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## **ACCREDITATION CRITERIA FOR MANAGEMENT SYSTEM CERTIFICATION BODIES**

**AC477**

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### **PREFACE**

The attached accreditation criteria have been issued to provide all interested parties with guidelines on implementing performance features of the applicable standards referenced herein. The criteria were developed and adopted following public hearings conducted by the International Accreditation Service, Inc. (IAS), Accreditation Committee and are effective on the date shown above. All accreditations issued or reissued on or after the effective date must comply with these criteria. If the criteria are an updated version from a previous edition, solid vertical lines (|) in the outer margin within the criteria indicate a technical change or addition from the previous edition. Deletion indicators (→) are provided in the outer margins where a paragraph or item has been deleted if the deletion resulted from a technical change. These criteria may be further revised as the need dictates.

IAS may consider alternate criteria provided the proponent submits substantiating data demonstrating that the alternate criteria are at least equivalent to the attached criteria and otherwise meet applicable accreditation requirements.

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# ACCREDITATION CRITERIA FOR MANAGEMENT SYSTEM CERTIFICATION BODIES

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. **Scope:** These criteria set forth the requirements for obtaining and maintaining International Accreditation Service, Inc. (IAS), Management System Certification Body (MSCB) accreditation. The criteria supplement the IAS Rules of Procedure for Management System Certification Bodies.
- 1.2. **Normative and Reference Documents:** Publications listed below refer to current editions (unless otherwise stated).
  - 1.2.1. ISO/IEC Standard 17021-1, Conformity assessment – Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems – Part 1: Requirements.
  - 1.2.2. ISO/IEC Standard 17021 series of standards as applicable.
  - 1.2.3. All IAF Mandatory Documents (MD).  
([http://www.iaf.nu/articles/Mandatory\\_Documents\\_/38](http://www.iaf.nu/articles/Mandatory_Documents_/38))
  - 1.2.4. IAF Resolutions related to accreditation bodies and transitions as available on the IAF website.
  - 1.2.5. All IAF Informative Documents (ID).  
([http://www.iaf.nu/articles/Informative\\_Documents\\_/32](http://www.iaf.nu/articles/Informative_Documents_/32))
  - 1.2.6. ISO/IEC Standard 17000, Conformity assessment – Vocabulary and general principles.

## 2. DEFINITIONS

- 2.1. Applicable definitions found in ISO/IEC Standard 17000 series apply.
- 2.2. **APAC:** Asia Pacific Accreditation Cooperation
- 2.3. **CAB:** Conformity Assessment Body
- 2.4. **IAF:** International Accreditation Forum
- 2.5. **MSCB:** Management System Certification Body applicant or accredited by IAS also referred to as 'Customer'
- 2.6. MSCB Certified client: Certified client of MSCB also referred to as 'Client'
- 2.7. **Witness Audits:** Certification audits that are observed by an IAS assessor
- 2.8. **Remote Assessments:** Accreditation Body's assessment of the physical location or virtual site of a CAB office or CAB's client, using electronic means
- 2.9. Virtual site: An online environment allowing persons to execute processes, e.g. in a cloud environment.

- 2.10 MSCB main office location:** The main office is listed on the IAS Certificate of Accreditation where activities are conducted and/or information maintained regarding the performance and management of all processes related to **all** management system activities (refer to 2.15).
- 2.11 MSCB key location:** Entities performing and/or managing key management system certification activities, on behalf of accredited certification bodies, **which are** wholly or partly owned or employed by the MSCB (refer to 2.15).
- 2.12 Subcontractor key location:** Entities performing and/or managing key management system certification activities, on behalf of accredited certification bodies, **which are NOT** wholly or partly owned or employed by the MSCB.
- 2.13 Subcontractor (No key activities):** Entities performing and/or managing processes related to management system activities, on behalf of accredited certification bodies, **which are NOT** wholly or partly owned or employed by the MSCB (processes include; marketing, communications, outreach, etc.).
- 2.14 Entity/Entities:** Collective term used in this document to describe any/all of the above four location types.
- 2.15 Key Management System Certification Activities:** Policy formulation; Process and/or procedure development; Initial approval of auditing personnel, or control of their training; Ongoing monitoring of auditing personnel; Application review; Assignment of auditing personnel; Control of surveillance or recertification audits; Final report review or certification decision or approval.

### **3. ELIGIBILITY**

- 3.1. Accreditation services are available to all third-party Management System Certification Bodies that meet the following requirements:
- 3.1.1. Have at least a minimum of one certified customers in each sub scope in the requested scope of accreditation
  - 3.1.2. Have completed at least one Internal Audit and one Management Review of the MSCB main and key locations.
  - 3.1.3. Have a complete and demonstrable management system based on the requirements of the ISO/IEC 17021 series of standards (as applicable)
  - 3.1.4. Have at least one auditor or pool of auditors approved for each IAF technical cluster, critical code, technical area or category in the requested scope of accreditation.

- 3.1.5. All office and witness assessments are conducted onsite unless agreed by IAS for remote or virtual assessments or mandated by IAF under special circumstances.
- 3.2. Accreditation services are available for all third-party MSCBs who provide certification for the disciplines listed in Annex A. These publications refer to current editions (unless otherwise stated). IAS may consider requests for recognition of other disciplines on a case-by-case basis.
- 3.3. All documents submitted to IAS must be in English.
- 3.4. The MSCB, or any part of the same legal entity or any entity under the organizational control of the MSCB cannot offer or provide management system consultancy.
- 3.5. The IAS Accreditation cycle for MSCB is 4 years. Refer to Annex B.

#### ➔ 4. REQUIRED BASIC INFORMATION

- 4.1. MSCBs must demonstrate compliance with the following requirements:
  - 4.1.1. ISO/IEC Standard 17021 series of standards as applicable.
  - 4.1.2. All IAF Mandatory Documents (MD).  
([http://www.iaf.nu/articles/Mandatory\\_Documents\\_/38](http://www.iaf.nu/articles/Mandatory_Documents_/38))
  - 4.1.3. IAF Resolutions related to accreditation bodies and transitions as available on the IAF website.
  - 4.1.4. All IAF Informative Documents (ID).  
([http://www.iaf.nu/articles/Informative\\_Documents\\_/32](http://www.iaf.nu/articles/Informative_Documents_/32))
  - 4.1.5. ISO/IEC Standard 17000, Conformity assessment – Vocabulary and general principles.
- 4.2. Relevant IAS policy documents
  - 4.2.1. IAS Policy – Certification Bodies (CBs) maintaining CB Key Locations, Subcontractor Key Locations, Subcontractors, and CB Locations
  - 4.2.2. Policy on the Transfer of Accreditation by MSCBs'
  - 4.2.3. Policy on the Restricted Use of IAS Endorsement by Accredited Organizations
  - 4.2.4. Policy on the use of the ILAC/IAF/IAS Combined Marks
  - 4.2.5. Food Safety Systems Certification (FSSC) V.5 Transition Policy
  - 4.2.6. Accreditation policy for Aerospace Quality Management System Certification Bodies

#### 5. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION (AS APPLICABLE)

- 5.1. All requested scopes must be in the format used in the IAS MSCB desired scope of accreditation pre-application form
- 5.2. Additional standards and guidelines will be used when performing assessments of the respective certification disciplines as listed in the Annex A. These publications refer to current editions (unless otherwise stated).

- 5.3. All accredited MSCBs and their certified clients must comply and be included in the IAF CERTSEARCH database including meeting the requirements stated in the IAS Rules of Procedure (MSCB) on the use of the IAF CERTSEARCH Mark. This applies to:
- 5.3.1. MSCBs accredited by IAS,;
  - 5.3.2. Entities certified by IAS accredited MSCBs.
  - 5.3.3. MSCBs must disclose all certified clients issued with the IAS symbol in the IAF CertSearch database. Non-disclosure will result in suspension and/or cancellation of the MSCB accreditation.
  - 5.3.4. Encourage MSCB clients to use the IAF CertSearch logo on the client websites.
- 5.4. For Aerospace Quality Management System Certification Body accreditations, refer to the policy listed on section 4.2.6 for all stages of application to final accreditation.
- 5.5. Accredited **Management Systems Certification Bodies – Unannounced Visits**: The following requirements must be observed by both MSCBs and their certified clients:
- 5.5.1. When IAS assessors arrive unannounced at either MSCB location or MSCB certified clients' site, they must be permitted access to the facility, management system documentation and all associated records. Please note that MSCBs have signed the application for accreditation with IAS which requires compliance to the AC477, Rules of Procedure for MSCBs and any published IAS policies and requirements.
  - 5.5.2. The MSCB certified client must have a readily available copy of the last audit report issued by the MSCB
  - 5.5.3. Have demonstrable evidence of the certification process (e.g., Management Review, internal audits, audit report, closure of findings, corrective action etc.).
  - 5.5.4. IAS will only accept certified client's audit report provided directly by the MSCBs.
- 5.6. **Accredited Management Systems Certification Bodies – Transitions to IAS requirements, international standards or IAF MDs**: The following is required when transitioning:
- 5.6.1. A transition plan to be provided by the MSCB to IAS
  - 5.6.2. Qualified and experienced personnel
  - 5.6.3. Audit records if any, relating to the transition or a witness assessment as needed
- 5.7. **Applicant Management System Certification Body – Initial Accreditation**: The following must be provided when seeking a quotation for accreditation:
- 5.7.1. Formal Application is through the IAS Portal

- 5.7.2. IAS Desired Scope of Accreditation Form. Template available in the IAS portal, document titled "IAS-MSCB-Accreditation -- Desired Scope of Accreditation (Available under "Scope Document" within portal)
- 5.7.3. Information regarding current or past accreditation status, including, but not limited to:
  - 5.7.3.1. Any negative findings that are currently unresolved according to accreditation body procedures
  - 5.7.3.2. Any outstanding payment to an IAF member accreditation body
  - 5.7.3.3. Any sanctions that have been brought against the CAB within the past five years and the reasons for those sanctions.
  - 5.7.3.4. Please note section 2.10 with regard to main office location

**5.8. Applicant Management System Certification Body – Initial Assessment:** The following must be provided prior to IAS scheduling of an initial assessment:

- 5.8.1. IAS online application form and associated fee
- 5.8.2. Proposed scope request (Desired Scope of Accreditation Form. Template available in the IAS portal, document titled "IAS-MSCB-Accreditation -- Desired Scope of Accreditation)
- 5.8.3. Quality documentation and associated procedures (refer clause 10 of ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015)
- 5.8.4. List of all auditors, relevant personnel and decision makers, including information on the IAF codes, categories or technical areas for which listed individuals have demonstrated competence (refer to clause 7.2 of ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015 and IAF MD10)
- 5.8.5. List of all MSCB certified clients with names, addresses, client technical contacts and email addresses and scope of certifications issued.
- 5.8.6. List of entities operating on behalf of the MSCB as defined under 2.10-2.15 for performing certification activities..) (See IAF MD23)
- 5.8.7. List of countries in which certifications have been issued (See IAF MD23 and IAF MD12). Please note that may prohibit issuance of certificates under IAS accreditation in those countries that are identified under sanctions by the US State Department on their website.

**5.9. Applicant/Accredited Management Systems Certification Bodies – Onsite/Remote**

**Assessment:** The following must be provided prior to any office assessment:

- 5.9.1. Office Assessment
  - 5.9.1.1. Arrangements for video/remote conferencing. This is applicable only when remote assessment is approved by IAS.

- 5.9.1.2. Copy of latest quality documentation and supporting procedures, forms, work instructions, etc.
- 5.9.1.3. Internal Audit/Management Review input/output evidence
- 5.9.1.4. Information on complaints and appeals received within the last four (4) years
- 5.9.1.5. Any internal corrective actions and the evidence supporting their closure and verification
- 5.9.1.6. Certified customer files as requested by the assessment team
- 5.9.1.7. List of entities operating on behalf of the MSCB as defined under 2.10-2.15 for performing certification activities. (See IAF MD23)
- 5.9.1.8. Evidence demonstrating the CAB's commitment to identifying, analyzing and managing risks, including those relating to impartiality/conflict of interest (ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015 clause 5.2.3), liability and financing (ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015 clause 5.3.1), operational control (ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015 clause 6.2.1), personnel (ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015 clause 7.2.9), control of entities operating on behalf of accredited CABs (IAF MD23 clause 1.1) and the specific risks associated with markets served (ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015 clause 9.1.4.2 g).

5.10. **Applicant/Accredited Management System Certification Bodies - Witnessing:** The following must be provided prior to any witness assessment (where applicable, the requirements apply for both onsite and remote witnessing):

- 5.10.1. Schedule and information for witness audits to be conducted
- 5.10.2. Auditor documents (confidentiality/impartiality agreement, contract, competence evaluation)
- 5.10.3. Audit program (full certification cycle)
- 5.10.4. Audit plan (specific to each audit being witnessed)
- 5.10.5. For initial accreditation, IAS requires stage 1 and stage 2 audits to be witnessed. This applies for each sub scope (QMS, EnMS, ITMS etc.) requested by the CAB during the application stage.
- 5.10.6. Logistical arrangements (e.g., travel, accommodation) for assessment team

**Note 1:** For witness audits, the number of auditors should not be more than double the number of assessors (2 auditors:1 assessor) as this prevents an adequate assessment of CAB's competence. Where this is not possible, CABs must seek permission from IAS head office to exceed this ratio.

**Note 2:** For discipline-specific witnessing requirements, please refer to relevant applicable IAF sub scope Mandatory Documents.

5.11. **Accredited Management System Certification Bodies – Scope Expansion (Onsite/**

**Remote):** The following must be provided prior to any scope expansion assessment:

5.11.1. Remote Scope Expansion (when possible)

5.11.1.1. Information regarding competence of personnel involved with the certification process (auditors, decision makers, application reviewers, personnel determining audit time, etc.)

5.11.1.2. At least one complete customer file (application received to certificate issued) demonstrating effectiveness of the certification process for the requested expansion.

5.11.1.3. Actions to address risks related to the scope expansion

5.11.2. Onsite Scope Expansion

5.11.2.1. Any Critical Code or Discipline that requires witnessing by the relevant ISO standard or IAF MD, these must be witnessed prior to granting accreditation

5.11.2.2. The full scope of a certification body must be witnessed within the first accreditation cycle. After the initial cycle, IAS reserves the right to reduce the witnessing requirements so that full scope is witnessed within the next two cycles, when appropriate

5.11.3. Scope Expansion during normal Surveillance/Reassessment

All of the above required information under 4.5.2 and:

5.11.3.1. Prior written notice to IAS and the assessment team (at least two weeks)

5.11.3.2. Any scope expansion requested while the assessment team is present may only be conducted with authorization from the IAS head office

**Note:** For discipline-specific witnessing requirements, please refer to relevant IAF sub scope Mandatory Documents.

5.12. **Applicant/Accredited Management Systems Certification Bodies – Response to**

**Findings:** The following criteria must be met when responding to findings issued by IAS personnel:

All finding responses must include effective Root Cause Analysis

5.12.1. Root cause analysis should include:

5.12.1.1. Identification of the root issue

5.12.1.2. Evaluation of additional impacts

5.12.1.3. Actions taken to address the immediate impacts

5.12.1.4. Actions taken to address ongoing impacts

5.12.1.5. Plan for verification of effectiveness of actions taken

5.12.1.6. Timeframe for completion of actions

5.12.2. All findings responses must include objective evidence (where applicable); objective evidence must be:

- 5.12.2.1. Submitted in English
- 5.12.2.2. Appropriately identified and organized
- 5.12.2.3. Accompanied by a narrative describing the complete corrective action process for the specific finding

→ **6. LINKS TO ADDITIONAL REFERENCES**

- 6.1. Food Safety System Certification (FSSC) – [www.fssc22000.com](http://www.fssc22000.com)
- 6.2. International Accreditation Forum (IAF) – [www.iaf.nu](http://www.iaf.nu)
- 6.3. International Organization for Standardization (ISO) – [www.iso.org](http://www.iso.org)
- 6.4. Asia Pacific Accreditation Cooperation (APAC) – <https://www.apac-accreditation.org/>
- 6.5. IAF CertSearch – <https://www.iafcertsearch.org>
- 6.6. International Aerospace Quality Group (IAQG) – [www.iaqg.org](http://www.iaqg.org)

*These criteria were previously issued June 2013, February 2014, February 2015, February 2016, April 2017, September 2018, September 2019 and December 1, 2020.*

**Annex A: Informational Purposes only.**

<b>IAS Abbreviation</b>	<b>Main Scope (Standard)  IAF Level 3</b>	<b>Additional Accreditation Document(s)  IAF Sub scope Level 4</b>	<b>IAF MDs, External Requirements  IAF Sub scope Level 4</b>	<b>Certification Standard(s)  IAF Sub scope Level 5</b>
QMS (Quality)	ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015	ISO/IEC 17021-3:2017	IAF MD 1, 2, 4, 5, 11, 12, 17, 23	ISO 9001:2015
EMS (Environmental)	ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015	ISO/IEC 17021-2:2016	IAF MD 1, 2, 4, 5, 11, 12, 17, 23	ISO 14001:2015
OHSAS (Occupational)	ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015	ISO/IEC 17021-10:2018	IAF MD 1, 2, 4, 5, 11, 12, 17, 22, 23	ISO 45001:2018
FSMS (Food Safety)	ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015	ISO/TS 22003:2013	IAF MD 1, 2, 4, 11, 12, 16, 23	ISO 22000:2018
FSSC (Food System)	ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015	ISO/TS 22003:2013	IAF MD 1, 2, 4, 11, 12, 16, 23	FSSC 22000 V5.0
ISMS (Information Security)	ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015	ISO/IEC 27006:2015	IAF MD 1, 2, 4, 11, 12, 13, 23	ISO/IEC 27001:2013
ITSMS (Info. Tech. Service)	ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015	ISO/IEC 20000-6:2017	IAF MD 1, 2, 4, 11, 12, 23	ISO/IEC 20000-1:2018
BCMS (Business Continuity)	ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015	ISO/IEC TS 17021-6:2014	IAF MD 1, 2, 4, 11, 12, 23	ISO 22301:2019
MED-QMS (Medical Quality)	ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015	N/A	IAF MD 1, 2, 4, 8, 9, 11, 12, 23	ISO 13485:2016
EnMS (Energy)	ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015	ISO 50003:2014	IAF MD 1, 2, 4, 11, 12, 23	ISO 50001:2018
ABMS (Anti-Bribery)	ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015	ISO/IEC TS 17021-9:2016	IAF MD 1, 2, 4, 11, 12, 23	ISO 37001:2016

GHG-VVB (Green House Gas)	ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015	ISO 14066:2011 ISO 14064-1:2018 ISO 14064-2:2019 ISO 14064-3:2019	IAF MD 1, 2, 4, 6, 11, 12, 14, 23	ISO 14065:2013
AMS (Asset Man.)	ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015	ISO/IEC TS 17021-5:2014	IAF MD 1, 2, 4, 11, 12, 23	ISO 55001:2014
LS-ET-SP (Learning Services)	ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015	N/A	IAF MD 1, 2, 4, 11, 12, 23	ISO 29990:2010
ESMS (Event Sustain.)	ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015	ISO/IEC TS 17021-4:2013	IAF MD 1, 2, 4, 11, 12, 23	ISO 20121:2012
RTSMS (Road Traffic)	ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015	ISO/IEC TS 17021-7:2014	IAF MD 1, 2, 4, 11, 12, 23	ISO 39001:2012
SDCMS (Sustain. Comm. Dev.)	ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015	ISO/IEC TS 17021-8:2019	IAF MD 1, 2, 4, 11, 12, 23	ISO 37101:2016
FMMS (Facility Management)	ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015	ISO/IEC DTS 17021-11:2018	IAF MD 1, 2, 4, 11, 12, 23	ISO 41001:2018
EOMS (Educational Organizations)	ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015	N/A	IAF MD 1, 2, 4, 11, 12, 23	ISO 21001:2018
PIMS (Privacy Information MS)	ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015	ISO/IEC 27006:2015 ISO/IEC 27001:2013	IAF MD 1, 2, 4, 11, 12, 23	ISO/IEC 27701:2019
CMS (Compliance Management Systems) (IN DRAFT INTERNATIONAL STANDARD PHASE)	ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015	TBD	IAF MD 1, 2, 4, 11, 12, 23	ISO/DIS 37301
International Aerospace	ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015		IAF MD 1, 2, 4, 5, 11, 17, 23 and IAF ID 1	AS 9104/1

Quality Group (IAQG)				
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Disclaimer:

1. Where IAF requirements referenced in the above table are in transition, browse the IAF Website Publications page for latest versions of the IAF Mandatory Documents (MDs).
2. All standards listed above for the relevant sub scopes are considered current at the time of this publication, please consult the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) or the specific Standards Development Organization

Annex B: IAS ACCREDITATION CYCLE for Office Assessment



1<sup>st</sup> Cycle

Example of MSCB Assessment Schedule *	Initial Accreditation Decision date to next Surveillance Assessment 1 date (12 months apart)	Surveillance 1 Assessment Date to Surveillance 2 Assessment Date (12 months apart)	Surveillance 2 Assessment date to Surveillance 3 Assessment date (12 months apart)	Surveillance 3 assessment date to Reassessment 1 date (12 months apart)
	June 1, 2019 to June 1, 2020	June 1, 2020 to June 1, 2021	June 1, 2021 to June 1, 2022	June 1, 2022 to June 1, 2023

2<sup>nd</sup> Cycle

Example of MSCB Assessment Schedule*	Reassessment 1 date to next Surveillance Assessment 1 date (12 months apart)	Surveillance 1 Assessment Date to Surveillance 2 Assessment Date (12 months apart)	Surveillance 2 Assessment date to Surveillance 3 Assessment date (12 months apart)	Surveillance 3 assessment date to Reassessment 2 date (12 months apart)
	June 1, 2023 to June 1, 2024	June 1, 2024 to June 1, 2025	June 1, 2025 to June 1, 2026	June 1, 2026 to June 1, 2027

→ \* Depending on the relevant IAF MDs' witness requirements for specific sub scopes, some MSCBs shall be visited on an annual basis.