



## ACSR PROCEDURES MANUAL

### **Title: Issue, Suspending, withdrawing or reducing the scope of certification**

Section: P4

Issue: 1

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**PURPOSE:** This procedure describes the issue of ACSR Certificates, their change and cancellation within guidelines as established by the accreditation body and to ensure appropriate action is taken.

**SCOPE:** Certificates issued by ACSR

**RESPONSIBILITY:** CEO/MD

**PROCEDURE:**

Following the conduct of the assessments, the process of certification would include the following steps.

1.1 After verification of the Reports of assessment, Corrective Action Plan and the relevant objective evidences, TC confirms the accuracy of documents and forward to QM.

1.2 The QM conducts an independent review of the audit documentation and checks compliance with the procedural requirements for the grant of certification QM completes the Certification Issue Check List and forwards the file to the CEO for his review and decision on the grant of certification.

1.3 The CEO reviews the QM forwarded verification report of the audit documentation and QM's Certification Issue Checklist and based upon a positive review; the QM approves the grant of certification, issuing instructions for the issue of a Certificate of Registration, as appropriate. The file is returned to QM to arrange for the Certificate of Registration to be prepared by AA and signed by the CEO for issue to the Client Company, based upon the following documentation details.

- (a) Name and address of company (locations audited)
- (b) Applicable Standards of ISO 9001.
- (c) The precise scope of the company activity for which it is being registered listing any exclusion.
- (d) The schedule of the Surveillance visits.

**Note:** A separate Certificate has normally been issued for each site. Where a company has a number of sites with a similar product range, then a single Certificate may be issued listing the sites covered under the Certification.

- (e) and any other relevant information (e.g. public information, comments on the audit report from the client).



2. In the event of any assessment being conducted by the TC or QM, the verification of audit reports will be carried out by one of the two who is not involved in the assessment process.

2.1 If the QM is involved in any assessment, the Certification Issue Checklist will be completed by TC.

3. The invoicing and payment of the certification will be verified before forwarding the Certificate of Registration to the Client.

#### 4. RECORDING AND NUMBERING

Each accredited Certificate issued by ACSR shall be given a Certificate number with the digits followed by a suffix QMS/EMS/OHMS followed by the initial of the country of issue and no 9 cod of the country, followed by the registration code given to the customer of the respective standard issued. Eg: ISO 14001 Certificate issued for an organization in January 2021. The certificate number will be- EMS UK/8/0180512001 ( EMS- suffix, UK-country of Issue, 8- cod of the country , 0180512001- the registration code give it to the client).

#### 5. ACTION WHEN CERTIFICATE IS SIGNED

When the Certificate has been signed, the QM records the details on the Client file progress form. When the above activities have been completed the TC shall transfer the following reports and documents from the under process file to a certified company file along with the progress form.

- (a) A Copy of the Certificate.
- (b) The Document review and stage 1 report together with CAP
- (c) The stage 2 reports together with Cap's
- (d) Correspondences
- (e) Invoices

The TC shall also open a surveillance plan for the company.

- (a) Copy of certificate and surveillance program.
- (b) Surveillance audit reports together with CAP's

The TC shall then prepare a covering letter which would include the following:

- (a) The Surveillance Programme indicating the dates/locations for surveillance visits for the next year.



- (b) Reference to the invoice to be raised for surveillance fees.
- (c) Logo: bromides and certification number.
- (d) Details on use of logo. A copy of the certificate is filed in the relevant file.

#### Decision Making for Issue of Certificate:

- Review by the OC and Final Decision by Head Decision making. In case the Head DM is not competent, the technical Expert is used for the Decision making and the action is taken after his decision.

## 6. PROCEDURES SUBSEQUENT TO INITIAL ISSUE OF CERTIFICATE

### Change to Certificates Proposed by Certified Company

A Certified Company may request changes to their certificate(s) for a number of reasons such as new premises, change of address, and change of company name. These changes may be advised to ACSR by letter or telephone in the change of company details form.

If the change required is adequately described in writing by the company then the processing will be started by the TC. However, if sufficient information is not available, the TC then writes to the company and requests for sufficient information to enable the form to be completed and forwarded to QM .

The procedure for changes to and the cancellation of certificate are detailed as follows:

Notifications of changes or cancellations to certificates are conveyed to those concerned, by the Quality Manager, by use of the Notification of change of details.

The Quality Manager in conjunction with the CEO shall be responsible for drafting the notification deciding upon the documents to be attached together with any distribution instruction.

The Managing Director issues a new/revised certificate (which shall indicate the date of original issue and latest revision date and a prefix to indicate the revision status). The issue of the certificate is recorded in the Certificate Register.

Where the change is at the request of the company, an administrative fee is payable. The client file with the Change of Company Details Form is passed on to the Accounts Assistant for rendering an invoice. The client file and the invoices are then returned to the Accounts Officer.



The invoice raised is sent to the company with a covering letter by Accounts Officer. The file is then to be kept pending to await payment of the invoice.

The new/revised certificate is referred to the Quality Manager for his updating of the records.

Once updated this is to be retained in a folder and filed by TC.

On receipt of notification from the accounts department that the invoice has been paid, the revised/new certificate shall be forwarded to the company under a covering letter and a copy retained in the client file containing the original certificate copy. A copy shall also be placed in the surveillance file. Previous copies of the certificate should be crossed through to show there is an updated version.

The company shall be requested to return the previous issues of their certificate to ACSR when received, this shall be filed in the relevant company file. Changes to Certificates proposed by ACSR.

The primary reasons for ACSR wishing to amend these certificates usually relates to the need to give an extension to the registered scope of the company. Changes to the registered scope of a company will normally be subject to an assessment/surveillance action to confirm acceptability. Amendments to scope may be considered at the company's request and ACSR will normally verify the compliance with the amended scope along with the Surveillance Audit with additional man-days in case of extension of the registered scope. In case, the extension/curtailment of scope is requested at the opening meeting during stage 1/stage 2 Audit, the Audit team leader will conduct the audit according to the amended scope and refer the matter to ACSR for acceptance.

The process for implementation of these changes would be the same as for a normal assessment or surveillance.

## 7. SUSPENDING

ACSR can suspend certification in following cases

- a) The clients certified management system has persistently or seriously failed to meet certification requirement including requirement for the effectiveness of the management system.
- b) Certified client does not allow surveillance or re-certification audits to be conducted at the required frequencies despite several reminders and follow ups by TC or.
- c) The certified client has voluntarily requested a suspension due to financial or other justified reasons.

The CEO shall communicate the exact reason of suspension, the actions to be taken for reinstatement and the time limit within those actions are to be implemented and verified through an audit. The TC shall inform the organization about the ACSR decision by registered letter within one week after the decision. ACSR may inform the Customer's clients/Impartiality committee and any other measures as suggested appropriate by the impartiality committee about the suspension.



During period of suspension the organization shall not promote its certification. This period of invalidity should be normally 3 months and not exceed 6 months.

ACSR can reinstate a suspended certificate based on an audit (post- or short notice audit) performed by a ACSR auditor. The auditor shall submit a report providing evidence concerning the requested action and shall by the same submit his recommendation.

Under suspension, the client's management system certification is temporarily invalid. ACSR have enforceable arrangement with its clients to ensure that in case of suspension the clients refrain from further promotion of its certification. The suspended status of the certification is made publicly accessible and takes any other measures it deems appropriate by way of ACSR website:

[www.acsr-certification.com](http://www.acsr-certification.com)

#### 8. WITHDRAWL OR REDUCING THE SCOPE OF CERTIFICATION:

Failure to resolve the issues that have resulted in the suspension in a time established (not exceeding 6 months) by the CEO, will result in withdrawal or reduction of the scope of certification as per the recommendation of the QM who refers to the lead auditor who will get in touch with the clients management and get the feedback on the necessary actions as were identified during the audit or as requested by the client or informed by TC.

In the case of "certification withdrawal", the organization shall not be allowed to make use of the certificate anymore, neither of the certification logo. The TC shall inform the organization about the ACSR decision by registered letter within one week after the decision.

If a company requests withdrawal of its Certification, the details are recorded on the Change of Company details form by the TC, for authorization by the Quality Manager. The company's certificate must be returned to ACSR before cancellation can be confirmed by the QM. Further, the name of the organizations shall be deleted from the ACSR list of certified companies.

CEO will reduce the client's scope of certification to exclude the parts not meeting the requirements, when the client has persistently or seriously failed to meet the certification requirements for those parts of the scope of certification as reported by Team leader and confirmed by QM. Any such reduction shall be in line with the requirements of the standard used for certification. The TC shall inform the organization about the ACSR decision by registered letter within one week after the decision and a revised certificate will be issued, the register of clients and website will be updated accordingly. Plan of the surveillance will also be amended by TC with respect to the reduction of the audit man days/need of expert as per the situation of the unit/manpower of the client's organization getting affected due to the reduction.



ACSR have enforceable arrangement with the certified client ensuring upon notice of withdrawal of certification that the client discontinues its use of all advertising mater that contains any reference to a certified status.

## 9 INFORMATION EXCHANGE BETWEEN ACSR AND ITS CLIENTS

ACSR provides and updates clients on the following:

- 1 Information on the various certification activities.
- 2 Notice of changes by ACSR

ACSR has legally enforceable arrangement to ensure that the certified client informs ACSR on matters related to management system certification changes

## 10. SURVEILLANCE AUDIT

The TC shall confirm the maintenance program at time of issuance of the certificate.

The maintenance program consists of a sequence of surveillance audits on site. There shall be not more than 12 months between two audits, starting from the previous renewal or initial certification audit.

During a surveillance audit a number of elements defined at the certification audit have to be reverified. These elements will be spread over the several surveillance audits in such a way that all the relevant items will be covered within the scope of the maintenance programme. The maintenance programme shall include at least:

- Internal audits and management review.
- A review of actions taken on nonconformities identified during the previous audit.
- Treatment of complaints.
- Effectiveness of the management system to achieve Organization's objectives.
- Progress of planned activities aimed at continual improvement.
- Continual operational control.
- Review of any changes.
- Use of marks or reference to certification.

The Administration schedules the surveillance audits and assigns the auditors (LA or A). The assigned auditor shall be qualified in the specific EA sectors / NACE codes. The auditor shall contact the organization to make arrangements about time, place and detailed program of the surveillance audit. The organization may refuse the appointed auditor and request once for a substitute.



During the audit, the auditor shall take care that the relevant elements defined at the certification audit, are covered over the several surveillance audits performed within the scope of the maintenance program. The progress of the re-verified elements shall be indicated as follows in the work matrix of the audit report:

"S1"\*: re-verified at the first surveillance audit,

"S2": re-verified at the second surveillance audit, etc.

At the end of the audit the auditor shall formally identify disclosed non-conformities and presents these to the organization. The organization shall be invited to define the necessary actions and to provide a suitable answer by filling in these CAR forms within 2 weeks after the audit.

The auditor shall complete the audit report and shall forward these to the QM. The surveillance audit report and the auditor recommendation shall have to be submitted to the CEO for review in the following cases:

-Disclosure of major non conformities or unreasonable accumulation of minor non conformities.

-Any other reason for suspension of the certificate.

-Request for modification of the current certificate.

The TC shall communicate the decision and send the surveillance audit report to the organization and shall file the report and any other related document in the concerned "customer file".

#### 11. RENEWAL AUDIT:

Two months before the end of the validity of the certification of a Quality Management System or before the time a Quality Management Statement has to be renewed, the Administration proposes the organization by letter to renew the certification. A questionnaire is attached to the letter.

Stage 1 audit shall be conducted only in case of:

1. Change in the applicable Legislation
2. Any significant change to the management system
3. Any complexity in the activity and in the quality management system
4. Variations in working practices and activities undertaken

The selection of sample sites for multiple site organization in case of Recertification should be the same as for an initial audit. Nevertheless, where the quality management system has proved to be effective over a period of three years, the size of the sample could be reduced by a factor 0.8, i.e.:  $(y=0.8 \sqrt{x})$ , rounded up to the whole number.

The Administration shall draw up a quotation in accordance with Procedure P13, "Contract Review".



When a contract is signed between the organization and ACSR, the Administration shall assign an audit team, by preference different to the previous one. The renewal audit shall be conducted not later than 36 months after the previous renewal or initial certification audit. The Administration shall, by preference, plan the renewal audit between 34 and 36 months after the initial certification audit. If during the renewal audit non-conformities are raised, the time frame for effective closure of those nonconformities shall not exceed the original certificate decision date.

The audit team shall prepare the renewal audit report must be available in the “customer file”.

The renewal audit on site shall be conducted like the initial certification stage 2 audit and shall also address the following:

- Effectiveness of the entire management system despite internal and external changes.
- Continual Improvement status
- Process performance and its review over last 3 years
- Customer Complaint & Satisfaction status
- Continued relevance of the scope of certification.
- Commitment to maintain and improve the effectiveness of the management system.
- Achievement of the organization’s policy and objectives.

## 12. SHORT NOTICE AUDIT

The CEO/MD can request an audit on short-term notice to verify handling of customer’s complaints, important modification within the organization or any reason leading to withdrawal or suspension of the certificate.

The CEO/MD, based on the nature of complaint, shall take decision on the time frame within which the audit is to be conducted. In case of Short Notice Audit because of Customer Complaint, the audit team shall not disclose the name of the complainant.

The TC shall assign an auditor (LA or A) to perform the short notice audit and informs the organization about the identity of the auditor. The organization may refuse the appointed auditor and request once for a substitute.

After the audit, the auditor shall report about the results of his investigation and shall make his recommendation to the CEO/MD