

RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR MANAGEMENT SYSTEM CERTIFICATION BODY ACCREDITATION

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 **Scope:** The purpose of these rules is to establish procedures governing accreditation of Management System Certification Bodies (MSCB) by International Accreditation Service, Inc. (IAS).

IAS accreditation does not make any representation nor should it be construed as making representation regarding attributes not specifically addressed by the accreditation. Accreditation also does not constitute an endorsement or recommendation for use of a particular certification body or certified organization.

1.2 Reference Documents

- 1.2.1 IAS Accreditation Criteria for Management System Certification Bodies, AC477.
- 1.2.2 IAS Rules of Procedure for Appeals Concerning International Accreditation Service, Inc., Actions

2.0 INITIAL ACCREDITATION

2.1 Initial Application, Fees and Assessment Costs

- 2.1.1 Each initial application must be submitted through the IAS Customer portal.
- 2.1.2 The new applicant must submit appropriate basic fee and assessment cost as identified in your quotation.
- 2.1.3 The basic fee covers one discipline and similar sectors or MSCB certification, as applicable and as provided in your quotation.
- 2.1.4 If any additional disciplines are identified during the course of accreditation, additional fees may apply. Disciplines of MSCB are broadly categorized as EMS, QMS, FSMS, ISMS, etc.

- 2.1.5 Initial applications held for more than 180 days, without the applicant's having fulfilled IAS requirements for accreditation, are subject to cancellation unless such term is extended by the IAS president or his/her designee.
- 2.1.6 All IAS fees are nonrefundable.
- 2.1.7 **Taxes and charges:** All sales, use, excise, value-added and similar taxes and charges are the responsibility of the applicant, and the applicant agrees to reimburse IAS for any such taxes and charges imposed on IAS with respect to services provided by IAS.
- 2.1.8 Required documentation as noted in Sections 4 and 5 of IAS AC477 must be submitted.
- 2.1.9 Desired scope of accreditation detailing the disciplines for which accreditation is sought must be submitted. As an example, the following format is recommended:

<i>Discipline of Certification</i>	<i>Quality Management Systems</i>
<i>Certification Standard</i>	<i>ISO 9001</i>
<i>Certification Scheme</i>	<i>For sector 4, the assessment includes the requirements set forth in BA9000</i>
<i>Certification Sectors</i>	
<i>4: Textiles and Textile Products (BA9000)</i>	<i>19: Electrical and Optical Equipment</i>
<i>7: Pulp, Paper and Paper Products</i>	<i>24: Recycling</i>

- 2.1.10 IAS may at any time, in addition to the required documentation noted above, require other information.
- 2.1.11 Initial applicants will be invoiced for the balance of costs and expenses resulting from the onsite assessment.
- 2.1.12 Additional fees, if any, due to identification of any additional disciplines of MSCB (refer to section 2.1.4) at the conclusion of the accreditation process will be invoiced.

2.2 Initial Assessment

- 2.2.1 Upon receipt by IAS of the application, applicable fees, required documentation and the desired scope of accreditation, IAS will process the application as follows:
- 2.2.1.1 A review of submitted documentation will be conducted to determine preliminary compliance with applicable requirements. Preliminary observations will be relayed to the applicant, including a request for any

additional data which may be required prior to scheduling the initial assessment.

2.2.1.2 An (optional) onsite pre-assessment visit may be scheduled at the discretion of the applicant for the purpose of determining preliminary compliance with applicable requirements. IAS and assessors shall ensure that no consultancy is provided during this pre-assessment exercise.

2.2.1.3 **Initial Assessment:** In consultation with the applicant, an initial onsite assessment at the CB's office and the CB's client (witness field assessment as required by relevant IAF MD documents and IAF resolutions) will be scheduled to verify compliance with the accreditation requirements.

2.2.1.4 **Response to Assessment Report:** A written response to any Corrective Action Requests (CARs) and Concerns identified during the initial assessment shall be submitted to IAS within thirty (30) days of the conclusion of the assessment as follows:

2.2.1.4.1 Corrective Action Requests (CARs) require a mandatory response on actions taken by the MSCB to resolve the CARs, including objective evidence substantiating the actions taken. The response must include root cause analysis to support CAR closures where appropriate. Resolution of CARs requiring revisions to the MSCB's management and technical system must be documented and submitted to IAS. Objective evidence may be in the form of revisions to procedures, additional training, mentoring and monitoring given to personnel accompanied by appropriate records, and/or other data.

2.2.1.4.2 Concerns require a mandatory written response from the MSCB within 30 days of submission of the assessment report. While objective evidence addressing Concerns is not mandatory, the MSCB must inform IAS on the action taken or intended action to be undertaken with a timeline for completion. The action taken by the organization to implement actions to resolve concerns will be verified at the agency's next scheduled assessment or during a follow-up assessment.

2.2.1.4.3 If more than 30 days are needed to resolve CARs or Concerns, the MSCB must request, in writing, for an extension from IAS. Requests for an extension should be accompanied by a reasonable estimate on when the responses will be submitted for review.

- 2.2.1.4.4 IAS reserves the right to conduct a follow-up assessment to determine if CARs and Concerns have been satisfactorily resolved.
- 2.2.1.4.5 Failure to resolve all CARS and Concerns within six months from the date of assessment will result in a reassessment or further action against the accreditation as called for in these rules.
- 2.2.2 IAS will grant accreditation upon determination that based on the onsite assessment and review of evidence submitted, the applicant has met all the accreditation requirements as an MSCB for the disciplines and sectors noted in the scope of accreditation certificate and available on the IAS website.
- 2.2.3 IAS may decide not to grant accreditation to the applicant for not fulfilling accreditation requirements. Any applicant denied accreditation may appeal this decision as per requirements noted under Section 6.2 of these rules.
- 2.2.4 Each initial accreditation is valid for a one-year period from the accreditation date.

2.3 Transfer of Accreditation: Applicant MSCB, currently accredited by a signatory to the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) Multilateral Recognition Arrangement, seeking transfer of accreditation, in addition to fulfilling IAS accreditation requirements, must provide the following:

- 2.3.1 A copy of the most recent accreditation certificate and scope of accreditation issued by the current accreditation body. Where accreditation has been withdrawn or cancelled, the reasons for such cancellation must be provided.
- 2.3.2 A complete copy of the previous two years' worth of office and witness audit reports from your current accreditation body.
- 2.3.3 A copy of corrective actions for any deficiencies noted in the audit reports, including acknowledgement of acceptance of the corrective actions by the current accreditation body. If the applicant and the accreditation body differ on the corrective actions or deficiencies, IAS will review them and make a decision separately.
- 2.3.4 Organizational chart (if not part of the management system documentation).
- 2.3.5 Completed IAS ISO/IEC 17021 and specific MSCB checklists.
- 2.3.6 Other information as deemed pertinent by IAS.

3.0 MAINTENANCE OF ACCREDITATION

3.1 Renewal Application, Fees and Assessment Costs

- 3.1.1 Each renewal application must be submitted through the IAS Customer portal.
- 3.1.2 An application to renew accreditation must be filed at least 15 days prior to the expiration date if continued accreditation is desired and shall be accompanied by the applicable fee as identified in the renewal notice.
- 3.1.3 Accreditation is subject to cancellation if an application to renew accreditation is not completed by the renewal date.
- 3.1.4 **Taxes and charges:** All sales, use, excise, value-added and similar taxes and charges are the responsibility of the applicant, and the applicant agrees to reimburse IAS for any such taxes and charges imposed on IAS with respect to services provided by IAS.
- 3.1.5 All expenses, including but not limited to travel and staff time, related to the assessments are reimbursable to IAS by the MSCB.
- 3.1.6 Additional fees, if any, due to identification of any additional disciplines (refer to section 2.1.4) at the conclusion of the accreditation process will be invoiced.

3.2 Surveillance Assessment after Initial Year of Accreditation

- 3.2.1 All accredited MSCBs are subject to a surveillance assessment at the end of the initial year of accreditation. IAS will determine whether the surveillance assessment may be conducted remotely or onsite. Determination will be based on factors including: severity of CARs and Concerns from the initial assessment, changes in the management system as indicated in the renewal application, complaints received by IAS in the past year and the risk associated with the scope of accreditation.
- 3.2.2 **Onsite Surveillance Assessment**
 - 3.2.2.1 If IAS determines an onsite surveillance assessment is required, IAS staff will contact the MSCB to schedule the assessment.
 - 3.2.2.2 At minimum, the following information shall be reviewed during the onsite surveillance assessment: the MSCB's internal audit and management review reports/minutes; any complaints; actions resulting from any Concerns noted in the previous assessment report; any major changes in key personnel, client audit files, progress of witness audits completed as per IAF MD

requirements, or in the MSCB's management system and the scope of accreditation with IAS.

3.2.2.3 Surveillance assessment process is similar to the initial assessment process noted above.

3.2.2.4 IAS may decide not to grant accreditation to the accredited MSCB for not fulfilling accreditation requirements. Any applicant denied accreditation may appeal this decision as per requirements noted under Section 6 of these rules.

3.2.2.5 For currently-accredited MSCBs, failure to respond to an IAS assessment report within 90 days will result in suspension of accreditation and removal of the CB's accreditation certificate from the IAS website.

3.2.3 Remote Surveillance Assessment

3.2.3.1 If IAS determines that the MSCB qualifies for a remote surveillance assessment, the MSCB shall provide the following information: the CB's internal audit and management review reports/minutes; any complaints; actions resulting from any Concerns noted in the previous assessment report; any major changes in key personnel, client audit files, progress of witness audits completed as per IAF MD requirements, or in the MSCB's management system and the scope of accreditation with IAS.

3.2.3.2 IAS will review the submittals and make a determination if the accreditation can be continued or an onsite surveillance assessment is required.

3.2.3.3 IAS may decide not to grant accreditation to the accredited MSCB for not fulfilling accreditation requirements. Any applicant denied accreditation may appeal this decision as per requirements noted under Section 6 of these rules.

3.3 First Interim Assessment after Surveillance Assessment

3.3.1 Depending on the size of the scope of accreditation and number of witness audits estimated for the first accreditation cycle as per IAF MD requirements, accredited MSCBs may be subject to an office or witness interim assessment or both 12 months after the Surveillance Assessment. IAS will determine whether the first interim assessment will be conducted remotely or onsite. Determination will be based on factors including: severity of CARs and Concerns from the surveillance assessment, changes in the management

system as indicated on the renewal application, complaints received by IAS during the previous year, required number of witness assessments and the risk associated with the scope of accreditation.

3.3.2 Onsite First Interim Assessment

3.3.2.1 If IAS determines an onsite assessment is required, IAS staff will contact the MSCB to schedule the assessment.

3.3.2.2 At a minimum, the information listed in 3.3.1 shall be reviewed during the onsite assessment.

3.3.2.3 First interim assessment process is similar to the initial assessment process noted above.

3.3.3 Remote First Interim Assessment

3.3.3.1 If IAS determines that the MSCB qualifies for a remote first interim assessment, the first remote interim assessment process will be similar to the remote surveillance assessment process noted in 3.2.3.

3.3.3.2 IAS will review the submittals and make a determination if the accreditation can be continued or an onsite assessment is required.

3.3.3.3 IAS may decide not to grant accreditation to the accredited MSCB for not fulfilling accreditation requirements. Any applicant denied accreditation may appeal this decision as per requirements noted under Section 6 of these rules.

3.4 Second Interim Assessment after First Interim Assessment

3.4.1 Depending on the size of the scope of accreditation and number of witness audits estimated for the first accreditation cycle as per IAF MD requirements, accredited MSCBs may be subject to an office or witness interim assessment or both 24 months after the Surveillance Assessment (or 12 months after the First Interim Assessment). IAS will determine whether the second interim assessment may be conducted remotely or onsite. Determination will be based as listed in 3.3.1.

3.4.2 Onsite Second Interim Assessment

If IAS determines an onsite assessment is required, the second interim assessment process will be similar to the first interim assessment process noted in 3.3.2.

3.4.3 Remote Second Interim Assessment

If IAS determines that the MSCB qualifies for a remote second interim assessment, the second remote interim assessment process will be similar to the first interim assessment process noted in 3.3.3.

3.5 IAS will grant accreditation upon determination based on surveillance or interim assessment and completion of renewal application that the accredited MSCB has met the accreditation requirements for the disciplines noted in the scope of accreditation certificate and available on the IAS website.

3.6 Onsite Reassessment

3.6.1 An onsite reassessment is required at the end of every four-year term commencing from the date of the granting of the initial accreditation.

3.6.2 In consultation with the accredited MSCB, an onsite assessment will be scheduled to verify compliance with the accreditation requirements.

3.6.3 Onsite reassessment process is similar to the initial assessment process noted above.

3.6.4 For currently-accredited MSCBs, failure to respond to an IAS assessment report within 90 days will result in suspension of accreditation and removal of the MSCB's accreditation certificate from the IAS website.

3.7 Scope Extension Assessments

3.7.1 Requests for extension of scope require submission of a formal request detailing the extension (e.g., disciplines) requested.

3.7.2 MSCBs seeking extension of scope may be subject to an onsite scope extension assessment.

3.7.3 In consultation with the accredited MSCB, an onsite assessment will be scheduled.

3.8 Extraordinary Assessments

3.8.1 Extraordinary onsite assessments may be conducted, including unannounced assessments, to investigate formal complaints or other changes in a MSCB's status that may affect the ability of the MSCB to fulfill IAS requirements for accreditation.

- 3.8.2 All costs associated with the extraordinary assessment will be the responsibility of the accredited MSCB.

4.0 RESPONSIBILITIES OF MSCB

- 4.1 **Changes to MSCB's Accreditation Status:** MSCBs accredited under these rules shall notify IAS in writing within thirty days concerning the following:

- 4.1.1 Change in MSCB name.
- 4.1.2 Change in MSCB ownership.
- 4.1.3 Change in MSCB address.
- 4.1.4 Changes in facilities, equipment, policies or procedures that affect the MSCB's accreditation.
- 4.1.5 Changes in principal officers or key supervisory personnel.
- 4.1.6 Change in status, including but not limited to cancellation, revocation, suspension or withdrawal of other accreditations maintained by the MSCB.
- 4.1.7 Changes in locations where certifications are being issued or distributed.

- 4.2 IAS may assess the CB or the CB's certified customers without any or with limited time notice to the CB. Therefore, the CB must include in its contractual agreements with its customers, their responsibility to accept and facilitate IAS assessments of their management systems. Failure to accept and/or facilitate such assessments may result in suspension or withdrawal of the CB's accreditation.

4.3 MSCBs Operating Under Special Jurisdictional/Governmental Regulations

- 4.3.1 Regulatory entities may place specific compliance requirements on MSCBs operating within their jurisdiction. If an MSCB intends to seek acceptance of its certifications by these entities, they must agree to comply with the additional assessment requirements, including more frequent onsite assessments, as applicable.
- 4.3.2 By executing the IAS application for MSCB accreditation, the MSCB agrees to furnish all needed documentation, pay the required fees, perform additional witness inspections, or otherwise fully comply with the requirements of the regulatory entities.

4.4 **Indemnification:** All applications for an IAS accreditation contain indemnification provisions.

4.5 **Unannounced Assessments:** The MSCB agrees to permit unannounced assessments of its office and facilities by the IAS for cause (see 4.2), such as formal complaints, pattern of nonconformance, regulatory requests, etc.

4.6 **Usage of the IAS Name or Symbol by Accredited MSCBs**

4.6.1 An accredited MSCB can make reference to its IAS accreditation on its website, in its general literature and promotional materials, and in business solicitations, under the following provisions:

4.6.1.1 The MSCB may not reference its accredited status in any way that indicates or implies accreditation in areas outside the actual scope of the specific IAS accreditation; or that indicates or implies IAS endorsement of any particular product, material or service certified by the body.

4.6.1.2 When the IAS name and/or the registered symbol are used, it shall be accompanied by the word “ACCREDITED.” The symbol must also include the name of the accredited program, e.g., “Management Systems Certification Body.”

4.6.1.3 When the IAS name or the registered symbol is printed on letterhead and/or other MSCB stationery, such stationery **may not** be used for work proposals or quotations if none of the work is within the MSCB’s current scope of accreditation with IAS.

4.6.1.4 The IAS registered symbol is to be used on IAS-endorsed certifications. The IAS registered symbol may not be changed in any way, although it may be enlarged or reduced.

4.6.1.5 The IAS registered symbol displayed on the MSCB’s IAS-endorsed certificates must include the name of the accredited program, e.g., “Management Systems Certification Body,” provided the certificates relate to disciplines that are within the MSCB’s IAS-approved scope of accreditation. Whenever the IAS symbol is used on a certificate covering multiple disciplines, some of which are within the MSCB’s scope of accreditation and some of which are outside the scope, the MSCB must clearly identify whatever portion of the disciplines are not covered by IAS accreditation.

- 4.6.2 It is the MSCB's responsibility to not misrepresent its accreditation status in any way, and to secure IAS approval in advance whenever there is a question about the MSCB's intended use of the IAS name and/or symbol.
- 4.6.3 Accredited certification bodies shall not issue nonaccredited certifications in accredited scope fields.

5.0 RESPONSIBILITY OF INTERNATIONAL ACCREDITATION SERVICE

- 5.1 **Accreditation Documents:** A certificate of accreditation and scope of accreditation document shall be issued and maintained current for each accredited MSCB upon satisfactory completion of the accreditation requirements. For each accredited MSCB, the scope of accreditation shall be posted on the IAS website. Accreditation actions will also be noted on the IAS website.
- 5.2 **Fee Modifications:** Any modifications to the fees must be reviewed and approved by the IAS president or his/her designee.
- 5.3 **Proprietary Data:** Data in any accreditation file or application are considered proprietary to the applicant. The data may be disclosed by IAS only upon the written consent of the applicant or pursuant to subpoena issued by a court or other governmental agency of competent jurisdiction. Proprietary data may also be disclosed to a staff member of IAS or an authorized representative of IAS having a legitimate interest therein; any duly identified representative of any MSCB, or like person or organization who initially prepared the data, or a duly authorized representative thereof stated to be an employee or principal thereof having a legitimate interest therein. Governmental regulatory bodies may be granted access in the interest of public safety or preservation of property as it relates to enforcement of laws/regulations upon receipt of an official written request.
- 5.4 **Access to Proprietary Data:** From time to time, IAS records and files are audited by national and international bodies on a random basis to establish conformance with international accreditation and conformity assessment standards. It is understood that, by executing an accreditation application, MSCBs grant IAS the authority to allow such access.

- 5.5 **Selection of Assessment Team:** IAS will provide an opportunity to the applicant or accredited MSCB to appeal against an assessor or assessment team assigned to assess the MSCB. This appeal must request in writing with the reasons identified. IAS, in mutual agreement with the MSCB, may arrange to assign a different assessor or assessment team for the scheduled assessment.

6.0 DENIAL, REVOCATION, MODIFICATION, SUSPENSION OR CANCELLATION OF THE ACCREDITATION, AND APPEALS

- 6.1 Any accreditation is subject to denial, revocation, modification, suspension or cancellation upon occurrence of any of the following:
- 6.1.1 Failure by the MSCB to comply with the current or updated Rules of Procedure.
 - 6.1.2 Failure to comply with the current or updated Accreditation Criteria.
 - 6.1.3 Failure to comply with any condition to the issuance of the accreditation.
 - 6.1.4 Any misstatement, whether intentionally or unintentionally made, in the application or any data or documentation submitted in support thereof.
 - 6.1.5 Failure to comply with any provision contained in the application.
 - 6.1.6 Failure to comply with any terms of the management system documentation on which the IAS accreditation was based.
 - 6.1.7 Any other grounds considered as adequate cause in the judgment of IAS.

6.2 Appeals

- 6.2.1 The denial, revocation, modification, suspension or cancellation of accreditation may only be appealed by the holder of the accreditation.
- 6.2.2 Procedures for appeals of denial, revocation, modification, suspension or cancellation of accreditation shall be in accordance with the Rules of Procedure for Appeals Concerning International Accreditation Service, Inc., Actions. The IAS president or his/her designee, or the Board of Directors, as the case may be, may shorten any of the time periods set forth in the Rules of Procedure for Appeals Concerning International Accreditation Service, Inc., Actions, if such action is deemed necessary, in their discretion, in the interest of public safety and welfare.

- 6.3 **With No Right To Appeal:** Notwithstanding anything in these rules to the contrary, any initial application, or accreditation may be denied, revoked, modified, suspended or

cancelled by the IAS president or his/her designee for any of the following reasons with no right of appeal:

- 6.3.1 Failure to pay required fees to IAS within thirty days from the date of the mailing by IAS of written demand for payment.
- 6.3.2 Failure to furnish any material or data relating to MSCB accreditation required by IAS within the specified time limit, unless extended by the IAS president or his/her designee.
- 6.3.3 Failure to respond and resolve IAS Corrective Action Requests or Concerns resulting from an IAS assessment report in the allotted time, unless extended by the IAS president or his/her designee.
- 6.3.4 Failure to permit or submit to an assessment as set forth in Sections 2 and 3 and, if applicable, the special oversight requirements stipulated in Section 4.3 of the Rules of Procedure.
- 6.3.5 Failure to furnish information and/or submit to a remote surveillance assessment as required in Section 3.2.3 of these rules within the specified time limit.

6.4 Results Of Denial, Revocation, Modification, Suspension or Cancellation

- 6.4.1 Upon the occurrence of any of the events set forth in Section 6.1 or Section 6.3, IAS, by the decision of its president or his/her designee, may choose any of the following actions:
 - 6.4.1.1 Denial of the application.
 - 6.4.1.2 Revocation of the accreditation.
 - 6.4.1.3 Modification of the accreditation, on such terms as determined by the IAS president or his/her designee.
 - 6.4.1.4 Suspension of the accreditation for such period on such terms as determined by the IAS president or his/her designee.
 - 6.4.1.5 Cancellation of the accreditation.
- 6.4.2 The decisions of the IAS president or his/her designee with respect to any of the actions set forth in this section may become effective immediately if deemed necessary, in the interest of public safety and welfare, may be stayed pending an appeal pursuant to the Rules of Procedure for Appeals Concerning International Accreditation Service, Inc., Actions, or may be otherwise stayed

on such terms and conditions as determined by the president or his/her designee.

- 6.4.3 Upon revocation or cancellation of the accreditation or during any period of suspension, unless this provision is specifically modified by the terms of the suspension, the accredited MSCB shall discontinue all use of the IAS symbol. The MSCB shall also immediately discontinue any references to IAS accreditation on any reports, certificates, or promotional material.
- 6.4.4 IAS shall have the right to immediately notify governmental jurisdictions and any other interested parties of any improper and unauthorized reference to the continuation of the accreditation, when in the sole judgment of IAS, as determined by its president or his/her designee, such notification is necessary in the interest of public safety or welfare.
- 6.4.5 Upon the determination by IAS that cause exists for any of the actions specified in this section, with respect to the accreditation, IAS shall deliver to the MSCB a written statement, signed by the IAS president or his/her designee, setting forth the factual basis for such action. This written statement shall include a specific reference to the cause for the action which is set forth in the Rules of Procedure. ▪