



NATA Charter of Service

This Charter describes NATA's aims in servicing the needs of its various clients in a timely and effective manner. It also identifies the ways in which our clients can assist NATA to provide these services.

NATA's Clients

NATA's clients fall into the following major categories:

- Accredited or applicant laboratories, inspection bodies, service facilities and other members of the Association.
- The panels of technical assessors and committee members which underpin the Association's core activities.
- Governments, regulators and industry specifiers of testing, inspection and related services.
- Non-member users of NATA services, such as training.
- The Australian community for their needs for a reliable network of technically competent laboratories, inspection bodies and service facilities.

NATA's Role

NATA's role is to:

- Provide, in the national interest, accreditation and supporting services which meet the needs of stakeholders and facilitate the domestic and international recognition and acceptance of their products and services;
- Be the national authority for the accreditation of testing and calibration laboratories, reference materials producers, inspection bodies and proficiency testing scheme providers and be the national authority responsible for monitoring compliance with the OECD Principles of Good Laboratory Practice;
- Promote and contribute to the science and practice of accreditation, testing and inspection, both nationally and internationally.

Be Absolutely Assured

NATA's Service Aims for Clients

In providing its services, NATA aims to:

- Treat our clients and other stakeholders honestly, fairly and professionally.
- Provide timely access to qualified staff.
- Be courteous and helpful.
- Give timely and accurate advice and information.
- Avoid any potential conflicts of interest of our staff and voluntary technical assessors and others involved in our services.
- Maintain confidentiality (within the provisions of NATA Rules) of any document, information or process entrusted to us.
- Conduct our accreditation and recognition services in compliance with international codes of best practice.
- Provide a range of effective training programs to support our members and technical assessors in activities relevant to NATA's Role.
- Help our clients promote the values and significance of accreditation.
- Provide a forum for members of NATA to explore issues of interest or special needs of Australian laboratories, inspection bodies and service facilities.

NATA's Service Standards

(1) **For Accreditation Activities** ¹ we aim to:

- Conduct an advisory visit within six weeks of receipt of a request for such a visit.
- Provide a formal report of our findings from an on-site advisory visit within two weeks of the visit. (For Medical Testing laboratories Medicare Australia requires NATA to provide a special report within one week.)
- Conduct an assessment of an applicant's facility within 15 weeks of receipt of an application form and appropriate supporting documentation.
- Provide an initial report, or oral briefing, of our findings at the conclusion of each on-site assessment, re-assessment, variation (including signatory interview) visit.

¹ Most of these timeframes are established as a result of a comprehensive 2002 survey of NATA members' expectations of acceptable timeframes.

- Provide a final report of our findings for each on-site assessment, re-assessment, variation (including signatory interview) visit within six weeks of the visit.
- Conduct a desk-top variation within six weeks of receipt of a written request and appropriate supporting documentation.
- Conduct a variation (including signatory interview) visit within ten weeks of receipt of a written request and appropriate supporting documentation.
- Review and report on submissions received from applicants following assessments and members following re-assessments or variation (including signatory interview) visits within six weeks of receipt of the information.
- Confirm the granting of accreditation of an applicant facility within six weeks of confirmation of appropriate remedial action.
- Confirm a member's accreditation status within two weeks of confirmation of remedial action. When requested, for special commercial or other needs of a member, best endeavours will be made to confirm the accreditation status as soon as possible.

(2) For Training Services we aim to

- Work openly with clients to identify their immediate and future development needs in keeping with NATA's Role.
- Ensure technically accurate and up-to-date course content.
- Answer all enquiries within two working days.
- Despatch participants' certificates or results within five working days of a course being completed.
- Actively seek input and suggestions from clients to improve their learning and development opportunities.
- Act on feedback from clients to improve service delivery.
- Provide a Technical Assessor Development Program training session within twelve months of acceptance of an invitation to join NATA's panel of assessors.
- Provide timely learning and development opportunities for clients.²

² Subject to sufficient participants being available at a given location to provide a valid group learning environment.

(3) For Information Services we aim to:

- Update the NATA web-site details of members' accreditation status and scope of accreditation within one week of formal notification to the member of any such change.
- Answer email or telephone enquiries from the general public within four working days of receipt.

Your Role in NATA Achieving its Service Aims

So that we can meet the aims of this Charter we need you to:

- Be open and honest in your dealings with us.
- Treat our staff professionally, fairly and with courtesy.
- Ensure you identify the most appropriate person within your organisation to be our principal point of contact.
- Provide, on request of staff, all supporting information and documentation necessary for us to deal with your accreditation or other needs, including evidence of any remedial actions specified by NATA.
- Where appropriate, allow our voluntary assessors time to review submissions from applicant or accredited organisations.
- Implement agreed actions within the timeframes proposed.
- Not cancel or postpone a planned visit unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- Ensure availability of all key staff for our on-site assessment visits.
- Pay all legitimate fees and expenses within agreed terms.
- Advise us promptly when there are key changes in personnel or other matters affecting our recognition of your organisation.
- Use NATA endorsements only in accordance with NATA's requirements.
- Use the ILAC-MRA mark in accordance with the ILAC Laboratory Combined MRA Mark Sub-license Agreement.

Compliments and Complaints

If you are pleased with our service, please let us know. We wish to advise our staff when their services are appreciated.

If you are not satisfied with our service, please assist by advising us, so that we can address the issue.

In the first instance, please discuss any technical or operational issues with the relevant NATA State Manager, Field Manager or Lead Assessor.

For issues regarding invoices or fees contact our *General Manager, Business Services* (02 9736 8222).

If you remain dissatisfied, contact or write to:

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