

**Revisions**

Revision	Changes	Date
1	Added rules about ISO 45001 closing meeting (pag. 6) Edited the paragraph about special audits (pag. 12)	07.02.2022

**1. SCOPE OF APPLICATION**

The procedure purpose is giving rules to perform management systems certification according to ISO standards to ensure the performance of the process in compliance with the principles of impartiality, competence, responsibility, transparency, professional secrecy, involvement in handling complaints and risk-based approach.

This will ensure the client and interested parties confidence in the services provided by certification body.

**2. TERMS AND DEFINITIONS**

The terms and definitions used in procedure are in accordance with:

- ISO/IEC 17000:2020
- ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015

**3. DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY**

The certification body audits by a third party certification of management systems to customers according to:

- ISO 9001
- ISO 14001
- ISO 45001

The process of certification management system begins after the written confirmation offer by the client and it includes the following stages:

- initial certification audit carried out in two stages;
- conclusion of the initial certification audit;
- information about success or failure of the certification process;

The audits types carried out by the certification body are:

- initial certification audit;
- surveillance audit;
- recertification audit;
- extra audit;
- audit transfer of accredited certification;
- special audits.

For making the initial assessment, the certification manager use the software, according the WI 8.0-02, collect all the necessary data from the client

Once all the data are collected, another certification manager or the head of certification body reviews the application and he/she can approve or deny the application, then the client is informed of the results.

The time required audit certification would not be reduced by any pre-audits.

After a positive assessment an offer / contract it's prepared, and the calculation of the man-days required for the audits is carried out.

The process uses the software according WI 8.0-03 contract, the certification manager prepares the man-days necessary for the audit to be included in the offer-contract.

When the offer is accepted and the contract is signed by the client, the audit team will be selected and the audit program will be arranged.

For the selection of the audit team, the requirements of competence, described in the Human Resources Management, are respected (MP 7).

The audits are prepared with the help of the software by the certification manager change the status of them and he/she decides the lead auditor and the veto auditor.

The audit is lead by the Lead Auditor who is responsible for the report preparation, using the software according to WI 8.0-04 audits.

The audit report stage 2 shows the deadline for the next audit.

The certification manager prepares the audit program F 9.0-08 every year recording the information on the software and he/she confirms or change the Audit Program according with the information of the previous audits.

When the certification / renewal or continuation decision is made, the certification manager updates the audit program, according to relevant information like non-conformities / improvement opportunities based on documented evidence.

The three-year management program includes the initial certification audit, surveillance audits during the first and second year after the certification issue and the recertification audit at the end of the first three-year certification cycle.

In developing the program audit it's considered:

- the size of the client organization;
- the scope and complexity of the management of the client;
- processes, and level of efficiency of the control system;
- the results of previous audits (already available certifications or other audits of client);
- information about complaints;
- changes in the organization and processes;
- changes in the certification requirements;
- changes in legal and other requirements;
- resources required and deadlines for implementation of the process of certification.

The changes in the audit program can be made at any stage of the certification cycle.

#### **4. CERTIFICATION AUDIT**

The initial certification audit of management is carried out for the sustained-two stages: Stage 1 and Stage 2.

The certification manager chooses the audit team and he/she prepares the F 8.5-04 audit team which is approved by another certification manager or by the Head of the certification body.

In determining the composition of the team the following factors are considered:

- types, objectives, scope, criteria and estimated time of conducting the audit;
- all the necessary competence of auditors of the team to achieve the objectives of the audit;
- the stated requirements for certification;
- the languages used during the audit;
- the knowledge of the host country's legal framework by the audit team (the auditors abroad audit with the help of a qualified technical expert familiar with the legal and regulatory framework of the industry in the respective country).

When compiling an audit team should be observed:

- the audit is performed under the direction of the lead auditor appointed by the certification body
- for an audit lasting less than four days using of audit team with at least two auditors is optional
- for an audit lasting for more than 4 days using of audit team with at least two auditors is mandatory (for each site)
- at least one member of the audit team must have technical competence related to the scope of the audit (this requirement also applies to Stage 1 of the audit);
- for simultaneous audit of more than one management system by the same team competence is required for each standard

The auditors in training may participate in the audit teams under the guidance of a competent auditor for learning and they are not participating as auditor/technical experts. The participation of trainee auditor shall be agreed with the client.

When conducting the audit requiring specific knowledge and experience in terms of organization, process or activity that will be audited, and knowledge associated with the language and culture of the organization the audit team includes technical expert/s, interpreters and translators. They work under the supervision of the auditors. When the audit duration is calculated no time is considered for the participation of technical expert(s) and auditor in training. Appropriate additional time is calculated for translators (due to translation time used).

The Lead Auditor can audit the same organization in three consecutive years (full cycle of certification), after this period, the certification body shall appoint another auditor.

All the staff involved in the auditing processes have signed declarations of independence, impartiality and professional secrecy and the certification body provides all the necessary documents, forms and information on the assessment team in preparation for an audit.

The applicant provides information relating to the equipment, the location of the sites included in the audit, personnel, subcontractors and other specific standards.

The Lead auditor during the preparation of stage 1 audit contacts the client management to confirm the details of the organization and in case of differences in client data referred to in the application for certification, he/she has to inform the Head of the Certification Body to clarify these differences.

The client is notified by mail about the audit team and the period of the audit, with the F 9.0-02 Audit Plan Stage 1.

The plan audit is being developed by the lead auditor and include:

- the purpose of the audit;
- the audit criteria;
- the scope of the audit;
- the dates and locations (sites);
- the scheduled time is the duration of the activity of the audit;
- the roles and responsibilities of the audit team and accompanying persons (if applicable);
- the information about the languages that will be used during the audit and others. Certification authority requires the applicant in writing to coordinate the team and the period subscribing the proposed by the Lead auditor Audit Plan.

The client may object in writing about:

- the auditor involvement (in terms of competence, independence, impartiality) - in this case, the charge carried a new certification auditor selection and coordination with the client;
- the planning of the activities.

The audits shall be done under instruction WI 9.0-01: during the stage 1 audit, the certification body assesses the compliance of the implemented management system with the requirements of the proposed standard for certification.

The terms and specific requirements for assessing compliance with a particular standard and the applicable requirements are specified in:

- WP 9.0-1 Rules for performing the audit;
- WP 9.0-2 Certification according to ISO 9001;
- WP 9.0-3 Certification according to ISO 14001;
- WP 9.0-4 Certification according to ISO 45001.

The Stage 1 audit is performed to:

- check the management system documentation of the client;
- check the specific conditions of location at the client and an exchange of information with the client staff to determine the level of preparation for Stage 2 audit;
- review the status of the client organization
- understand the requirements of the standard especially for the identification of characteristics or aspects, processes and objectives, risks of substantial importance for the functioning of the management system;

- review and gather the necessary information related to the scope of the management system, processes and locations of the client organization, the applicable regulations, which the client must comply;
- allow for the planning of Stage 2 of the audit after achieving a sufficient understanding of the management and functioning of place;
- review the allocation of resources for Stage 2 audit and agree with the client details of the audit of Stage 2;
- check the planning, implementation and documentation of internal audits and management review.

During this audit determined the readiness of the organization to perform an audit of Stage 2 based on the degree of implementation of the management system.

The stage 1 audit can be performed without on-site audit only in particular cases which must be approved by the Head of the certification body.

The information on readiness for transition to the stage 2 are collected by the audit team and within 3 days after the audit, the lead auditor prepares F 9.0-04.1 report stage 1 audit, which documents the results of the audit, including the problems identified (if applicable).

All problems of the management system the clients are identified for inspection at stage 2 certification audit and the stage 1 report is sent to the client.

To conduct the stage 2 audit it's necessary to solve all the client problems identified in stage 1 and if the organization does not show readiness to conduct the stage 2 audit, the lead auditor may propose the end of the certification process.

All the records created from Stage 1 audit are part of the certification audit documentation.

After the proposal of the lead auditor for conducting stage 2 audit, the Certification manager reviews it and the lead auditor prepares and sends the client the audit plan of stage 2, which has to be performed in 6 months after stage 1 audit.

The audit plan stage 2 includes all system requirements and all the units audited, temporary sites (if applicable) and there is the distribution of tasks among the audit team members.

In preparing the plan it's considered:

- time for independent and collaborative work of the audit team, consistent with their competence and their roles;
- the presence of multiple shifts regarding the distribution of the processes;
- the use of electronic-based audit techniques;
- the availability of temporary sites.

The number of sites audited and audit time will depend on the number, size and complexity of the activities at the site and the sites choice is performed considering the audit program.

The lead auditor coordinates the plan with the audit team and the manager of the customer. The audit Stage 2 objectives is to gather evidences about the implementation and effectiveness of the client management system.

The stage 2 audit includes at least the following elements:

- information and evidences collection of the management system with the requirements of the standards;
- monitoring, measuring, reporting and review of achievements of the client;
- compliance of the management system and applicable regulations;
- operational control of the client processes;
- internal audits and management review and improvements of the management system;
- responsibility and commitment of the management to implement the policy of the organization;
- the relationship between requirements, policies and objectives in accordance with the applicable standards;
- all applicable legal requirements;
- responsibilities, competence of personnel, operations, procedures, data on achievements and results of internal audits.

The process audit is described in WI 9.0-1 Rules for performing audit.

The opportunities for improvement and non-conformities are documented in the software which fills the F 9.0-06 Non conformity form and F 9.0-07 Strengths and opportunities for improvement.

During the closing meeting, the audited client provides its proposals for corrective actions that it believes will close the non-conformities and the corrective actions are checked by the audit team.

Before the closing meeting, the audit team reviewed the evidences obtained during the audit, analyze them and compiles them in terms of achieving the objectives audit compliance with the audit criteria and the implementation of the audit plan.

The audit team prepares the conclusions of the audit, taking in consideration the uncertainty of the process and it determines the necessary follow-up.

The audit findings are documented and reported under WI 9.0-1 Auditing rules.

The audit at the client ends with a closing meeting in which the audit team meets the company top management and discusses the compliance level with the standards.

In case of ISO 45001 it is necessary that the management legally responsible for occupational health and safety, personnel responsible for monitoring employees' health and safety and the employees' representative(s) with responsibility for occupational health and safety to attend the closing meeting.

Justification in case of absence shall be recorded.

Depending on the non-conformities gravity and number, the check is done by:

- by reviewing the documentation in the next 3 months and the checking the effectiveness of corrective actions during the next planned audit;

- on site during the next planned audit;

on site during an extraordinary audit (in this case, the lead auditor can propose the approval of the certification for the organization only after the approval of corrective action and the additional audit may be conducted within 6 months after the certification audit and if this deadline is not met the certification process is terminated).

The certificate can be issued only for checked and approved scope by the audit team.

The auditors and experts keep records of inspections during the audit using an online checklist on the software.

The lead Auditor analyze and summarize the evidences preparing the reports stage 2 F 9.0-04.2 and within 7 days from the conclusion of the audit or approval of the corrective actions taken (if applicable), the lead auditor makes a proposal and he/she prepares F 9.0-10 Proposal certification. The audit report is sent to the customer by e-mail and they are stored on the software in the specific section.

The certification manager collects all documents and records on the software which must contain:

- F 8.5-01 Application review;
- records relating to the performance of the contract;
- correspondence with the client, including the selection and coordination of the audit plan as dates and auditors;
- Audit program
- Audit team
- Stage 1 and Stage 2 audit plans;
- Stage 1 report;
- The assessment of the documentation of the audited management system;
- The evaluation of previous certification audits (for the re-certification audits);
- The nonconformities and the opportunities for improvement (if applicable);
- Stage 2 report;
- Proposal certification;

The records and the documents are described in F 9.0-09 Record of audited organization.

The records storage is managed according MP 10.2.3.

The records of the audited organization are then transmitted to the veto auditor within 7 days after the proposal.

In reviewing the documentation it's checked the completeness and comprehensiveness in accordance with ISO / IEC 17021:2015, procedures of certification bodies technical examination relating to the scope of certification.

If it's necessary, the Veto auditor can be helped by technical experts who are independent from the audited company and who are not involved in the certification process and in different geographical



areas, the Veto auditor is assisted by auditors or technical experts competent under the local law of the audited organization.

In case of omissions or ambiguity, the evidences are returned to the Lead Auditor to be fixed. When the documentation is correct, the Veto auditor certifies it with his/her approval on the software in F 9.0-12 Certification decision.

The certification decision is taken by the Head of the Certification Body, based on the evaluation of the results and conclusions of the lead auditor's opinion of Veto auditor and other relevant information and the certification decision is taken within 30 days after the veto auditor's check.

In positive case documented in the certification decision, the certificates are issued for each audited management system.

In case of denial of a certificate the client is notified in written form within 14 days after the decision by the Head of the Certification Body and the client may object in written form against the decision within 14 days from the notification.

Upon successful certification, the organizations receive a certificate in pdf format, signed by the Head of the Certification Body.

The validity of certificates issued by certification is 3 years from the date of the decision, which coincides with the date of the certification and registration in the F 9.0-14 Certified companies records.

The template of the certificate is F 9.0-13 Certificate and it's provided a separate certificate for every standard management system.

Each certificate has a unique number that is generated by an alphabet (Q for ISO 9001, E for ISO 14001, OHS for ISO 45001, followed by a dash followed by the unique client's number.

Each customer has a unique number that is reported in the certificate number (and in the Contract number) for quick and accurate traceability. The unique customer number is generated by taking the number of the day the customer was registered under the Gregorian calendar, followed by two numbers starting from 01 that follow the order if there are more than one customer registered the same day.

For example:

the first client registered on 09.01.2021 will have a unique number 21009-01, the first client registered on 10.01.2021 will have a unique number 21010-01, the second client registered on 10.01.2021 will have a unique number 21010-02, e21.

If the certificate is reprinted (for scope reduction / extension for example), 1 (and subsequently 2, 3 etc.) is added to the end of the original certificate number.

Issued certificates contain the following information:



- name and address of the certified organization;
- the certification scope;
- unique certificate number;
- date of issue of the certificate the date of decision of certification;
- the date by which the certificate is valid;
- date of initial certification (if applicable);
- locations certificated;
- certification mark (brand);
- information about the certification body.

The certificate is owned by the certification body and it operated under the procedure WP 8.3.

Upon receipt of the certificate, the client top management sign the F 8.3-01 declaration of compliance with requirements in relation to certification and certification symbols, these declaration must be stored on the software.

The certificate is transmitted to the client by mail.

In granting the certification outside the scope of accreditation of certification body issuing the certificate is placed only certification mark that is not in combination with the accreditation symbol.

## **5 SURVEILLANCE AUDIT**

The certification body performs audits for the period of validity (three years) on each certificate.

The surveillance audits are carried out at least once a year in order to preserve confidence and assessment of continued compliance with the applicable requirements for the specific certification standard.

For a certification cycle all requirements are audited, the surveillance scope audits shall be included:

- internal audits and management review;
- review of corrective actions taken during the previous audit;
- review of complaints in the management systems;
- effectiveness of the audited management systems regarding the achievement of objectives;
- the processes related to the handling of complaints;
- development of planned activities aimed at continual improvement;
- process control;
- review of any changes;
- use of the logo (mark) or other reference of certification body

The period for carrying out surveillance audit is determined by the date of the certification decision plus 12 months.

The annual surveillance audit can be performed as early as three months before the planned audit date.

Delays after the intended date are undesirable, require approval by the Head of the Certification Body and may lead to suspension of the validity of the certificate.

If the surveillance audit is not completed within the planned date of the audit, the certificate will be suspended for 6 months.

Within six months after the surveillance deadline, the audit can be performed to restore the certificate and the Head of the Certification Body can decide to include additional tasks to the audit. If within six months after the audit is not carried out a successful audit, the certificate will be withdrawn.

An exception to these rules in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Head of the Certification Body.

The surveillance audit is lead by lead auditor and the audit team should have the necessary competence in all the system.

In preparing the audit, the lead auditor examines client in terms of changes in the structure and procedures, the size of the company / organization and its activities, including a review of the valid documentation of the audited management system and other materials.

The results of the study could lead to the updating of the audit program, in the event of non-conformities found during the surveillance audit.

The surveillance audit is documented in F 9.0-04.2 Report of Audit.

After the end of the surveillance audit, Veto auditor reviews the audit documents submitted by the lead auditor:

- the conclusion of the audit team and the duration of the audit;
- audit program;
- audit plan;
- records of the implementation of the requirements of the standard;
- audit report (including non-conformities forms, strengths and opportunities forms, and the closure of previous non conformities);
- application for certificates.

In case of omissions or ambiguity, the evidences are returned to the Lead Auditor to be fixed. When the documentation is correct, the Veto auditor certifies it with his/her approval on the software in F 9.0-12 Certification decision.

## **6 RECERTIFICATION AUDIT**

The recertification audits are performed to check the conformity and effectiveness of the certified management system, and its applicability for providing coverage and continued fulfillment of all applicable requirements of the specific standard.

The recertification audits are planned and carried out at least 2 months before the expiry of the validity of the certificate.

This time includes the stage of review of the corrective actions, the recommendations of the about the certification and review for approval and decision to renew certification.

The recertification activities include a review of the client for the last cycle of certification.

In the event that there are previous certifications performed by an accredited certification body under a multilateral agreement (IAF MLA), a review of the previous certificate and audit reports is done.

The competence requirements for the auditors are the same as initial certification. The recertification audit includes a review of the documentation of the certified management system and an audit on site.

The audit at the client covers all applicable requirements and it includes the check of:

- the effectiveness of the interaction between all the elements of the certified management system;
- the integrity in case of internal and external changes related to the certification scope;
- the check of the continuous improvement of the management system in order to increase efficiency;
- the effectiveness of the management system related to the achievement of the objectives and policies of the certified organization and its performance.

Upon successful conclusion of the audit before the expiry date of the existing certification to begin the recertification is the date of expiry of the existing certification.

The recertification is not provided if the certification body fails to complete the audit or it's unable to verify that adjustments and corrective actions found significant non-conformities before the expiry date of the certificate.

## **7. TRANSFER OF CERTIFICATE**

The transfer is only valid for a certificate issued by an accredited certification body belonging to IAF MLA agreement and it is not possible to transfer suspended or terminated certificate.

The transfer of certification is performed through document review and if the transfer coincides with surveillance or recertification audit it will be also performed on site.

In the event of non-conformities from previous audits, the audit team has to check the closure activities and their effectiveness, paying attention to the agreement the customer made with the previous certification body, based on the documentation provided.

The application review has to include the check of:

- evidences to confirm that the client's certified activities are compatible with the accredited scope of the certification body;
- the reasons for the transfer;
- evidences that the sites of clients are included in the scope of the valid certificate;
- confirmation that the certificate is valid;
- audit reports of the certification cycle (or the last certification cycle in case of recertification) of the previous certification body (according IAF MD2 section 2.2.4);

- if the reports are not available or final audit has not been completed the client candidate for transfer is treated as a new certification;
- performance related to the compliance with current regulations,

If there are doubts in the application examination for transfer the decision is taken by the Head of the Certification Body.

The following surveillance / recertification audits are planned according to the audit program.

## **8. UNSCHEDULED (SPECIAL) AUDITS**

This group includes all audits that do not belong to the ordinary audits of the certification cycle (Certification Audit (Stage 1, Stage 2), Surveillance Audit (1 and 2), Recertification audit).

Special audits can be of the following types:

### **8.1. EXTENSION AUDITS**

The extension audit is done on the application for extension of the certificate already granted. The extension of the scope, activities and / or sites can also be performed at any time during the cycle of a valid certification, including during the surveillance audit, recertification audit.

The implementation of the audit, including approval processes and decision-making follows the procedure of the certification audit, considering all the requirements related to the requested extension.

After the successful extension, the period of validity of the certificate remains unchanged, but it will be reissued with updated date and scope.

### **8.2 SHORT NOTICE AUDITS**

Unscheduled

The unscheduled audits are conducted within a short time and without notice in the case of:

- received complaints including those relating to violation of WP 8.3 Terms of reference of the certification and use of the certification mark;
- received information about significant changes in the structure, processes of the client or the specific requirements of the standard;
- need to close a NC1 identified during a past audit;

The execution of the audit process follows that of an oversight except that the client cannot object to the selection of the audit team.

The client's refusal to carry out this type of audit will result in the withdrawal of the certificate.

## **9 SUSPENSION, TERMINATION AND LIMITATION OF THE SCOPE OF CERTIFICATION**

The certification body suspends the certification in the case of:

- repeated or serious violations identified during surveillance audit or inconsistencies with the requirements for certification which are not undertaken with corrective actions;
- misleading use of the certificate or logo of the certification body;
- the client does not perform recertification / surveillance audits in the planned timeframe;
- not paid amounts due for certification services;

- written request of the client;
- significant changes of client business activities.

The suspension of certification is performed by the Head of the Certification Body for a period not exceeding six (6) months and the decision shall specify the actions necessary to terminate the suspension and reinstatement of certification in accordance with the requirements of the certification scheme.

In this case, the certificate is temporarily invalid, the suspension period starts from the date of the decision and the certificate is restored after a written request by the client within the period of suspension.

In resolving the question that led to the suspension action for recovery of certification. Failing to address the causes that led to the suspension shall take action to revoke or limit the scope of certification. If during the audit recovery of certification, on-site re-establish inconsistencies with the requirements or the client does not request to restore the suspended action certification for its withdrawal.

The certification body limits the scope of certification, excluding the areas / processes that do not comply with repeated or significant violations of the requirements of a particular scheme.

The decision to limit and restore the certification is taken by the head of the certification body. The certificate is reissued and provided to the client with the modifications.

A decision for termination of the certification shall be taken in case of:

- termination of client activity;
- expiry of the provided certification and not requested by the client to renew certification;
- uncovered discrepancies after the deadline for suspension of certification / absence of a stated desire to restore the suspended certification;
- inability to implement new requirements for changes in the certification scheme;
- identified during the audit significant or repeated failure to conform with the requirements for certification;
- written request by the customer requested a interruption of certification;
- missing fulfill financial obligations;
- incorrect and misleading use of the certification logo.

Depending on the causes, the withdrawal period starts from the date of the decision or the date of expiration of the certification.

The decision to revoke the certification shall be taken by the head of the certification body.

The decision must be motivated and notified the customer in writing within 3 days from the date of withdrawal.

Upon termination, limiting and stopping the client has to stop using the certificate and the logos of the certification body.

Any changes in the presented range of certification, including amendments are documented in the Register of certified organizations F 9.0-14.

Against the decision to limit, suspend and terminate the certification client may open an objection, which is managed according to MP 9.7.