



Criteria for NIST Designation of US Third Party Testing Laboratories to Mexico under the US-Mexico Mutual Recognition Agreement

Issue Date: October 18, 2018

Introduction

The *Mutual Recognition Agreement Between the Government of the United Mexican States and the Government of the United States of America for Conformity Assessment of Telecommunications Equipment* (US-Mexico Telecom MRA, MRA, or Agreement) was signed on May 26, 2011 and implemented by the US on September 26, 2017.

This Agreement provides for the mutual recognition of qualified testing laboratories (hereafter referred to as CABs – *conformity assessment bodies*) by the US and Mexican governments, and for the mutual acceptance of the results of testing undertaken by these CABs for specific technical regulations specified by each Party in the relevant MRA Annex I¹.

Each MRA Partner's regulatory scheme may differ in the requirements (1) for the types of telecommunication equipment that must be tested, (2) in the applicable technical regulations, test methods, and standards that must be applied, and (3) in any further certification and/or homologation that must be conducted before the equipment can be placed on the market. The activities related to product certification and homologation fall outside the scope of this US-Mexico Telecom MRA.

NIST is the US Designating Authority under the MRA. NIST reviews and processes requests from qualified third-party CABs for designation to Mexico's telecom regulator, Instituto Federal de Telecomunicaciones (IFT). IFT makes the decision on recognition of US CABs.

A US third party CAB seeking designation by NIST and recognition by Mexico shall meet the requirements identified in this document.

To apply for designation, the US third party CAB shall submit the documentation and information listed in the Application Checklist located in Section 8.0 of this document to the NIST Telecom MRA Program Office via e-mail at mra@nist.gov.

¹ Please refer to Section 6.0 of this document.

1.0 General Requirements for Designation

To be eligible for designation by NIST to Mexico for consideration as a recognized CAB for testing of telecommunications equipment to one or more of the technical regulations covered under the MRA (see Section 6.0), the following criteria shall be met by the CAB:

- 1.1 The CAB shall be a legally identifiable third-party test lab located in the US.

Note: Mexico does not accept designations from first-party and second party testing laboratories. [MRA, Appendix B, II (2)]

- 1.2 The CAB shall be ISO/IEC 17025 accredited by a US laboratory accreditation body (lab AB) that is NIST-Listed² as acceptable for use by US CABs for NIST MRA designations under the EMC/Telecom MRAs signed by the US.
- 1.3 The CAB's ISO/IEC 17025 Scope of Accreditation shall contain one or more of the NOMs (Official Mexican Standards) and IFT Technical Provisions covered under the MRA (See Section 6.0). The Scope of Accreditation format shall include all information noted in Section 2.0 of this document.
- 1.4 The CAB shall only subcontract testing covered under its scope of recognition to other third-party testing laboratories also recognized by IFT for the relevant NOMs and IFT Technical Provisions.
- 1.5 The CAB shall have sufficient technical knowledge of Mexico's relevant telecommunications laws and the technical regulations applicable to the scope of testing for which recognition from IFT is being sought.
- 1.6 The CAB is responsible for staying up-to-date with the relevant laws, technical regulations, procedures and rules of Mexico as these apply under the MRA.
- 1.7 The CAB shall have access to the applicable NOMs and IFT Technical Provisions in English or have the capability to accurately translate the technical requirements from Spanish to English.
- 1.8 The CAB shall renew recognition in accordance with instructions provided by NIST and in accordance with IFT requirements.

² <https://www.nist.gov/standardsgov/accreditation-bodies-mras>

2.0 Scope of Accreditation Requirements – Content/Format

2.1 Content/Format

The Scope of Accreditation shall include the applicable NOMs and IFT Technical Provision available for recognition under the MRA (see Section 6.0).

For each NOM and IFT Technical Provision, the Scope of Accreditation should reference the specific sections and subsections of the applicable test methods in the NOMs and IFT Technical Provisions that the CAB has been deemed competent to perform.

2.2 Example Format

Scope of Accreditation Example

Type of Test	Standard and Test Method Sections/Sub-Sections
Radiated Emissions	IFT-008-2015 Sections: 5.1.4.2, 5.2.1, 5.2.2.1, 5.2.3, 5.3.1.1, 5.3.1.2, 5.3.1.3, 5.3.1.4, 5.3.1.5, 5.3.3, 5.4.1, 5.4.1 Method 1, 5.4.1 Method 2, 5.4.2 (A1-M1, A2, A2-M2, A2-M3, A2-M4), 5.4.3, 5.5.1, 5.5.2, 5.6.1, 5.6.2 (all subsections); NOM-208-SCFI-2016 (all subsections)

3.0 Expiration

3.1 IFT requires that CABs be accredited for a two-year accreditation period.

3.2 If a US CAB is accredited for a period of validity that exceeds two years (as allowed by ISO/IEC 17011), NIST will designate the US CAB for no more than two years at a time. The designation period must be updated at the end of the two years.

3.3 IFT recognition expires when the ISO/IEC 17025 accreditation expires. To continue recognition, the CAB must provide evidence of continued ISO/IEC 17025 accreditation. Additional information may be required to continue recognition. NIST will request the renewal information from CABs in advance of the expiration date.

4.0 Test Report Signatories Requirements

When applying for designation to NIST, the CAB shall submit a list of competent test report signatories who have been approved by the NIST-Listed AB. The details for this list and its management are noted below.

- 4.1 For each NOM and IFT Technical Provision for which recognition is being sought, the CAB shall maintain a list of the qualified competent test report signatories that sign applicable test reports.
- 4.2 The CAB shall obtain written confirmation (in the form of a letter, for example) from the NIST-Listed AB that the signatories identified by the CAB are competent to sign the test reports.
- 4.3 The written confirmation shall identify the full name of each signatory, the effective date of AB approval, and the NOMs and IFT Technical Provisions applicable to that signatory.
- 4.4 The written confirmation of the competent signatories issued by the NIST-Listed AB shall be provided to NIST as part of the application process.
- 4.5 NIST will provide this information to IFT upon designation.

[IFT will provide the list to the relevant Mexican certification bodies (CB) that will be receiving test reports from recognized CABs. Test reports issued by the recognized CAB are accepted by the relevant Mexican CBs only if the test report signatory is on record with the Mexican CB.]

- 4.6 The CAB shall keep test report signatory information up-to-date with their AB and NIST. If there are changes to the list, the CAB shall provide NIST with an updated written confirmation from their AB.

5.0 Accreditation Body Assessment Documentation and Translation Requirements

In accordance with the text of the MRA, for initial designation, the CAB shall submit the following assessment documentation in English (original AB version) to NIST.

- 5.1 The AB issued ISO/IEC 17025 Assessment Report signed by the assigned Assessor(s) and the associated AB assessment checklist (or other AB assessment documentation) showing the ISO/IEC 17025 clauses that were assessed and the determination of compliance.
- 5.2 The AB issued ISO/IEC 17025 Assessment Deficiency Report

- 5.3 The CAB's written Corrective Action Responses (with objective evidence where applicable, and as approved by the AB) for all technical deficiencies related to the technical scope of competency for which recognition from Mexico is being sought.
- 5.4 The CAB shall provide Corrective Action Response information related to other deficiencies noted in the AB issued Deficiency Report if so requested by IFT.

For subsequent renewals of IFT recognition, the AB assessment information is not currently required.

6.0 Standards/Technical Provisions Covered under the MRA

The current standards (NOMs) and Technical Provisions available for IFT recognition are provide on the NIST TEL MRA webpage for the US-Mexico MRA:

<https://www.nist.gov/standardsgov/us-mexico-mra>

7.0 IFT Resources

- IFT website
<http://www.ift.org.mx/>
- IFT webpage to the Guidelines for Accreditation, Authorization, Designation and Recognition
http://www.ift.org.mx/industria/politica_regulatoria/laboratorios-de-prueba.
- Guidelines for Recognition of Third Party Testing Laboratories Designated by a Designating Authority of a Foreign Government (Canada or United States of America)
<http://www.ift.org.mx/tramites/solicitud-de-reconocimiento-de-laboratorios-de-prueba-de-tercera-parte-designados-por-una-autoridad>
- List of Third Party Testing Laboratories Recognized by IFT:
<http://www.ift.org.mx/industria/lista-de-laboratorios-de-prueba>
- IFT Conformity Assessment Overview for Telecommunications Equipment

IFT has provided diagrams illustrating how the MRA fits in to the broader conformity assessment system for telecommunications equipment in Mexico. The flow diagrams show the process for testing, certification, use of experts (Peritos), and homologation. The diagrams are posted on NIST's Mexico MRA Designation webpage: <https://www.nist.gov/standardsgov/us-mexico-mra>

8.0 US CAB Designation Application

To apply for designation, the CAB shall meet all requirements stated in this document and shall submit the following checklist along with the indicated documents/information to the NIST MRA Program Office at mra@nist.gov.

Application	CAB use
Copy of this Application Checklist	
Cover letter or e-mail that includes: organization name, web address, mailing address, physical address of laboratory, main phone number, and the CAB's primary and alternate contact information (name, title, email address and phone number) for that location	
Written confirmation letter signed by top management confirming that (1) the CAB is a third party independent testing laboratory and (2) the CAB shall only subcontract relevant testing covered under their IFT recognition to other third-party testing laboratories also recognized by IFT for the relevant NOMs and IFT Technical Provision. <i>Refer to Sections 1.1 and 1.4 of this document.</i>	
A copy of the ISO/IEC 17025 Scope of Accreditation and Certificate of Accreditation valid for at least six months with - Relevant NOMs and IFT Technical Provisions <i>Refer to Section 2.0 of this document.</i>	
Written confirmation letter from AB with approved signatories <i>Refer to Section 4.0 of this document.</i>	
The AB issued ISO/IEC 17025 Assessment Report in English and the AB issued ISO/IEC 17025 Checklist showing the clauses that have been assessed. <i>Refer to Section 5.1 of this document.</i>	
The AB issued ISO/IEC 17025 Assessment Deficiency Report in English <i>Refer to Section 5.2 of this document</i>	
The CAB's written Corrective Action Responses for relevant technical deficiencies in English <i>Refer to Section 5.3 of this document</i>	
Signed CAB Declaration Form	

NAME OF CAB: _____

COMPLETED BY: _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____

9.0 Document Control Information

Date	Description	Other Details
September 26, 2017	Version 1.0	Initial version released.
October 17, 2018	Version 2.0	<p>Cover page: Removed Notice</p> <p>Section 2.1 Made the references to the sub-sections optional (changed shall to should)</p> <p>Sections 5.0 and 8.0: Requirement for Spanish translation of assessment documents removed</p> <p>Section 3.0: Clarified two-year accreditation period requirement</p> <p>Added details on IFT recognition expiration and need for renewal process</p> <p>Section 6.0: Added language to clarify that standards available for recognition are included on the NIST TEL MRA webpage</p> <p>Section 6.1 Removed this section</p> <p>Section 6.2 Removed this section</p> <p>Section 8.0 Updated the checklist to remove requirement for Spanish translation of assessment documents</p> <p>Added requirement for submittal of the AB's ISO/IEC 17025 Checklist that shows which clauses were assessed</p>

For questions about the information contained in this document, please contact the NIST Telecom MRA Program Office via e-mail at mra@nist.gov.