qualify for the Initiative. This list is non-exhaustive. While it is not necessary to achieve all the items listed, the CAB should try to achieve at least one item in each category (identified by the various coloured boxes)

At the subsequent assessments, the Team leader will assess if there are recurrence of significant non-conformities for key clauses in the requirements.

### Evidence of effective communication of policies

<p><b>Continuous Improvement</b></p> <p>KPIs for the improvements, feedback and preventive actions</p> <p>No. of Staff Trainings, participation in developing standards</p> <p>Continuous monitoring and competency analysis</p> <p>Review of work processes to increase productivity.</p> <p>Staff Suggestion Scheme</p> <p>Good implementation of risk management and proper analysis performed to address the risks</p> <p>Efforts to minimize risk</p>	<p><b>Effective management meeting</b></p> <p>Action items followed up timely</p> <p>New ideas for improvements</p> <p>Thorough review of audit findings</p> <p>Other meetings / practices (i.e. Kaizen meetings, Six sigma)</p> <p>Note: Not limited to ISO 17025/20</p>	<p><b>Good internal audit system</b></p> <p>Quality of internal audit comments</p> <p>Thoroughness of root cause analysis done</p> <p>All elements of the system addressed</p>
	<p><b>Good track record</b></p> <p>No recurrence of Significant NCs during the last accreditation cycle.</p> <p>No critical NCs for key clauses of the relevant accreditation standard.</p> <p>Total number of NCs a reasonable amount relative to scope of accreditation.</p>	<p><b>Technical Competency</b></p> <p>Sufficient competent personnel</p> <p>Accuracy and validation of results</p> <p>Well established metrological traceability</p> <p>Equipment Management</p>

### **What is the cost of application?**

*There is no application fee for this Initiative. As the assessment is conducted during a regular renewal assessment, there will not be a separate assessment for this. On the first year of application, an increase check of 4 years record will be conducted to assess compliance to the Key Markers. Additional man-days may be allocated for Team Leader to complete this on top of the regular assessment scope. This will be charged according to the man-day rate stated in the Fee Schedules for the respective schemes (SAC-SINGLAS-003, IB-02 etc.)*

**For more enquiries, you may wish to email to [sac@enterprisesg.gov.sg](mailto:sac@enterprisesg.gov.sg) or speak to your SAC Account Manager.**