

## **Rules for accredited conformity assessment bodies on the use of the accreditation certificate, the accreditation symbol of the Deutsche Akkreditierungsstelle GmbH as well as other references to the accreditation**

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### **Scope:**

This rule contains requirements for the use of the accreditation certificate, the national accreditation symbol of the Deutsche Akkreditierungsstelle GmbH (DAkkS) as well as other references made by the conformity assessment body (CAB) to their accreditation. It applies mandatory for all accredited CABs. It comprises the demands of national legislation as well as international coordinated documents from EA, ILAC and IAF.

**Date of the confirmation by the accreditation advisory board: 12.04.2016**

Substantive changes in comparison to the previous issue of this rule are marked with a line on the right side or highlighted with a **yellow** background.

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## 1 Purpose/ Scope

This rule contains requirements for the use of the accreditation certificate, the national accreditation symbol of the Deutsche Akkreditierungsstelle GmbH (DAkKS) as well as other references made by the conformity assessment body (CAB) to their accreditation. It applies mandatory for all accredited CABs. It comprises the demands of national legislation as well as international coordinated documents from EA, ILAC and IAF.

## 2 Terms / Definitions

<b>National accreditation symbol (symbol)</b>	Mark that is issued by the DAkKS and used by accredited conformity assessment bodies in order to identify their accreditation status. The accreditation symbol of the DAkKS is specified in the ordinance on the accreditation symbol (SymbolVO).
<b>Combined symbol</b>	Mark that is issued by the DAkKS and consists of the symbol and the IAF- respectively ILAC-mark and reveals the status of the DAkKS as a signatory of the multilateral recognition arrangements.
<b>Accreditation body logo (DAkKS mark)</b>	Logo used by the DAkKS for its own identification. <i>Note: The logo of the DAkKS is registered at the German Patent and Trademark Office (DPMA).</i>

## 3 Description

### 3.1 Introduction

Accreditation supplies the formal confirmation that a CAB<sup>1</sup> has the competence to implement specific conformity assessment tasks. Users of services<sup>2</sup> of accredited bodies should be able to trust in the results<sup>3</sup> of these bodies. On the basis of the multilateral European and international recognition arrangements the results of accredited bodies enjoy international recognition. The trust in results of

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<sup>1</sup> As conformity assessment bodies count: testing laboratories, calibration laboratories, medical laboratories, inspection bodies, certification bodies, verification- / validation bodies, proficiency testing providers, reference material producers...

<sup>2</sup> Within this rule with „services of accredited bodies“ only services are meant that fall within the scope of the current accreditation.

<sup>3</sup> Results of accredited bodies may be: Test reports, calibration certificate, certificates, inspection reports, evaluations, diagnostic findings, ...

accredited bodies is consequently a cornerstone for the warranty of the free movement of goods in Europe and worldwide.

Results of accredited bodies are especially then faithful, when in the respective report is marked, that the results are in accordance with all relevant accreditation requirements. The labelling within the report may be indicated by a reference to the existing accreditation or the application of the symbol. The CAB confirms herewith, that the results were issued in accordance with all relevant accreditation requirements. The following defined requirements for use of the symbol apply analogously for the use of a text reference to the accreditation.

It is the policy of the DAkKS to encourage the use of the symbol by the accredited bodies. The DAkKS firmly recommends to accredited bodies/ applicants to mark the accreditation status in their reports towards their customers.

If an accredited CAB issues results which give no hint on the accreditation neither the conformity with the respective accreditation requirements according to the basic standards (DIN EN ISO/IEC 17000 ff., DIN EN ISO 15189, ...) nor the compliance with other requirements can be expected. This will also apply if the body disposes of an accreditation within the scope which is being reported.

For indication of the international recognition of reports the accredited body may apply the symbol in combination with the IAF- or ILAC-symbol. The specific conditions for using of these combined symbols are part of this rule.

For the reduction of trade barriers and promotion of the acceptance and equivalence of services provided by accredited bodies the DAkKS supports the existing multilateral arrangements of EA, ILAC and IAF. It encourages the use of the combined symbols and thereby the acceptance of reports of accredited bodies in Europe and in the world which dispose on their part of an accreditation by a signatory of the multilateral arrangement of EA, ILAC and IAF.

## **3.2 General rules on the use of the accreditation certificate**

### **3.2.1 Regulatory field**

The accreditation certificate marked with the Federal Eagle and the logo of the DAkKS is part of the official notice of accreditation; the certificate is used by the conformity assessment bodies as a reference to their accreditation by the DAkKS (according to the EU Regulation No. 765/2008 in connection with the AkkStelleG). It is thus the formal accreditation document according to Section 7.9.4 of EN ISO/IEC 17011.

By submitting the notice of accreditation along with the accreditation certificate, the conformity assessment body is approved to be competent for performing tasks in the specified scope of accreditation based on the stated standard from the standards series for conformity assessment bodies.

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They do not represent any registration in terms of a notification, approval or recognition as defined by legislation.

The accreditation certificate itself consists of a double-sided cover sheet and the Annex.

An accredited conformity assessment body may indicate to its accreditation status using the front of the cover page of the certificate which bears the Federal Eagle, the logo of the DAkKS, and the registration number. This permission expires immediately with the cancellation of the accreditation.

Users of the services provided by accredited bodies may check the status of an accreditation in the [DAkKS-database of the accredited bodies](#) . There the current scope of accreditation is listed in the respective annex of the accreditation certificate.

### 3.2.2 Non regulatory field (accreditations outside the EEA)

The accreditation certificate marked only with the logo of the DAkKS, without the Federal Eagle, can be used by the accredited conformity assessment bodies that are established outside the EEA as a reference to their accreditation by the DAkKS and thus as a formal accreditation document according to Section 7.9.4 of EN ISO/IEC 17011. It is delivered along with a covering letter out of which further rights and duties may arise.

Note: A notice of accreditation is not issued as these accreditation activities of the DAkKS are neither covered by the EC Regulation No. 765/2008, nor by the Act on Accreditation (AkkStelleG) or by the Ordinance on Authorisation of Accreditation Service, and therefore are non-public authority activities.

The DAkKS is not allowed to use the Federal Eagle on accreditation certificates they issue for non-public authority activities.

The rules referred to in 3.2.1 on how to use the certificate by accredited conformity assessment bodies apply correspondingly.

## 3.3 General rules on the use of the symbol

The permission for the use of the symbol follows on application of the CAB. The written application may be submitted informal or in the context of a requested initial accreditation, reaccreditation or modification/extension of an accreditation with the application forms on the DAkKS website.

### 3.3.1 Preconditions for the use of the symbol by accredited bodies

To be entitled to give a reference to the accreditation or to use the symbol, an accredited body must

- be in possession of a valid accreditation;
- dispose of an approval of the DAkKS for the specific use;

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- observe the requirements according to the mandatory rules of the DAkKS and EA, ILAC, IAF (if applicable).

The symbol consists of according to §1 of the SymbolVO and from the Deutschen Patent and Markenamt (DPMA) protected sign of the DAkKS and of the individual registry number of the respective CAB. It is provided by the DAkKS in the electronic form and may only be used in this depiction.

The accredited CAB has to use the symbol in the way it is defined in the SymbolVO. The design and the use of the symbol of the DAkKS are basically regulated in the SymbolVO.

The accredited body shall document their procedures how the accreditation certificate, the symbol and other references to their accreditation are used in a suitable manner. These procedures shall refer to the fulfilment of the requirements of this rule and shall not contradict to these requirements.

For the use on reports or other documents appropriate samples need to be provided that have to be handled by the accredited body according to their document control procedures.

Before the application of the symbol for a specific intended use, it is necessary to provide a sample for review and release to the responsible customer manager of the DAkKS.

The accredited CAB is responsible for the correct use of the symbol according to the defined conditions within this rule.

### 3.3.2 Reproduction of the symbol, background design and protection area

Regarding the reproduction of the symbol the following conditions apply:

- the symbol (see image) may be only illustrated on a white background;
- At least one unit white space (12 pt in square) may remain around the symbol. The protection area is integrated in the provided files of the symbol, with the result that on positioning of the files in other layouts the correct protection area automatically arises;
- The symbol including the protection area may be scaled (enlarged or downscaled) while retaining of the aspect ratio;
- The symbol may be only applied in the determined design (form, font, positioning of the registration number and proportions). An editing of the provided files with image editing programs to modify the determined design is prohibited;
- The symbol may not exceed the size of the respective corporate logo of the accredited CAB;
- The symbol must appear separately, in other words it may be not be integrated in the corporate mark of the accredited CAB;

- The symbol may be applied as a combined symbol together with the ILAC- or IAF-symbol (see also section 3.6);
- The symbol/ combined symbol is provided electronically to the accredited CAB as colour version and also with graded shades of grey;
- Embosser, relief stamp or normal stamp versions of the DAkkS symbol may be only apply by the DAkkS in the relevant colours, shades of grey or in black and white.



Registrierungs-Logo mit Schutzfläche (Originalgröße: 100 %)

### 3.3.3 Use of the symbol and text reference to accreditation

According to § 6 AkkStelleG in connection with § 4 section 1 sentence 1 of the SymbolVO accredited CABs may apply the symbol on request in

- test reports,
- calibration certificates,
- inspection reports (including expertises) and/or
- certificates

to indicate their accreditation status.

An exceeding use of the symbol may be allowed on request by the DAkkS, as far these not damage the reputation of the accreditation body. This may be about the following:

- Reports of CABs which are not issued in the form of test reports, calibration certificates, inspections reports or certificates (e.g. reports of providers of proficiency tests, producer of reference materials, verification bodies, etc.);
- Business letters of the CAB;
- Tenders for the service of conformity assessments;

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- Advertising materials;
- Website.

Instead of the symbol or additionally to the symbol the accredited CAB may apply a text reference to the existing accreditation on their documents. In the case that a text reference is used instead of the symbol, it must contain the same information which is displayed by the symbol. The text reference shall not mislead as to the scope of accreditation or to the body that holds the accreditation.

A text reference should read as follows:

***„Accredited ...[e.g. calibration laboratory] by DAKKS according to ... [EN ISO/IEC 17025]  
The accreditation is valid only for the scope listed in the annex of the accreditation certificate [reg-  
istration number].“***

Accredited CABs outside of the EEA (non-regulated field) are equally allowed to use the symbol. The basis for the use is provided by the closed contract about the accreditation between DAkKS and the applicant and a valid accreditation certificate.

#### 3.3.4 Reference to the status of DAkKS as signatory of the multilateral arrangements of EA, ILAC and IAF

In reports of accredited bodies additionally to the symbol or text reference to the accreditation may be referred to the status of the DAkKS as signatory of the multilateral arrangement of the EA, ILAC and IAF. The text reference should read as follows:

***„The Deutsche Akkreditierungsstelle GmbH is signatory of the multilateral arrangements of EA,  
ILAC and IAF for mutual recognition.“***

#### 3.3.5 Multiple accreditations

Accredited conformity assessment bodies holding multiple accreditations or several partial accreditation certificates may have the possibility to list several registration numbers one below the other. Image files with several registration numbers are also provided by the DAkKS.

#### 3.3.6 Use on reports of accredited bodies

The use of the symbol on reports of accredited bodies is the significant purpose of the symbol. The use of the symbol for indication of the results of accredited bodies is explicitly requested by the DAkKS. The symbol shows the reader of these reports that the results are provided by capable bodies and with due regard to the requirements of fundamental standards and that the results are trustful.

To justify this trust high care on using the symbol by the accredited body is necessary. The issuing CAB is not allowed to keep the reader of reports in the dark or deceive about the scope and holder of

the existing accreditation. The CAB is under the duty towards their customers to present absolutely transparent in the reports about what is covered by the accreditation and what is not covered.

Reports containing partially accredited and not accredited results may be marked with the symbol on condition that the reader is able to recognize clearly by respective and decidedly indication which results fall within the scope of accreditation and which do not. In this context general information to the scope of accreditation (annex of the accreditation certificate) is not sufficient.

Reports containing results of other bodies beside the results of the issuing body may be marked with the symbol on condition that the reader is able to recognize clearly by respective and decidedly indication which results were produced by the issuing accredited body.

**Reports of accredited bodies which only contain results which do not fall within their accreditation may contain neither the symbol nor any other reference to the status as accredited body.**

If an accredited body places an order of a customer completely with one or more subcontractors it is also not allowed to use the symbol.

The symbol may not be used in a way, that it validates, implies or indicates that DAkKS is responsibility about the validity of test, calibration or inspection results or about the decision for certification, which are subject to the accreditation.

Furthermore no use is allowed, that validates, implies or indicates that DAkKS approves a calibrated device, a test or inspection item, a product, a management system or a person or that a product, a management system or a person has been approved by DAkKS.

### 3.3.7 Use on tenders

The use of the symbol on tenders of accredited bodies is subject to the conditions which apply for the use on reports.

### 3.3.8 Services of the CAB outside the accredited scope and their labeling

An accredited CAB ist free to provide conformity assessment services to the market for which it is not accredited. It shall not give the impression that it is accredited for this activity (e. g. by using the symbol or a text reference).

It is in the interest of DAkKS that an accredited CAB provides the services for which it is accredited only under their accreditation to the market.

But a CAB cannot be prohibited to provide these services also outside to their accreditation.

If a CAB does so, it must be absolutely transparent to the customer, if the services are provided under accreditation or not. This is ensured for example, if neither the report nor any accompanying letter includes the symbol or a text reference to accreditation.

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The DAkKS recommends in such a case to inform the customer actively about the accreditation status of the provided services, to exclude any misunderstanding on the part of the customer and to create maximum transparency.

The verification of this issue is part of the assessment by DAkKS.

### 3.3.9 Use on other documents and promotional media

Basically the use of the symbol on promotional medias or other documents may be allowed when the documents or promotional medias refer at least partially to a service, which is covered by the scope of accreditation.

The symbol may not – like a corporate logo – be used in a form which conduces exclusively as identification of the body by which no connection to the services within the accredited scope is cognizable.

The use of the symbol on training certificates which are issued by the accredited body for training courses (internal or external) to the participants is not allowed because it can convey the impression that the training course is subject of the scope of accreditation.

The use of the symbol on internal QM-documents of the CAB as quality manual, work instructions, SOP`s, procedure instructions, forms, etc. is not allowed, because this creates the impression that the QM-documents would be authorized, released or approved by DAkKS.

#### Letterheads

The symbol may be used on general letterheads of the accredited body to show that the body is accredited. It is recommended to provide the symbol with a text reference to the scope of accreditation and e.g. contains following statements:

***„The accreditation is valid for the scope determined in the annex of the accreditation certificate D-PL-99999-01-00“***

As long as the content of a business letter refers to specific services as a CAB (e.g. tenders, contracts, ...) the body is obligated to declare fully transparent the status and the scope of accreditation towards the recipient of the letter. Thereto it has to be obviously cognizable which services are covered by the accreditation and which not.

Letters to be printed on letterheads bearing the symbol and going with reports or certificates containing no accredited results shall include a disclaimer stating for instance:

***„Attached reports are not covered by accreditation“***

## Business cards and E-Mail signatures

The use of the symbol or text reference to accreditation on business cards or E-Mail signatures by the accredited conformity assessment body's staff is not permitted.

## Other uses

The use of the symbol for other not already mentioned application purposes may be approved by the DAkKS as long as the fundamental requirements of the SymbolVO and this rule are observed. In any case an informal approval of the DAkKS for the specific use has to be obtained by the accredited conformity assessment body.

### **3.4 Right to use in the case of revocation, termination or restriction of the accreditation**

If an accreditation is revoked, temporarily suspended or the validity of accreditation is expired the right for using the symbol immediately terminates. Any reference to the status of accreditation is prohibited after the expiration of validity of the accreditation. Existing references to the accreditation (website, letterheads, publications, promotion material) needs to be promptly retracted. A re-application of the symbol needs the reinstatement of the accreditation and the reapproval by the DAkKS for using the symbol.

If the accreditation is restricted the approval for using the symbol applies only for the scope which is not involved in the restriction.

### **3.5 Prohibition on the use for not accredited areas of activity**

Accreditation shall not be stated or implied or reference shall not be made to accreditation for non-accredited activities.

In particular:

- An accredited conformity assessment body which holds accreditation for only parts of its activities may use the symbol or make reference to its accreditation provided there is no confusion with regard to the accredited scope.
- Whenever a conformity assessment body exercises its activities at several sites, among which at least one has not been granted accreditation, only those accredited sites shall make reference to accreditation or use the symbol. When a common document is issued, the accreditation status – even of the not accredited sites needs to be fully transparent declared;

If the accredited body is part of a bigger organization, there shall not be any confusion as to which part of the organization holds accreditation. Communication shall not imply that other parts of the organization or the organization as a whole is been accredited. When a common

document is issued, the accreditation status of the parts of the organization needs to be fully transparent declared.

### **3.6 Use of the combined IAF- respectively ILAC-DAkkS-symbol**

The DAkkS is signatory of the multilateral arrangements of the EA, ILAC and IAF. Results of accredited bodies enjoy a status of international acceptance.

The DAkkS has signed license agreements with IAF and ILAC on usage and sublicensing the IAF and ILAC symbols. Accredited bodies may use costless the combined IAF-DAkkS or ILAC-DAkkS symbol on request and after signing a respective sublicense agreement.

Certification bodies may apply for using the combined IAF-DAkkS symbol, laboratories and inspection bodies for using the combined ILAC-DAkkS symbol.

By the use of the combined IAF- or ILAC-DAkkS symbol on reports the issuing body indicates that the results are subject to the multilateral recognition arrangements and as a consequence internationally accepted. Likewise reports, which only contain the DAkkS symbol, are internationally accepted. By the use of the combined symbol is merely adverted to the status of the DAkkS as a signatory to the multilateral recognition arrangements. For the reader of a report it is consequently easier to recognize the status.

Regarding the application rules for the combined symbols the same conditions and requirements apply as for the use of the DAkkS symbol.

For using the IAF-DAkkS symbol on certificates specific conditions apply (see IAF document IAF ML 2).

The use of the combined IAF-DAkkS symbol on accredited certificates is admissible only if the scope of the certificate contains a recognized IAF-MLA sub-scope – such as ISO 9001 or ISO 14001 for the certification of management systems. The current published information on the IAF website is valid. In this case the combined IAF-DAkkS symbol confirms the international equivalence and recognition of the certificate. The use of the DAkkS symbol is unrestrictedly possible on every certificate as long as a respective accreditation for this purpose exists.

Before using the combined IAF- or ILAC-DAkkS symbol for a specifically intended use it needs a sample which has to be provided to the customer manager of the DAkkS for the purpose of review and approval.

### **3.7 Rules for the use related to other symbols**

A combination with other marks (e.g. from standard setting bodies, scheme owners, ...) is possible based on the specific requirements from the relevant regulations, provided they do not contradict the overall requirements set out in the SymbolVO. Background design and protection area around the DAkkS symbol shall not be violated.

If an accredited CAB is certificated, the mark of the certification body or another reference to the certification may not be used on reports of the CAB which contain the Symbol or another reference to accreditation.

A use with other symbols requires a separate approval by the DAkkS.

### **3.8 Use of the symbol by users of services of accredited bodies**

The accredited conformity assessment bodies are basically not allowed to pass on the symbol to the users of their services.

But they are free to allow the usage of their own mark/logo, name or a reference made to their accreditation to their customers on letterheads, reports, brochures, documents, promotional material, products or other communication media, such as the Internet.

By doing so, the accredited conformity assessment body shall ensure that:

- they laid down rules how the users of their services may provide a link to it and also agree by contract this arrangements with the users;
- in cases of doubt, the DAkkS will be included prior to authorisation of use;
- the use refers only to services that are covered by accreditation and are in clear, un-equivocal relationship with them;
- that the users of accredited services and the references to the accreditation do not imply that the users are the holders of accreditation;
- the users will not make any statements regarding the accredited services that might be considered as misleading or unjustified;
- no report or certificate, or parts thereof, as far as their partial reproduction was allowed, is used in a confusing way;
- by referring to the date or period of use of accredited services, their respective valid accreditation status is reproducible;
- in the event of suspension or withdrawal of their accreditation, the users of the services can no longer make further use of any references relating to the previously accredited status;

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- in the case of certification bodies, their logo shall be in combination with the mark related to their accreditation, if it was affixed on the product itself or on the accompanying packaging;
- in the event of incorrect use of the accredited services and the related information in media appropriate measures shall be taken.

### **3.9 Misuse and infringement**

Misuse is present e.g., if the symbol or the name of the DAkKS were used in a misleading way, if false or misleading reference to accreditation was made by an accredited conformity assessment body or any other party.

The DAkKS penalises infringements against the SymbolVO or against the rules which are declared concretely in this document according to the severity of breach with the following sanctions:

- Written warning;
- Written warning specifying remedial action;
- Withdrawal of the right to use and asserting claims of trademark.

Based on general accreditation rules, infringements which are capable of damaging the reputation of the accreditation body may lead to a withdrawal of the accreditation by the DAkKS.

As to the Trademark Law, the DAkKS is entitled to directly prohibit the accredited conformity assessment bodies to use the symbol, if despite of a warning from the DAkKS the information about misuse or infringement as to the use of the symbol were not satisfied by the accredited conformity assessment bodies and the failure was not treated or redressed within the period stipulated. Infringements against the DAkKS warning will be punished by the DAkKS with corresponding measures as set out in the trademark protection.

#### 4 References and applicable documents

Akkreditierungsstellengesetz (AkkStelleG)	Law about the accreditation body
Akkreditierungssymbolverordnung (SymbolVO)	Act for the design and use of the accreditation symbol of accreditation body
DIN EN ISO/IEC 17011	Conformity assessment – general requirements to accreditation bodies which accredit conformity assessment bodies
EA-3/01: 2012	EA Conditions for the use of accreditation symbols, text reference to accreditation and reference to EA MLA signatory status
<b>ILAC-R7: 2015</b>	Rules for the Use of the ILAC MRA Mark
ILAC P8: 2012	ILAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement (Arrangement): Supplementary Requirements and Guidelines for the Use of Accreditation Symbols and for Claims of Accreditation Status by Accredited Laboratories and Inspection Bodies
IAF ML 2: 2011	General Principles on the use of the IAF MLA Mark
83 SD 002	Regeln für die Gestaltung und den Aufbau der Akkreditierungsurkunde der Deutsche Akkreditierungsstelle GmbH
	CD Corporate Design Manual of DAkKS (DAkKS-internal)

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