

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 [herein referred to as 'Management System Certification Body (MSCB)] or certified client.

1.2 Reference Documents: Publications listed below refer to current editions (unless otherwise stated)

- 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
- 1.2.3 IAF Information and Mandatory Documents

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 of MSCB certification, as applicable and as provided in your quotation.

- 2.1.4 Applicants with related entities (such as CB key locations, subcontractors and/or subcontractor key locations) must disclose this information on the initial application for accreditation. Any related entities identified during the course of accreditation will be reviewed for addition to the accreditation certificate, additional fees may apply and a request for a quote for additional costs can be provided upon request.
- 2.1.5 If any additional disciplines are identified during the course of accreditation, additional fees may apply.
- 2.1.6 Initial applications held for more than 180 days, without the applicant's having fulfilled IAS requirements for accreditation, are subject to non-refundable cancellation unless such term is extended by the IAS president or his/her designee.
- 2.1.7 All IAS fees are nonrefundable. If any exceptions are granted, IAS management reviews the request from the MSCB and decide accordingly.
- 2.1.8 **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.
- 2.1.9 Required documentation as noted in Sections 4 and 5 of IAS AC477 must be submitted.
- 2.1.10 Desired scope of accreditation detailing the disciplines for which accreditation is sought must be submitted. If CABs want national versions of ISO standards included in the IAS scope, it is their responsibility to demonstrate equivalence to the assessment team based on National Standards Body Declaration. As an example, the following format is recommended:

<i>Discipline of Certification</i>	<i>Quality Management Systems</i>
<i>Certification Standard</i>	<i>ISO 9001:2015</i>
<i>Additional Information:</i>	<i>e.g. Includes the current edition of the equivalent national standard for sub scopes</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>

2.1.11 IAS may at any time, in addition to the required documentation noted above, require other information.

2.1.12 Initial applicants are invoiced for the balance of costs and expenses resulting from the onsite assessment (including cost of assessment of related entities).

2.1.13 Additional fees, if any, due to identification of any additional disciplines or related entities of MSCB (refer to section 2.1.4) at the conclusion of the accreditation process are also 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 processes the application as follows:

2.2.1.1 A review of submitted documentation is conducted to determine preliminary compliance with applicable requirements. Preliminary observations are relayed to the applicant, including a request for any additional data which may be required prior to scheduling the initial assessment. If the review of the submitted documentation indicates inability to achieve accreditation, the application can be cancelled and application fee paid will be returned.

2.2.1.2 A pre-assessment visit may be scheduled at the discretion of the applicant or IAS for the purpose of determining preliminary compliance with applicable requirements. Any costs incurred during preassessment will be charged to the applicant. IAS and assessors do not provide any consultancy during this pre-assessment exercise.

2.2.1.3 **Initial Assessment:** In communication with the applicant, an initial assessment at the MSCB's office and the MSCB's client (witness field assessment as required by relevant IAF MD documents and IAF resolutions) are scheduled to verify compliance with the accreditation requirements. Additionally, if any other related entities were identified, they are subject to assessment.

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 by the MSCB 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. 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 are verified at the MSCB'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 shall 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 an assessment or further action against the accreditation as called for in these rules.

2.2.2 IAS grants accreditation upon determination 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 has the right to 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 office and witness assessment reports from the current accreditation body. IAS requires at least all assessment records from the current accreditation body for their accreditation cycle.

2.3.3 A copy of corrective actions for any deficiencies noted in the assessment 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 an independent decision.

2.3.4 Ownership and organizational chart (if not part of the management system documentation).

- 2.3.5 Where required, additional information to support the application may be requested.

3.0 MAINTENANCE OF ACCREDITATION

3.1 Renewal, Fees and Assessment Costs

- 3.1.1 Each renewal must be completed on the IAS Customer portal.
- 3.1.2 Payment to renew accreditation must be filed at least 15 days prior to the expiration date if continued accreditation is desired.
- 3.1.3 Accreditation is subject to cancellation if renewal 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 and/or related entities at the conclusion of the accreditation process are invoiced.

3.2 Surveillance Assessments

- 3.2.1 All accredited MSCBs are subject to a surveillance assessment at the end of the initial year of accreditation and subsequent years until reassessment. The surveillance assessment will include office, witness and related entity assessments.
- 3.2.2 The IAS accreditation cycle for all MSCBs is 4 years.
- 3.2.3 At minimum, the following information shall be reviewed during the surveillance assessment: the MSCB's internal audit and management review reports/minutes; any complaints; actions resulting from any findings noted in the previous assessment report; any major changes in key personnel, client audit files, progress of witness assessments completed as per IAF MD requirements; or in the MSCB's management system and the scope of accreditation with IAS.
- 3.2.4 Surveillance assessment process is similar to the initial assessment process noted above.

3.2.5 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.

3.2.6 For 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.

3.3 IAS will grant accreditation upon determination based on surveillance and compliance to the accreditation requirements for the disciplines noted in the scope of accreditation available on the IAS website.

3.4 Reassessment

3.4.1 A reassessment is required at the end of every four-year term commencing from the date of the granting of the initial accreditation. The reassessment will include office, witness and related entity assessments.

3.4.2 In communication with the accredited MSCB, an assessment will be scheduled to verify compliance with the accreditation requirements.

3.4.3 Reassessment process is similar to the initial assessment process noted above.

3.4.4 For 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.

3.5 Scope Extension and Related Entity Addition Assessments

3.5.1 Scope Extension

3.5.1.1 Requests for extension of scope require submission of a formal request detailing the extension (e.g., codes, technical areas, etc.) requested.

3.5.1.2 MSCBs seeking extension of scope may be subject to a scope extension assessment.

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

3.5.2 Related Entity Addition

3.5.2.1 Requests for addition of Related Entities requires a submission of a formal Related Entities Application

3.5.2.2 MSCBs seeking addition of Related Entities may be subject to an assessment.

3.5.2.3 In communication with the CB, an assessment will be planned.

3.6 Extraordinary Assessments

- 3.6.1 Extraordinary assessments may be conducted, including unannounced assessments (whether at the MSCB, Related Entity or the Certified Client locations), to investigate formal complaints or other changes in an MSCB's status that may affect the ability of the MSCB to fulfill IAS requirements for accreditation. A report will be provided at the conclusion of the assessment.
- 3.6.2 All costs associated with the extraordinary assessment will be the responsibility of the accredited MSCB.
- 3.6.3 To prevent suspension or cancellation, MSCBs must undertake investigative measures for any deficiencies identified in the report during these assessments and shall respond to IAS within the stipulated timeframe. IAS will invoice the MSCBs for the cost of these assessments.
- 3.6.4 For Accredited MSCBs, Failure to respond to an assessment report within the stipulated timeframe may result in suspension of accreditation and removal of the MSCBs accreditation certificate from the IAS website. In some cases, the MSCB may be subject to cancellation of accreditation.
- 3.6.5 IAS may assess the MSCB or the MSCBs clients with limited to no notice. Failure to accept unannounced assessment of either the MSCB or the Certified Clients may result in suspension and/or withdrawal of the accreditation.

3.7 Accreditation cycle

- 3.7.1 Each accreditation is valid for a four-year period depending on the completion of accreditation assessments and closure of all findings. This is calculated from the initial granting date of accreditation.
- 3.7.2 IAS accredited MSCBs have a one year administrative validity which is listed on the IAS website.

3.8 Accreditation and Certification Data

- 3.8.1 All IAS accredited MSCB certificates and scopes of accreditation are listed on the IAS website

- 3.8.2 All accredited certificates issued by the MSCBs must include a description of the services and the appropriate IAF codes (as listed in ID-1, MD-17 etc.), food categories (as listed in ISO/TS 22003) or medical device technical areas (ISO 13485). Not including the appropriate codes, categories etc. in accredited certificates issued by MSCBs, is a violation of this Rules of Procedure.
- 3.8.3 All accredited MSCBs must register in the IAF CertSearch Database.
- 3.8.4 All accredited certifications issued by accredited MSCBs must be registered on the IAF CertSearch database (log on to www.iafcertsearch.org)
- 3.8.5 If an accredited MSCB does not register on the IAF Certsearch database, they are subject to administrative action.
- 3.8.6 The MSCB must upload details of certified clients to the IAF Certsearch database as soon as possible after issuance of the certificate.
- 3.8.7 By agreeing to initial/continued accreditation by IAS, MSCBs consent to the release of all client data input to IAF Certsearch to IAS for verification purposes.

4.0 RESPONSIBILITIES OF MSCB

- 4.1 **Changes to MSCB's Accreditation Status:** MSCBs accredited under these rules shall notify IAS in writing at least thirty days prior to changes 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 **Related Entities:** MSCBs seeking initial or continued accreditation with IAS must disclose all related entities.
 - 4.2.1 Please refer to IAS/MSCB/031 for requirements.

4.3 The MSCB must include in its contractual agreements with its certified clients, their responsibility to accept and facilitate IAS assessments of their management systems.

4.4 **MSCBs Operating Under Special Jurisdictional/Governmental Regulations**

4.4.1 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.

4.4.2 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.

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

4.6 **Unannounced Assessments:** The MSCB agrees to permit unannounced assessments of its office, certified clients and related entities by IAS for cause (see 3.6.3 and 4.2), such as formal complaints, pattern of nonconformance, regulatory requests, fraudulent activity unethical behavior, misuse of logo etc.

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

4.7.1 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:

4.7.1.1 Only the accredited CB and the CB key locations can use the IAS accreditation Symbol. Subcontractor Key Locations and/or Subcontractors are not permitted to claim accreditation or use the IAS accreditation Symbol.

4.7.1.2 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.

- 4.7.1.3 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”.
- 4.7.1.4 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.
- 4.7.1.5 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.
- 4.7.1.6 The IAS registered symbol displayed on the MSCB’s IAS-endorsed certificates must include the name of the accredited program and accreditation number, “MSCB-YYY” to the right of or under the IAS accreditation symbol” provided the certificates relate to sub scopes 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.
- 4.7.2 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.
- 4.7.3 The address and legal name featured on the accreditation certificate must be responsible for substantive key activities (i.e. Policy formulation; Process and/or procedure development; Initial approval of auditing personnel, or control of their training; On-going monitoring of auditing personnel; Application review; Assignment of auditing personnel; Control of surveillance or recertification audits; Final report review or certification decision or approval) including issuance of certification. IAS reserves the right to deny changes in address if substantive key activities are not being conducted from the requested address. IAS assessors will determine the suitability of the office as a main location during assessment. This office will be assessed each year in combination with a sample of related entities.

- 4.7.4 In accordance with IAF Resolution 2015-14, accredited MSCBs shall not issue NON-ACCREDITED CERTIFICATIONS in scopes for which they are accredited.
- 4.7.5 IAS Symbol cannot be used by certified clients of IAS accredited MSCBs.
- 4.7.6 On a periodic basis IAS is subject to evaluation by the IAF, other regional co-operations and other regulators. Accredited MSCBs consent to release of data to these organizations and to facilitate evaluations which may include a visit to the MSCB, related entities and/or certified client locations.
- 4.7.7 If the accredited MSCB wishes to display the combined IAS/IAF MLA Mark, the MSCB must enter into a separate sub-license agreement with IAS in accordance with the 'Policy on the use of ILA/IAF/IAS Combined Marks.

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 to confidential proprietary data. As required by IAF, IAS shares the information of accredited MSCB's already available on the IAS website with IAF Certsearch database, IAF CertSearch is responsible, to protect and manage the loaded data.

5.5 **Appeal to Change 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 be requested 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 Limited Considerations for 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, unless extended by the IAS president or his/her designee.
- 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 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 requirements stipulated in Section 4.4 of the Rules of Procedure.

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. ▪