



SADC Technical Regulations Liaison Committee (SADCTRLC)

Lilongwe, Malawi

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SADC SQAM MOU

- The Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) Memorandum of Understanding on Standardisation, Quality Assurance, Accreditation and Metrology (SQAM MoU) was signed by SADC Member States in 2000. The SADC SQAM MoU provided for five (5) structures to facilitate the implementation of SADC Trade Protocol with regards to Standards, Technical Regulations and Conformity Assessment issues and these are;
- SADC Expert Group on Standardization, Quality Assurance, Accreditation and Metrology (SQAMEG),
- SADC Cooperation in Legal Metrology (SADCMEL),
- SADC Cooperation in Measurement and Traceability (SADCMET),
- SADC Cooperation in Standardization (SADCSTAN), and
- SADC Cooperation in Accreditation (SADCA).

SADC TBT Annex

- The SADC SQAM MoU was superseded by the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Annex to the SADC Protocol on Trade based on which two (2) other Committees; the SADC Technical Regulations Liaison Committee (SADCTRLC) and the SADC Technical Barriers to Trade Stakeholder Committee (SADCTBT SC) have been established.

SADC Technical Regulations Liaison Committee

- The SADC Technical Regulations Liaison Committee (SADCTRLC), has been established to promote and facilitate implementation of the SADC Technical Regulation Framework.

Why was a SADC Technical Regulations Liaison Committee (SADCTRLC) established?

- SADC countries want to use technical regulations to facilitate SADC trade through the implementation of common and harmonized technical regulations.
- In this regard, SADC Ministers of Trade and Industry adopted the SADC Technical Regulation Framework as enshrined in the TBT Annex to the SADC Protocol on Trade.

SADC Technical Regulation Framework

Objective

- The objective of the Framework is to identify, prevent and eliminate unnecessary Technical Barriers to Trade (TBTs) amongst the Member States and between SADC and other Regional and International Trading Blocks through harmonized standards, technical regulations and conformity assessment procedures in order to facilitate and increase trade in goods and services. This includes:
 - The use of consultation, participation and exchange of information processes when technical regulations are developed, amended and implemented;
 - The appropriate use of common performance based standards based on international standards rather than prescriptive standards as a basis for technical regulations;
 - The withdrawal of a conflicting national standard once the text of a regional standard has been developed and approved in accordance with the agreed SADCSTAN procedures;
 - The relevant use of impact and risk assessment to inform technical regulatory decisions;
 - The use of appropriate international measures to promote the acceptance of the conformity assessment results among Member States;
 - The review, update and modification of technical regulations to meet changing needs; and
 - The co-ordination amongst various institutions that are part of the technical regulation framework.

Overall Aims of the SADCTRLC

- Preparing recommendations regarding SADC Technical Regulation policy issues relating to the TBT Annex;
- Developing and making available guidelines and other tools for the national implementation of the SADC Technical Regulation Framework in the Member States; and
- Providing a forum for the identification of common technical regulations to be implemented in the Region
- Ensuring that the functions are pursued in accordance with the aims and objectives of the TBT Annex.

Functions of the SADC Technical Regulation Liaison Committee

- Develop mechanisms to facilitate the incorporation of harmonized standards in technical regulations;
- Request the SQAM Cooperation Structures to develop appropriate standards and conformity assessment procedures for use in the regulatory domain;
- Monitor and review the implementation of the SADC technical regulation framework and the other obligations in terms of the TBT Annex by the SADC Member States;
- Develop a common SADC position regarding WTO TBT Agreement issues for eventual use by Member State delegations at the WTO TBT Technical Committee; and
- Be involved in mediation and conciliation in respect of technical regulations, if required, before Article 32 of the Trade Protocol is invoked.

National implementation

- Member States need to establish within 2 years of adoption of the Annex a function within government which will oversee the implementation of the Annex at national level for all future technical regulation work.
- The objectives and functions of a national Interdepartmental TBT Committee may include:
 - To review the implementation of the SADC TBT Annex at national level
 - To developed national positions for the various SADC TBT Annex structures
 - To influence the work of SADC TBT structures

Tools available

- The SADCTRLC is important because it links the work on standards, accreditation and metrology with SADC regional integration in terms of technical regulations.
- The aim is to ensure that the other committees that are responsible for standardisation develop appropriate standards and conformity assessment procedures that respond to the needs of the SADCTRLC.
- That accredited conformity assessment services are available to support SADC regional trade.