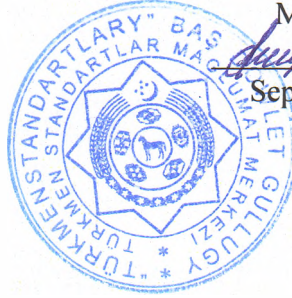




“I approve”
Director of the Management
System Conformity Assessment Body
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PROCEDURE
SYSTEM CERTIFICATION SCHEME



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General Provisions

Management system certification is used to ensure that an organization's management system meets established requirements. To conduct a system conformity assessment, the certification body uses a framework that defines three main components of conformity assessment. First, there are the objects of conformity assessment, including the specific scope of the client's activities (groups of products/services), their aspects, and interested parties. Second, there are the applicable requirements, specific rules, and procedures. Finally, there are the conformity assessment methodology in accordance with accreditation standards; the certification body's quality management manual; and the adopted certification process.

Scope of application

The document sets out a framework for assessing the conformity of a management system for the various application areas listed in the appendix, including the objects of conformity assessment, the specified requirements for the object of conformity assessment, and the methodology for conducting the conformity assessment.

This scheme has been developed by the Management System Conformity Assessment Body (MSCAB), which is the owner of the scheme, for distribution to all its clients wishing to obtain management system certification and to ensure their awareness of the requirements for the certification process.

Normative references

- ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015 Conformity assessment. Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems. Part 1: Requirements.
- CASCO brochure: How to develop project documentation – Guide for ISO technical committees – Edition 1 (2019).

SCHEME

Objects of conformity assessment of the system

A client wishing to obtain a management system certificate under the ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management Systems certification scheme – Requirements, must submit an application through the MSCAB Group website, filling in all the necessary information regarding the company and the relevant activities.

Application review

The Certification Manager reviews the application and assigns the appropriate team based on their competencies and the product/service category. After reviewing the application, the appropriate team decides whether to approve it. If the application is approved, a commercial proposal is sent to the Client via email. Upon the Client's approval, an invoice for certification services is issued.



Conclusion of the contract

The client pays the certification fees and signs an agreement between their company and the MSCAB.

The agreement has legal force and defines the obligations of the respective parties.

Audit program

The team of auditors is formed by the lead auditor, taking into account the competencies required for the specific area of certification and the requirements of the scheme.

The client has the right to object to the appointment of any particular auditor or technical expert, and the MSCAB shall re-constitute the team in response to any justified objection.

The audit team may engage technical experts and translators, who will work under the supervision of the lead auditor. The engagement of translators should be conducted in a manner that ensures they do not undue influence the audit. During the audit, work assignments may be modified to achieve its objectives.

When multiple-item sampling is used for certain clients, where the same activities are covered in different locations, the audit team develops a sampling program to ensure a proper audit process. The rationale for the sampling plan is documented for each client.

The audit team contacts the client to verify the information provided about their activities and requests additional documents and information to assist in preparing the audit prior to the on-site assessment. Based on the information provided by the client, the requirements of the OCMS scheme, and the procedure, the certification manager determines the audit duration and compiles a list of all possible audits that can be scheduled during the certification cycle.

The audit program defines other important information such as the audit scope, audit objectives, audit criteria and design, audit team, assessment methods, language, and potential risks.

When outsourcing part of the system, evidence of the subcontractor's compliance with the requirements is requested and an additional audit may be conducted.

Audit plan

Following communication with the client, an audit date is set with confirmation that on that date the audit team will have access to the client's premises, personnel, and documentation involved in the verification of the certification scope.

The audit plan contains a detailed audit agenda, a list of auditors, and auditees. The client is also familiarized with the audit objectives and criteria, including all audit framework requirements and methods. The availability and roles of observers, interns, technical experts, and guides are also agreed upon with the client prior to the audit.

The audit plan is sent to the client by the audit team one week before the audit.



Conducting an audit

The audit process complies with the MSCAB procedures and the requirements of accreditation standards.

A formal introductory meeting must be held with the Client's management and representatives of the key departments involved in the system. The purpose of this meeting, chaired by the audit team leader, is to clarify the content of the audit plan, approve the composition of the participants, and approve the overall audit program.

The client is given the opportunity to introduce their team and ask questions.

The audit team leader must assign work among the auditors and periodically inform the Client of the audit progress and any problem areas. If there are changes to the audit plan, changes to the audit objectives or scope, or if the audit is terminated, the audit team leader is obligated to notify the Client and the Certification Department of the actions taken.

Typically, an audit begins with the first part: a sample check of documents to collect information and evidence about the client's system's compliance with the stated standards.

The second part of the audit includes an inspection of the organization's premises and grounds, with the opportunity to interview staff. During both parts of the audit, auditors collect various types of evidence in full transparency with the client's representative for subsequent use in the audit report.

The initial certification audit is conducted in two stages: the first stage is shorter and consists of verifying the client's readiness to meet the scheme's requirements. If the first stage audit results are positive, a second stage audit is conducted, which includes an in-depth assessment of the client's system's compliance with all requirements.

Auditors confirm the compliance of the client's system by gathering evidence from observations of the process related to the scope of application, interviews with personnel, and completion of a checklist based on the requirements of the framework.

A detailed audit report outlining the results and potential problem areas that may be identified as nonconformities. If serious nonconformities are identified during the first stage of the audit, the client is given time to take corrective actions. Scheduling a second stage audit is possible only after the client has successfully completed the first stage of the audit. The gap between the first and second stages of the audit cannot exceed six (6) months.

Once the client's system is confirmed ready for the second stage audit, a date is agreed upon with the client. The second stage is always conducted on the client's premises to monitor operations and the environment. Information and evidence of compliance with the certification scheme requirements are collected.

The audit team meets separately to discuss the evidence gathered by each auditor, identify and classify the audit findings, and summarize them in a single document.

A formal closing meeting with all participants should be held with the organization's management and representatives of its departments involved in the system.

The purpose of this meeting, chaired by the audit team leader, is to present the audit findings, including explanations of any nonconformities identified.

The audit findings are classified into three parts: best practices, opportunities for improvement (Recommendations) and a description of non-conformities with the corresponding item from the audit criteria.



All identified discrepancies are discussed with the Client to ensure the accuracy of the evidence collected and that the details of the discrepancy are clear to the Client.

At the same time, auditors do not comment or indicate the reasons for the discrepancies and do not propose solutions to eliminate the identified discrepancies.

The closing meeting includes a notification to the client that the evidence gathered during the audit is based on a sampling method, which allows for an element of uncertainty to be taken into account; a timeline for the client to provide a plan for implementing measures to eliminate nonconformities identified during the audit; information about the complaints and appeals process and other stages preceding certification.

Auditor's report

The audit team provides the client with a written report for each audit. The report format complies with accreditation requirements and contains summary information about the client and the audit findings. Additionally, the report describes the client's compliance status for each requirement of the certification scheme, with a detailed description of the evidence collected.

The audit report will summarize the overall assessment of the client's compliance with the management system certification standards and provide the auditors' final recommendation.

In addition, the report indicates whether an additional full audit, an additional limited audit, or the provision of documentary evidence (to be confirmed during future surveillance audits) will be required to verify the effectiveness of the corrective actions.

Inconsistencies

By the agreed deadline, the client must ensure that all nonconformities identified during the audit are fully addressed. The audit team reviews and approves the measures taken to address the nonconformities and their effectiveness. Based on the evidence collected, the audit team then makes new recommendations for the certification decision.

Review

The audit report and non-conformity report are reviewed by a technical expert to confirm that the audit procedure has been followed and that there are no missing documents and/or information for decision making.

Solution

The decision maker considers all information and results related to the client's certification process, assessment reports, effective resolution of non-conformities, and certification recommendations provided by auditors.

Decisions on issuing, suspending, revoking and refusing to issue certification, as well as on expanding or reducing the scope of certification, are made in accordance with the requirements of the ISO17021-1 standard and the MSCAB procedures.



If the Client has not taken steps to correct the non-conformities within the specified period, the certification process is cancelled and if the Client wishes to continue the certification process, it must be restarted.

In the event of a certificate being denied, the decision-maker provides a report stating the reasons for the denial and the issuance of the certificate. The MSCAB will notify the Client in writing of the decision, stating the reasons for the denial.

Management System Certificate

If all certification requirements are met and a positive decision is made to issue a certificate, the MSCAB issues a management system certificate to the client, signed by the Director of the MSCAB, containing the following information:

- Name and address of the relevant MSCAB.
- Date of issue of the certificate.
- Client's name and address.
- Scope of certification.
- The standard to which the client is certified.
- Certificate validity period (The certificate is valid for 3 years).
- Unique identification code of the certificate.
- Unique customer identification number.

The MSCAB regularly reviews the scope of its validity and, in accordance with the selected certification standard, sends clients an email reminder to renew their certificate before the expiration of the issued MSCAB certificate.

Use of the certificate and logo

The client is prohibited from using the ISO standard logo on product labels. In the event of unauthorized use of the ISO logo and/or the issued certificate, the certificate will be suspended or revoked.

If the Client does not take immediate corrective action, the MSCAB will file an appeal with the district court of the relevant country.

Observation

The client's activities must be continuously monitored. On-site audits must be conducted at the frequency established in the Certification Agreement (at least once a year), taking into account the requirements of the certification scheme under which the certification was conducted, the nature of any identified nonconformities, and any complaints received from the client.

Regular surveillance audits are conducted in the same way as certification audits, but the duration of the audit may be shorter and depends on the complexity of the organization being audited, the results of previous audits, and the established frequency of surveillance audits.



Changes affecting certification

All changes affecting certified systems must be assessed to ensure continued compliance with the Certification Scheme. The following types of changes are possible:

- Review of the certification scheme or standards. The MSCAB certification manager evaluates changes to published standards to determine the timeframe required for the client to comply with additional requirements, if any. The MSCAB verifies the implementation of the changes by its clients and takes actions required by the certification scheme.
- A request for approval of changes in the certified area (activity) by the client must be submitted in writing with documentation supporting these changes.
- Unapproved changes in the certified area (activity) detected during surveillance audits are considered as non-conformities and are subject to elimination using appropriate procedures.
- A request for an extension of the scope of certification must comply with the procedures for the initial certification.

The decision to approve changes is documented by the MSCAB and communicated to the client, and, if applicable, amendments are made to the certificate document.

Reduction, suspension or revocation of certification

If minor violations are detected during supervisory inspections, the client is issued an official warning and given a deadline to correct the violation. Failure to correct the violations will result in the certificate being revoked, and the client is prohibited from using the MSCAB logo.

If extremely serious violations are discovered during the audit, the certificate is immediately revoked, and the client is immediately prohibited from using the MSCAB logo. In the event of suspension or revocation of the certificate, the client is obligated to return the original MSCAB certificate by registered mail within 10 (ten) business days.

If certification is terminated (at the client's request), suspended, or revoked, the MSCAB will take the actions specified in the relevant documents and make all necessary changes to the official certification documents, publicly available information, logo permission, etc., to ensure that there is no indication that the system continues to be certified.

In the event of a reduction in the scope of certification, the MSCAB takes the actions specified in the relevant documents and makes all necessary changes to the official certification documents, publicly available information, permission to use the logo, etc., to ensure the reduction in the scope of certification.

The scope of certification is clearly communicated to the Client and is clearly stated in the certification documentation and publicly available information.

If certification is reinstated after suspension, the MSCAB will make all necessary changes to the official certification documents, publicly available information, logo permission, etc., to ensure that all appropriate indications are present that the organization continues to be certified.

If a decision is made to reduce the scope of certification as a condition for reinstatement, the MSCAB will make all necessary changes to the official certification documents, publicly available



information, logo use permission, etc. to ensure that the reduced scope of certification is clearly communicated to the client and clearly indicated in the certification documentation and publicly available information.

Complaints and appeals

Clients have the right to file a complaint regarding any part of the certification process via email to the MSCAB or through the available communication channels indicated on the website.

The MSCAB has a documented procedure for managing complaints and appeals submitted to the MSCAB, which contains requirements for the registration and tracking of complaints and appeals, as well as actions to resolve them.

The Complaints and Appeals Department is responsible for reviewing complaints and appeals. The MSCAB strives to ensure satisfactory resolution of complaints and appeals.

Certificate renewal

The MSCAB warns the client that the certificate expires 6 months prior to the certificate expiration date.

If the Client decides not to renew the certificate or fails to complete the certificate renewal procedure before the current certificate expires, the Client will not have the right to use the certificate on its commercial channels from the moment the Certificate expires and is obligated to remove all information about the certification from all sources.

If the Client decides to renew the certificate, it must undergo a full certification process to assess the continued compliance with all requirements of the relevant certification scheme, assessing changes that affect the Client's activities and the scope of certification.

Where there are multiple sites or certification to multiple standards, audit planning should ensure sufficient coverage of the scope of certification to provide confidence in the certification.

The MSCAB makes a decision on extending certification based on the results of the recertification assessment.

Emergencies

The MSCAB Group ensures full compliance with IAF ID 3 requirements for managing emergency events or circumstances that impact the certification process. In the event of emergencies such as natural disasters, war, political instability, pandemics, or other force majeure situations, the MSCAB:

- Assesses the potential impact on certified clients.
- Determines the appropriate response, including possible postponement, rescheduling, or modification of certification activities.
- Clearly communicates to clients any changes in audit schedules or Requirements.
- Documents all decisions and rationales made in response to the event.
- Ensures that the impartiality and integrity of the certification are not compromised.