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ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015
Section 9: Process Requirements

Section 9: Process Requirements
9.1 Pre-certification Activities

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9.1.1 Application
Authorized representative of the applicant organization required and the following information needed:

a) the desired scope of the certification;

b) relevant details of the applicant organization

➢ specific certification scheme

➢ name and address(es) of its site(s)

➢ processes and operations.

➢ human and technical resources

➢ functions, relationships and any relevant legal obligations;

c) identification of outsourced processes that will affect conformity to requirements;

d) the standards or requirements for seeking certification;

e) whether consultancy relating to the management system to be certified has been provided and, if so, by whom.

Section 9: Process Requirements
9.1 Pre-certification Activities

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9.1.2 Application review
9.1.2.1
Conduct a review of the application and supplementary information :

a) the information about the applicant organization (see 9.1.3);

b) any known difference between the CB and the applicant organization is resolved;

c) CB's competence and ability to perform the certification activity;

d) Desired scope , time required , language, safety conditions, threats to impartiality, etc.

9.1.2.2
• Post-review of the application - either accept or decline an application
• If declined reasons documented and client informed

9.1.2.3
• Next step - determine competences of audit team and for the certification decision.

Section 9: Process Requirements
9.1 Pre-certification Activities

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9.1.3 Audit Programme

9.1.3.1 Develop Audit programme for full certification cycle

9.1.3.2
- **The audit programme for the initial certification - two-stage initial audit, surveillance audits in the first and second years following the certification decision, and a recertification audit in the third year prior to expiration of certification.**

- **The first three-year certification cycle begins with the certification decision. Subsequent cycles begin with the recertification decision (see 9.6.3.2.3)**

NOTE 1 Annex E provides a flowchart of a typical audit and certification process.

NOTE 2 The following list contains additional items that can be considered when developing or revising an audit program, they might also need to be addressed when determining the audit scope and developing the audit plan:
- complaints received by CB about the client; combined, integrated or joint audit
- changes to the certification requirements; changes to legal requirements;
- changes to accreditation requirements; organizational performance data (e.g. defect levels, key performance indicators data);
- relevant interested parties' concerns.

NOTE 3 If specified by the industry specific certification scheme, the certification cycle can be different from three years.

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9.1 Pre-certification Activities

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9.1.3 Audit Programme (Continued)
9.1.3.3
- **Surveillance audits conducted at least once a calendar year, except in recertification years.**
- **Date of the first surveillance audit following initial certification shall not be more than 12 months from the certification decision date.**
NOTE frequency of surveillance audits to accommodate factors such as seasons or management systems certification of a limited duration (e.g. temporary construction site).
9.1.3.4
Transfer of certification - CB takes account of certification already granted to the client and to audits performed by another CB, shall obtain and retain sufficient evidence, e.g. reports and documentation on corrective actions, to any nonconformity.
9.1.3.5
Where the client operates shifts, the activities that take place during shift working to be considered when developing the audit programme and audit plans

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Section 9: Process Requirements
9.1 Pre-certification Activities

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9.1.4 Determining Audit Time

9.1.4.1
Have documented procedures for determining audit time.

9.1.4.2
To consider, among other things, the following aspects:
a) the requirements of the relevant management system standard;
b) complexity of the client and its management system;
c) technological and regulatory context;
d) any outsourcing of any activities included in the scope of the management system;
e) the results of any prior audits;
f) size and number of sites, their geographical locations and multi-site considerations;
g) the risks associated with the products, processes or activities of the organization;
h) whether audits are combined, joint or integrated.

Section 9: Process Requirements
9.1 Pre-certification Activities

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9.1.4 Determining Audit Time (Continued)

9.1.4.3
Duration of the management system audit and its justification shall be recorded.

9.1.4.4
The time spent by any team member not assigned as an auditor shall not count in the above established duration of the audit
(i.e. technical experts, translators, interpreters, observers and auditors-in-training).

NOTE: The use of translators and interpreters can necessitate additional time.

Section 9: Process Requirements
9.1 Pre-certification Activities

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9.1.5 Multi-site Sampling

Where multi-site sampling is used for client's audit covering the same activity in various geographical locations, the certification body shall:
• develop a sampling programme to ensure proper audit of the management system
• sampling plan rationale documented for each client.
Sampling is not allowed for some specific certification schemes, and where specific criteria have been established for a specific certification scheme, e.g. ISO/TS 22003, these shall be applied.

NOTE Where there are multiple sites not covering the same activity sampling is not appropriate.

9.1.6 Multiple management systems standards

When certification to multiple management system standards is being provided by the certification body, the planning for the audit shall ensure adequate on-site auditing to provide confidence in the certification.

Section 9: Process Requirements
9.2 Planning Audits

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9.2.1 Determining audit objectives, scope and criteria
9.2.1.1
Audit scope and criteria, including any changes, determined after discussion with the client.
9.2.1.2
The audit objectives:
describe what is to be accomplished by the audit and include:
a) **determination of the conformity of the client's management system, or parts of it, with audit criteria;**
b) **determination of the ability of the management system to ensure the client meets applicable statutory, regulatory and contractual requirements;**
> NOTE A management system certification audit is not a legal compliance audit.
c) **determination of the effectiveness of the management system to ensure the client can reasonably expect to achieving its specified objectives;**
d) **as applicable, identification of areas for potential improvement of the management system.**

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9.2.1.3
Audit scope must cover the extent and boundaries of the audit (or more than one audit) e.g., sites, organizational units, activities and processes to be audited.

9.2.1.4
Audit criteria used as a reference against which conformity to be determined, and include:
- **the requirements of a defined normative document on management systems;**
- **the defined processes and documentation of the management system developed by the client.**

**Section 9: Process Requirements
9.2 Planning Audits**

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9.2.2 Audit Team Selection and Assignments
9.2.2.1.1
Have process for selecting and appointing the audit team, including the audit team leader and technical experts
9.2.2.1.2
In deciding the size and composition of the audit team, consideration be given to the following:
a) **audit objectives, scope, criteria and estimated audit time;**
b) **whether the audit is a combined, joint or integrated;**
c) **the overall competence of the audit team needed to achieve the objectives of the audit (see Table A.1);**
d) **certification requirements (including any applicable statutory, regulatory or contractual requirements);**
e) **language and culture.**

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9.2 Planning Audits**

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9.2.2.1.3
- **Necessary knowledge and skills of the audit team leader and auditors may be supplemented by technical experts, translators and interpreters**
- **Translators or interpreters must not influence the audit.**

9.2.2.1.4
Auditors-in-training may participate in the audit, provided an auditor is appointed as an evaluator with final responsibilities.

9.2.2.1.5
The audit team leader; in consultation with the audit team, shall assign to each team member responsibility for auditing specific processes, functions, sites, areas or activities.
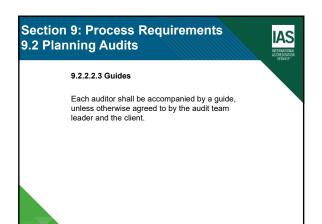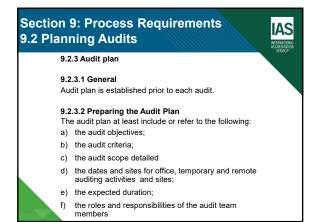
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9.2 Planning Audits

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9.2.2.2 Observers, technical experts and guides

9.2.2.2.1   Observers
- **Need to be agreed by CB and client prior to audit.**
- **Observers must not influence the audit.**

9.2.2.2.2   Technical experts

- **Role of technical experts to be agreed by CB and client prior to the conduct of the audit.**
- **Not act as an auditor and be accompanied by an auditor.**

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9.2 Planning Audits

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9.2.2.2.3 Guides

Each auditor shall be accompanied by a guide, unless otherwise agreed to by the audit team leader and the client.

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9.2 Planning Audits

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9.2.3 Audit plan

9.2.3.1 General
Audit plan is established prior to each audit.

9.2.3.2 Preparing the Audit Plan
The audit plan at least include or refer to the following:
a)   the audit objectives;
b)   the audit criteria;
c)   the audit scope detailed
d)   the dates and sites for office, temporary and remote auditing activities and sites;
e)   the expected duration;
f)   the roles and responsibilities of the audit team members

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9.2 Planning Audits

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9.2.3.3 Communication of Audit Team Tasks
The tasks given to the audit team shall be defined, and require the audit team to:

a) examine and verify the structure, policies, processes, procedures, records and related documents of the client relevant to the management system standard;

b) determine that these meet all the requirements relevant to the intended scope of certification;

c) determine that the processes and procedures are established, implemented and maintained effectively, to provide a basis for confidence in the client's management system;

d) communicate to the client, for its action, any inconsistencies between the client's policy, objectives and targets.

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9.2 Planning Audits

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9.2.3.4 Communication of Audit Plan

The audit plan be communicated and the dates of the audit shall be agreed upon, in advance, with the client.

9.2.3.5 Communication Concerning Audit Team Members

Provide the name of and, when requested, make available background information on each member of the audit team, with sufficient time for the client to object to the appointment of any particular audit team member and for the certification body to reconstitute the team in response to any valid objection.

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9.3 Initial Certification

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9.3.1 Initial Certification Audit

9.3.1.1 General
The initial certification audit of a management system shall be conducted in two stages: stage 1 and stage 2.

9.3.1.2 Stage 1

9.3.1.2.1
Planning shall ensure that the objectives of stage 1 can be met and the client shall be informed of any "on site" activities during stage 1.

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9.3 Initial Certification

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9.3.1.2.2 The objectives of stage 1 are to:

a) review the client's management system documented;

b) evaluate the client's preparedness for stage 2;

c) review the client's status and understanding regarding requirements of the standard;

d) obtain necessary information regarding the scope including:
- the client's site(s);
- processes and equipment used;
- levels of controls established (particularly in case of multi site clients);
- applicable statutory and regulatory requirements;

e) review the allocation of stage 2 details with the client;

f) provide a focus for planning stage 2;

g) evaluate if the internal audits and management reviews are being planned and performed.

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9.3 Initial Certification

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9.3.1.2.3
- Documented conclusions with regard to fulfilment of the stage 1 objectives
- Readiness for stage 2 and identification of any areas of concern
- Raised as nonconformities during stage 2.

9.3.1.2.4
Interval between stage 1 and stage 2, consideration given to:
- needs of the client to resolve areas of concern identified during stage 1.
- CB may also need to revise its arrangements for stage 2.
- repeat all or part of stage 1 (i.e., cancellation of Stage 2)

Client be informed of Stage 1 decisions or recommendations

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9.3 Initial Certification

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9.3.1.3 Stage 2
Purpose of stage 2 is to evaluate the implementation, including effectiveness, of the client's management system.
The stage 2 takes place at site and includes:

a) information and evidence;

b) performance monitoring, measuring, reporting and reviewing against key performance objectives and targets;

c) performance regarding meeting of applicable statutory, regulatory and contractual requirements;

d) operational control of the client's processes;

e) internal auditing and management review;

f) management responsibility for the client's policies.

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9.3 Initial Certification

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9.3.1.4 Initial Certification Audit Conclusions

Analyze all information and audit evidence gathered during stage 1 and stage 2 to review the audit findings and agree on the audit conclusions.

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9.4 Conducting Audits

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9.4.1 General

- **Have a process for conducting on-site audits with opening and a closing meeting.**

- **Personnel with appropriate competence for both virtual and onsite.**

- NOTE "Consideration can also be given to the use of electronic means for conducting audits.

Section 9: Process Requirements
9.4 Conducting Audits

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9.4.2 Conducting the Opening Meeting

A formal opening meeting

Section 9: Process Requirements
9.4 Conducting Audits

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9.4.3 Communication During the Audit

9.4.3.1
Periodically assess audit progress and exchange information

9.4.3.2
When audit objectives are unattainable or suggests the presence of an immediate and significant risk (e.g. safety), the audit team leader informs the client (and CB) and takes appropriate action.

9.4.3.3
Progressive review of audit scope with client during activity

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Section 9: Process Requirements
9.4 Conducting Audits

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9.4.4 Obtaining and verifying information

9.4.4.1
During the audit, appropriate sampling and verification

9.4.4.2
Methods are but are not limited to:

    a) interviews;
    b) observation of processes and activities;
    c) review of documentation and records.

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9.4 Conducting Audits

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9.4.5 Identifying and Recording Audit Findings
9.4.5.1
Audit findings identified, classified and recorded
9.4.5.2
Opportunities for improvement may be identified and recorded, unless prohibited by the requirements of a management system certification scheme.

**Section 9: Process Requirements
9.4 Conducting Audits**

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9.4.5.3

A finding of nonconformity be recorded against a specific requirement, and shall contain a clear statement of the nonconformity, identifying in detail the objective evidence on which the nonconformity is based.

Nonconformities discussed with the client to ensure that the evidence is accurate and understood.

The auditor however shall refrain from suggesting the cause of nonconformities or their solution.

9.4.5.4

- Team leader resolves any diverging opinions between the audit team and the client
- Unresolved points shall be recorded.

**Section 9: Process Requirements
9.4 Conducting Audits**

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9.4.6 Preparing Audit Conclusions

Audit team:

a) review;

b) agree;

c) on any necessary follow-up actions;

d) confirm or identify any modification like scope, frequency etc

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**Section 9: Process Requirements
9.4 Conducting Audits**

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9.4.7 Conducting the Closing Meeting

9.4.7.1

- Formal
- Attendance recorded
- Report presentation
- Recommendations
- Agreed timeframe for response

Section 9: Process Requirements
9.4 Conducting Audits

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9.4.7.2

The closing meeting:

a) advising the client that the audit evidence;

b) the method and timeframe of reporting, including any grading of audit findings;

c) the certification body's process for handling nonconformities including any consequences relating to the status of the client's certification;

d) the timeframe for the client to present a plan for correction and corrective action for any nonconformities identified during the audit;

e) the certification body's post audit activities;

f) information about the complaint and appeal handling processes.

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9.4 Conducting Audits

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9.4.8 Audit Report
9.4.8.1
• **Provide a written report**
• **Ownership is CB**
9.4.8.2
Audit report to have the following:
a) **identification of the certification body;**

b) **the name and address of the client and the client's representative;**

c) **the type of audit (e.g. initial, surveillance or recertification audit or special audits);**

d) **the audit criteria;**

e) **the audit objectives;**

f) **the audit scope, particularly identification of the organizational or functional units or processes audited and the time of the audit**

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9.4 Conducting Audits

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9.4.8.2 (Continued)
g) **any deviation from the audit plan and their reasons;**

h) **any significant issues impacting on the audit programme;**

i) **identification of the audit team leader, audit team members and any accompanying persons;**

j) **the dates and places where the audit activities (on site or offsite, permanent or temporary sites) were conducted;**

k) **audit findings (see 9.4.5), reference to evidence and conclusions, consistent with the requirements of the type of audit;**

l) **significant changes, if any, that affect the management system of the client since the last audit took place;**

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9.4 Conducting Audits

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9.4.8.2 (Continued)
m) **any unresolved issues, if identified;**
n) **where applicable, whether the audit is combined, joint or integrated;**
o) **a disclaimer statement indicating that auditing is based on a sampling process of the available information;**
p) **recommendation from the audit team**
q) **the audited client is effectively controlling the use of the certification documents and marks, if applicable;**
r) **verification of effectiveness of taken corrective actions regarding previously identified nonconformities, if applicable.**

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9.4 Conducting Audits

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9.4.8.3 The report shall also contain:

a) a statement on the conformity and the effectiveness of the management system together with a summary of the evidence relating to:
   - **the capability of the management system to meet applicable requirements and expected outcomes;**
   - **the internal audit and management review process;**
b) a conclusion on the appropriateness of the certification scope;
c) confirmation that the audit objectives have been fulfilled.

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9.4 Conducting Audits

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9.4.9 Cause Analysis of Nonconformities

CB shall require the client to analyse the cause and describe the specific correction and corrective actions taken, or planned to be taken, to eliminate detected nonconformities, within a defined time.

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9.4 Conducting Audits

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9.4.10 Effectiveness of Corrections and Corrective Actions

CB review the corrections, identified causes and corrective actions submitted by the client to determine if these are acceptable.

CB verify the effectiveness of any correction and corrective actions taken. Evidence obtained to support the resolution of nonconformities be recorded.
- Client be informed of the result of the review and verification.
- Client be informed if an additional full audit, an additional limited audit, or documented evidence (to be confirmed during future audits) will be needed to verify effective correction and corrective actions.

NOTE: Verification of effectiveness of correction and corrective action can be carried out based on a review of documented information provided by the client, or where necessary, through verification on-site. Usually this activity is done by a member of the audit team.

Section 9: Process Requirements
9.5 Certification Decision

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9.5.1 General

9.5.1.1

Decision makers are different from those who carried out the audits and have the appropriate competence.

9.5.1.2

Decision-makers are employed by, or shall be under legally enforceable arrangement. CB organizational control can be:

a) whole or majority ownership of another entity by the certification body;

b) majority participation by the certification body on the board of directors of another entity;

c) a documented authority by the certification body over another entity in a network of legal entities (in which the certification body resides), linked by ownership or board of director control.

NOTE For governmental certification bodies, other parts of the same government can be considered to be "linked by ownership" to the certification body.

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9.5 Certification Decision

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9.5.1.3

The persons employed by, or under contract fulfil the same requirements of this part of ISO/IEC 17021 as persons employed by, or under contract with, the certification body.

9.5.1.4

Record each certification decision

9.5.2 Actions Prior to Making a Decision

Have a process to conduct an effective review prior to making a decision

a) the information provided by the audit team is sufficient;

b) major nonconformities closed;

c) minor nonconformities reviewed and have a plan for corrective action.

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9.5 Certification Decision

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9.5.3 Information for Granting Initial Certification

9.5.3.1
The information provided to CB:

a) the audit report;

b) comments on the nonconformities and, where applicable, the correction and corrective actions taken by the client;

c) confirmation of the information provided to the certification body used in the application review (see 9.1.2);

d) confirmation that the audit objectives have been achieved;

e) a recommendation whether or not to grant certification, together with any conditions or observations.

9.5.3.2
If CB is not able to verify the implementation of corrections and corrective actions of any major nonconformity within 6 months after the last day of stage 2, the certification body shall conduct another stage 2 prior to recommending certification.

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9.5 Certification Decision

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9.5.3.3

For transfer of certification is envisaged from one certification body to another, the accepting certification body shall have a process for obtaining sufficient information in order to take a decision on certification. http://www.iaf.nu//articles/Publications/6

NOTE: Certification schemes can have specific rules regarding the transfer of certification.

9.5.4 Information for Granting Recertification

The certification body shall make decisions on renewing certification based on the results of the recertification audit, including overall performance.

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9.6 Maintaining Certification

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9.6.1 General

Maintain certification based on demonstration that the client continues to satisfy the requirements with positive conclusion by the audit team leader without further independent review and decision, provided that:

a) For major findings, review by competent personnel, different from those who carried out the audit;

b) competent CB personnel confirm that certification activity is operating effectively.

Section 9: Process Requirements
9.6 Maintaining Certification

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9.6.2 Surveillance activities

9.6.2.1 General

9.6.2.1.1
Surveillance activities covered by the scope are monitored on a regular basis

9.6.2.1.2
Surveillance activities shall include on-site auditing. Other surveillance activities may include:

a) enquiries from the certification body to the certified client on aspects of certification;

b) reviewing any certified client's statements with respect to its operations (e.g. promotional material, website);

c) requests to the certified client to provide documented information (on paper or electronic media);

d) other means of monitoring the certified client's performance.

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9.6 Maintaining Certification

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9.6.2.2 Surveillance Audit

Surveillance audits are on-site audits, but are not necessarily full system audits. Each surveillance includes review of :

a) **internal audits and management review;**

b) **actions taken on nonconformities identified during the previous audit;**

c) **complaints handling;**

d) **effectiveness of the management system with regard to achieving the certified client's objectives and the intended results of the respective management system(s);**

e) **)progress of planned activities aimed at continual improvement;**

f) **continuing operational control;**

g) **review of any changes;**

h) **use of marks and/or any other reference to certification.**

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9.6 Maintaining Certification

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9.6.3 Recertification
9.6.3.1 Recertification Audit Planning
9.6.3.1.1
• **Recertification audit is to confirm the continued conformity and effectiveness**
• **Planned and conducted in due time to enable for timely renewal before the certificate expiry date.**

9.6.3.1.2
The recertification activity include the review of previous surveillance audit reports

9.6.3.1.3
Recertification audit activities may need to have a stage 1 (significant changes to the management system, changes to legislation).

NOTE Such changes can occur at any time during the certification cycle and the certification body might need to perform a special audit (see 9.6.4), which might or might not be a two-stage audit.

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9.6 Maintaining Certification

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9.6.3.2 Recertification Audit
9.6.3.2.1
The recertification audit shall include an on-site audit that addresses the following:
a) the effectiveness of the management system to the scope of certification;
b) demonstrated commitment to maintain the effectiveness and improvement
c) the effectiveness of the management system with regard to achieving the certified client's objectives and the intended results

9.6.3.2.2
For any major nonconformity, time limits for correction and corrective actions are defined and completed prior to the expiration of certification.

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9.6 Maintaining Certification

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9.6.3.2.3
- When recertification activities are successfully completed prior to the expiry date of the existing certification, the expiry date of the new certification can be based on the expiry date of the existing certification.
- The issue date on a new certificate shall be on or after the recertification decision.

9.6.3.2.4
- If not, recertification shall not be recommended and the certification not extended.
- The client be informed

9.6.3.2.5
- Following expiration of certification, the certification body can restore certification within 6 months provided that the outstanding recertification activities are completed, otherwise at least a stage 2 shall be conducted.
- The effective date on the certificate shall be on or after the recertification decision and the expiry date shall be based on prior certification cycle.

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9.6 Maintaining Certification

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9.6.4 Special Audits

9.6.4.1 Expanding Scope
- In response to an application for expanding the scope of a certification already granted, undertake a review of the application.
- This may be conducted in conjunction with a surveillance audit.

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9.6 Maintaining Certification

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9.6.4.2 Short-notice Audits

Conduct audits of certified clients at short notice or unannounced to investigate complaints, or in response to changes, or as follow up on suspended clients. In such cases:

a) CB shall describe and make known in advance to the certified clients (e.g. in documents as described in 8.5.1) the conditions under which such audits will be conducted;

b) CB shall exercise additional care in the assignment of the audit team because of the lack of opportunity for the client to object to audit team members.

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9.6 Maintaining Certification

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9.6.5 Suspending, Withdrawing or Reducing the Scope of Certification

9.6.5.1

Have a policy and documented procedure(s) for suspension, withdrawal or reduction of the scope of certification, and specify the actions by the certification body.

9.6.5.2

The certification body shall suspend certification in cases when, for example:

• **the client failed to meet certification requirements;**

• **the certified client does not allow surveillance or recertification audits to be conducted at the required frequencies;**

• **the certified client has voluntarily requested a suspension.**

Section 9: Process Requirements
9.6 Maintaining Certification

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9.6.5.3

Under suspension, the client's management system certification is temporarily invalid.

9.6.5.4

Restore the suspended certification if the issue that has resulted in the suspension has been resolved.

Failure to resolve results in withdrawal or reduction of the scope of certification.

NOTE In most cases, the suspension would not exceed six months.

9.6.5.5

Reduce the scope of certification to exclude the parts not meeting the requirement

Section 9: Process Requirements
9.7 Appeals

IAS

9.7.1
Have a documented process to receive, evaluate and make decisions on appeals.

9.7.2
CB responsible for all decisions at all levels of the appeals-handling process

Persons engaged in the appeals-handling process are different from those who carried out the audits and made the certification decisions.

9.7.3
Submission, investigation and decision on appeals shall not result in any discriminatory actions against the appellant.

9.7.4
The appeals-handling process to include:

a) an outline of the process for receiving, validating and investigating the appeal, and for deciding what actions need to be taken in response to it, taking into account the results of previous similar appeals;

b) tracking and recording appeals, including actions undertaken to resolve them;

c) ensuring that any appropriate correction and corrective action are taken.

Section 9: Process Requirements
9.7 Appeals

IAS

9.7.5
The certification body receiving the appeal shall be responsible for gathering and verifying all necessary information to validate the appeal.

9.7.6
The certification body shall acknowledge receipt of the appeal and shall provide the appellant with progress reports and the result of the appeal.

9.7.7
The decision to be communicated to the appellant shall be made by, or reviewed and approved by, individual(s) not previously involved in the subject of the appeal.

9.7.8
The certification body shall give formal notice to the appellant of the end of the appeals handling process.

Section 9: Process Requirements
9.8 Complaints

IAS

9.8.1
Responsible for all decisions at all levels of the complaints handling process.

9.8.2
Submission, investigation and decision on complaints shall not result in any discriminatory actions against the complainant.

9.8.3
Upon receipt of a complaint, the certification body shall confirm

• whether the complaint relates to certification activities that it is responsible for and, if so, shall deal with it.

• If the complaint relates to a certified client, then examination of the complaint shall consider the effectiveness of the certified management system.

9.8.4
Any valid complaint about a certified client shall also be referred by the certification body to the certified client in question at an appropriate time.

Section 9: Process Requirements
9.8 Complaints

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9.8.5
Have a documented process to receive, evaluate and make decisions on complaints.
Be confidential

9.8.6
The complaints-handling process shall include at least the following elements and methods:

a) an outline of the process for receiving, validating, investigating the complaint, and for deciding what actions need to be taken in response to it;

b) tracking and recording complaints, including actions undertaken in response to them;

c) ensuring that any appropriate correction and corrective action are taken.

NOTE ISO 10002 provides guidance for complaints handling.

9.8.7
CB receiving the complaint shall be responsible for gathering and verifying all necessary information to validate the complaint.

Section 9: Process Requirements
9.8 Complaints

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9.8.7
Acknowledge receipt of the complaint, and provide the complainant with progress reports and the result of the complaint.

9.8.8
Decision to be communicated to the complainant shall be made by, or reviewed and approved by, individual(s) not previously involved in the subject of the complaint.

9.8.9
CB give formal notice of the end of the complaints-handling process to the complainant.

9.8.10
Extent to be made public, decided between CB, certified client and the complainant.

Section 9: Process Requirements
9.9 Client Records

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9.9.1 Maintain records of submitted applications, and all organizations audited, certified, or with certification suspended or withdrawn.

9.9.2 Records on certified clients shall include the following:

a) application information and initial, surveillance and recertification audit reports;

b) certification agreement;

c) justification of the methodology used for sampling of sites, as appropriate;

NOTE Methodology of sampling includes the sampling employed to audit the specific management system and/or to select sites in the context of multi-site audit.

Section 9: Process Requirements
9.9 Client Records

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d) justification for auditor time determination (see 9.1.4);

e) verification of correction and corrective actions;

f) records of complaints and appeals, and any subsequent correction or corrective actions;

g) committee deliberations and decisions, if applicable;

h) documentation of the certification decisions;

i) certification documents, including the scope of certification with respect to product, process or service, as applicable;

j) related records necessary to establish the credibility of the certification, such as evidence of the competence of auditors and technical experts;

k) audit programmes.

Section 9: Process Requirements
9.9 Client Records

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9.9.3

Transported, transmitted or transferred and stored records on applicants and clients secure and confidential.

9.9.4
- Have a documented policy and documented procedures on the retention of records.
- Records of certified clients and previously certified clients shall be retained for the duration of the current cycle plus one full certification cycle.

NOTE. In some jurisdictions, the law stipulates that records need to be maintained for a longer time period.

Thank you!

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