

Subcontracting of measurements under the CIPM MRA

In some cases the designated NMI or other designated institute, either for unexpected reasons or on a continuing basis, will subcontract, as part of its calibration, measurement or CRM certification activities under the CIPM MRA, to another competent laboratory with which it collaborates (i.e. a subcontractor).

Examples:

- 1. an expensive facility like a reactor for instrumental neutron activation analysis is not available in the institute itself but is needed in addition to the in house capabilities and competences in the same field. Subcontracting to a competent reactor institute should be possible.*
- 2. in order to increase the reliability of values assigned to a CRM, provided by a NMI or other designated institute, and which is used as means of disseminating traceability to its customers, the institute will make use of an other expert laboratory and may routinely establish a collaboration as part of the certification process. Subcontracting to a competent expert laboratory should be possible.*
- 3. an expensive and unique length comparator with a better performance than an in house device is available at a laboratory. Establishing a collaboration to enable subcontracting to this "collaborating laboratory" should be possible.*

In cases of subcontracting the following criteria have to be fulfilled:

1. The NMI or other designated institute subcontracting work to another competent and collaborating laboratory shall describe the process of subcontracting in its quality system.
2. The collaborating laboratory to which work will be subcontracted shall have a quality system in place in compliance with ISO/IEC 17025 (and in the case of a CRM certification process in compliance with ISO Guide 34) or equivalent. The quality system must cover, as a minimum, the part of the work subcontracted to it.
3. The NMI or other designated institute which subcontracts work to another laboratory, shall assure itself of the capability and competence of the collaborating laboratory. It shall also keep records of evidence of the capabilities and competences of this collaborating laboratory and its compliance with ISO/IEC 17025 (and/or ISO Guide 34) or equivalent.
4. In its internal and external reports to clients, the subcontracting NMI or other designated institute shall clearly state which part of the work has been carried out by a subcontracted collaborating laboratory.
5. If possible, the subcontracting NMI or other designated institute shall inform its clients in advance when subcontracting is considered.
6. The subcontracting NMI or other designated institute is responsible for the use of the results obtained by the collaborating laboratory.
7. Collaborating laboratories may only be used in addition to in house capabilities and competences in the field concerned.
8. The name of a subcontracted, collaborating laboratory is not published in the Appendix C of the CIPM MRA because this laboratory is not designated to act

as a national metrology institute for measurements of those quantities, measurands and measurement ranges which are subcontracted to it. However, the contribution of the collaborating laboratory should be mentioned in the calibration, measurement or certification report.

9. The calibration certificate, measurement report or CRM certificate issued by a NMI or other designated institute, and which includes results of subcontracted work, shall be issued in the usual way on the NMIs (or designated institute's) certificate paper and be signed by the responsible person in the NMI or other designated institute. If an important or significant part of the work has been subcontracted, it is possible for the certificate to be co-signed by the subcontractor.
10. The criteria above also applies in cases where staff from the designated NMI or other designated institute are on the spot taking part in, or observing, the measurements carried out in the collaborating/subcontracted laboratory.
11. The designated NMI or other designated institute shall keep a register of subcontracted collaborating laboratories used.
12. A collaborating laboratory carrying out work subcontracted to it as part of a CMC claim of a NMI or other designated institute cannot claim the same CMC if it subsequently becomes a designated institute.

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