

New Act Recognises SANAS as Only Accreditation Body in SA Involved in Conformity Assessment, Calibration and Monitoring for GLP Compliance

Stakeholders will remember that in the 2006 Communications Meetings a presentation was given on an Accreditation Bill that was to be tabled before parliament, whose aim is to provide for an internationally recognised and effective accreditation and monitoring system in South Africa. This was followed up by a report in the December 2006 issue of the SANAS Communiqué on the progress of the Bill in the different stages and committees that it had to go through in parliament before it could become law.

SANAS is very happy to announce that in March 2007 the Bill was gazetted in Government Gazette No. 29712 as Act No 16 of 2006 and its enforcement became effective as from 1 May 2007. Primarily, the Act provides for recognition of SANAS as the only accreditation body in South Africa that is involved in conformity assessment, calibration and monitor-

ing for GLP (good laboratory practice) compliance. The importance and significance of this achievement can never be overstated. Stakeholders are urged to get hold of copies of the Act, as it puts everything in perspective. The Act clearly demonstrates the intended use of accreditation in supporting public policy objectives with regards to health, safety and broad-based black economic empowerment (BBBEE) compliance issues.

All stakeholders need to take special note that according to the Act, in any legal proceedings, documents like calibration certificates, test reports, inspection reports and certification reports issued by accredited bodies in terms of their accreditation, and signed by individuals deemed by SANAS to be competent to do so will, upon their production in court, be used as evidence of the facts contained therein.

Dr Notende Mgudlwa, Manager: Special Projects
Accredited facilities should thus be warned that misuse of accreditation, including misrepresentation of data in the reports mentioned above, will henceforth constitute an offence.

Another important fact is that promulgation of the Act now changes SANAS' status from being a section 21 company to being a public entity. The change has given rise to a need for the organisation to comply with a number of requirements provided for under the Act. As an example, the SANAS board of directors will from now on be appointed by the Minister of Trade and Industry. The provision is that the members should have sufficient knowledge, experience or qualifications relating to the functions of SANAS and the responsibilities of the Board, including business management, marketing, international and regional accreditation standardisation and technical regulatory matters.