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## Minimum Requirements For The Operation of Management System Certification Bodies

### 1. Introduction

This document set out minimum requirements for the operation of management system certification bodies. And it is prepared based on international standard (ISO/IEC 17021).

### 2. Scope

This requirements document is applicable to all organization performing certification of management system of all types

### 3. Definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO 9000, ISO/IEC 17000 and the following apply.

#### 3.1 Certified client

Organization whose management system has been certified.

#### 3.2 Impartiality

Actual and perceived presence of objectivity

**NOTE 1** Objectivity means that conflicts of interest do not exist or are resolved so as not to adversely influence subsequent activities of the certification body.

**NOTE 2** Other terms that are useful in conveying the elements of impartiality are: objectivity, independence, freedom from conflict of interest, freedom from bias, lack of prejudice, neutrality, fairness, open-mindedness, even-handedness, detachment, balance.

#### 3.3 management system consultancy

Participation in designing, implementing or maintaining a management system

**EXAMPLES** are:

- a) Preparing or producing manuals or procedures, and
- b) Giving specific advice, instructions, solutions towards the development and implementation of a management system;

**NOTE** Arranging training and participating as a trainer is not considered as consultancy, provided that, where the course relates to management systems or auditing, it is confined to the provision of generic information that is freely

available in the public domain; i.e. the trainer should not provide company specific solutions.

#### **4. Requirements**

##### **4.1 Legal and contractual matters**

###### **411 Legal responsibility**

The quality management system certification body shall be a legal entity, or a defined part of a legal entity, such that it can be held legally responsible for all its certification activities.

###### **412 Certification agreement**

The quality management system certification body shall have a legally enforceable agreement for the provision of certification activities to its client. In addition, where there are multiple offices of a certification body or multiple sites of a certified client, the certification body shall ensure there is a legally enforceable agreement between the quality management system certification body granting certification and issuing a certificate, and all the sites covered by the scope of the certification.

###### **413 Responsibility for certification decisions**

The quality management system certification body shall be responsible for, its activities and decisions relating to certification, including the granting, maintaining, renewing, extending, reducing, suspending and withdrawing of certification

##### **4.2 Management of impartiality**

**421** The quality management system certification body shall have:-

- a) commitment to impartiality in its activities and
- b) a publicly available statement that it understands the importance of impartiality in carrying out its management system certification activities manages conflict of interest and ensures the objectivity of its management system certification activities.

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**422** The quality management system certification body shall identify analyses and document the possibilities for conflict of interests arising from provision of certification including any conflicts arising from its relationships.

**423** The quality management system certification body's activities shall not be marketed or offered as linked with the activities of an organization that provides management system consultancy.

All quality management system certification body personnel, either internal or external, or committees, who could influence the certification activities, shall act impartially and shall not allow commercial, financial or other pressures to compromise impartiality.

The certification body shall be able to demonstrate that it has evaluated the risks arising from its certification activities and that it has adequate arrangements (e.g. insurance or reserves) to cover liabilities arising from its operation. The certification body shall evaluate its finance and service of income.

### **5. Structural requirements**

#### **5.1 Organizational structure and top management**

**511** The quality management system certification body shall document its organizational structure, showing duties, responsibilities and authorities of management and other certification personnel and any committees. When the quality management system certification body is a defined part of a legal entity, the structure shall include the line of authority and the relationship to other parts within the same legal entity.

**512** The quality management system certification body shall have formal rules for the appointment, terms of reference and operation of any committees that are involved in the certification activities.

#### **5.2 Committee for safeguarding impartiality**

**521** The structure of the quality management system certification body shall safeguard the impartiality of the activities of the quality management system certification body and shall provide for a committee to conduct a review, at least once annually, of the impartiality of the audit, certification and decision-making

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processes of the quality management system certification body. Other tasks or duties may be assigned to the committee provided that these addition a tasks or duties do not compromise its essential role of ensuring impartiality.

**522** The committee shall represents all interested parties as much as possible The composition, terms of reference, duties, authorities, competence of members and responsibilities of this committee shall be formally documented and authorized by the top management of the certification body.

### 6. Resource requirements

#### 6.1 Competence of management and personnel

The quality management system certification body shall have processes to ensure that personnel have appropriate knowledge relevant to the types of quality management systems and geographic areas in which it operates. It shall determine the competence required for each technical area (as relevant for the specific certification scheme), and for each function in the certification activity. It shall determine the means for the demonstration of competence prior to carrying out specific functions.

#### 6.2 Personnel involved in the certification activities

**621** All personnel involved in any aspect of quality management system certification activities shall have minimum first degree in engineering/science or relevant fields, and shall possess relevant experience ,appropriate training, and technical knowledge relevant to the type of management system.

**622** The quality management system certification body shall have, as part of its own organization, personnel having sufficient competence for managing the type and range of audit programmes and other certification work performed.

**623** The quality management system certification body shall employ, or have access to, a sufficient number of auditors, including audit team leaders, and technical experts to cover all of its activities and to handle the volume of audit work performed.

**624** The quality management system certification body shall make clear to each person concerned their duties, responsibilities and authorities.

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**625** The certification body shall have defined processes for selecting, training, formally authorizing auditors and for selecting technical experts used in the certification activity.

**626** The certification body shall ensure the satisfactory performance of all personnel involved in the audit and certification activities.

### 6.3 Outsourcing

**631** The quality management system certification body

- a) shall have a process in which it describes the conditions under which outsourcing (subcontracting ) to another organization to provide part of the certification activities on behalf of the quality management system certification body
- b) shall take responsibility for all activities outsourced to another body in all aspects
- c) shall have a legally enforceable agreement covering the arrangements, including confidentiality and conflict of interest, with each body that provide outsourced services.
- d) Shall ensure that the body that provided out sourced services and the individual that it uses, is not involved, either directly or through any other employer, with an organization to be audited, in such a way that impartiality could be compromised.

**632** Decisions for granting, maintaining, renewing, extending, reducing, suspending or withdrawing certification shall never be outsourced.

## 7. Information requirements

### 7.1 Publicly accessible information

**7.1.2** Information provided by the quality management system certification body to any client or to the marketplace, including advertising, shall be accurate and not misleading.

**7.1.3** On request from any party, the quality management system certification body shall provide means to confirm the validity of a given certification.

### 7.2 Reference to certification and use of marks

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**721** A quality management system certification body shall have a policy governing any mark that it authorizes certified clients to use. This shall assure, among other things, traceability back to the quality management system certification body.

**722** There shall be no ambiguity, in the mark or accompanying text, as to what has been certified and which certification body has granted the certification. This mark shall not be used on a product or product packaging seen by the consumer or in any other way that may be interpreted as denoting product conformity.

**7.2.3.** The certification body shall maintain directory of certification body and make publicly accessible.

### **7.3 Certification document**

The certification document (s) shall identify the following

- a) the name and address of the client
- b) the date of granting, extending or renewing certification.
- c) The expiring date of certification.
- d) A unique identification code.
- e) The standard including issue number/or revision, used for audit of the client.
- f) The scope of certification.
- g) Any other information required by the relevant standard.

### **7.4 Confidentiality**

**741** The quality management system certification body shall, through legally enforceable agreements, have a policy and arrangements to safeguard the confidentiality of the information obtained or created during the performance of certification activities at all levels of its structure, including personnel, committees and external bodies or individuals acting on its behalf and it shall inform the client, in advance, of the information it intends to place in the public domain.

**742** Information about a particular client or individual shall not be disclosed to a third party without the written consent of the client or individual concerned, where the certification body is required by law to release confidential information to

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A third party, the client or individual concerned shall unless regulated by law be notified in advances. .

### 8. Process requirements

#### 8.1 General

**8.1.1** The audit programme shall include a two-stage initial audit, surveillance audits in the first and second years, and a recertification audit in the third year prior to expiration of certification. The three-year certification cycle begins with the certification or recertification decision. The determination of the audit programme and any subsequent adjustments shall consider the size of the client organization, the scope and complexity of its management system, products and processes as well as demonstrated level of management system effectiveness and the results of any previous audits.

**8.1.2** The certification body shall ensure that an audit plan is established for each audit to provide the basis for agreement regarding the conduct and scheduling of the audit activities. This audit plan shall be based on documented requirements of the certification body, drawn up in accordance with the relevant guidance provided in ISO 19011.

**8.1.3** The quality management system certification body shall provide a written report for each audit. The report shall be based on relevant guidance in ISO 19011. The audit team may identify opportunities for improvement but shall not recommended specific solutions. Ownership of the audit report shall be maintained by the certification body.

**8.1.4** The quality management system certification body shall ensure that the persons or committees that make the certification or recertification decisions are different from those who carried out the audits.

#### 8.2 Suspending, withdrawing or reducing scope of certification

The quality management system certification body shall have a policy and documented procedure(s) for suspension, withdrawal or reduction of the scope of



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certification, and shall specify the subsequent actions by the quality management system certification body.

### 8.3 Appeals

The quality management system certification body shall have a documented procedure to receive, evaluate and make decisions on appeals and shall be responsible for all decisions at all levels of the appeals-handling process.

### 8.4 Complaints

**841** The quality management system certification body shall have a documented procedure to receive, evaluate and make decisions on complaints.

**842** Any complaint about a certified client shall also be referred by the certification body to the certified client in question at an appropriate time.

### 8.5 Records

**851** The quality management system certification body shall maintain records on the audit and other certification activities for all clients, including all organizations that submitted applications, and all organizations audited, certified, or with certification suspended or withdrawn.

**852** The quality management system certification body shall maintain up-to-date personnel records, including relevant qualifications, training, experience, affiliations, professional status, competence and any relevant consultancy services that may have been provided. This includes management and administrative personnel in addition to those performing certification activities.

**853** Records on certified clients shall include the following:

- a) application information and initial, surveillance and recertification audit reports;
- b) certification agreement;
- c) justification of the methodology used for sampling;
- d) justification for auditor time determination
- e) verification of correction and corrective actions;
- f) records of complaints and appeals, and any subsequent correction or corrective actions;

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- g) committee deliberations and decisions, if applicable;
- h) documentation of the certification decisions;
- i) certification documents including the scope of certification with respect to product, process or service as applicable;
- j) related records necessary to establish the credibility of the certification, such as evidence of the competence of auditors and technical experts.

**854** The quality management system certification body shall keep the records on applicants and clients secure to ensure that the information is kept confidential. Records shall be transported, transmitted or transferred in a way that ensures that confidentiality is maintained.

### 9. Process requirements.

The Certification body should have appropriate quality management system in place.

The certification body shall have audit process and documentation based in ISO/IEC 17021.

Revision No.	Date approved	Revision History
Revision 0	01 April 2013	
1	2023-02-07	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Correction done on page 1 that, this document was prepared by Meseret Tessema replaced by Zewdu Ayele (new quality manager).</li> <li>• Former director general was resigned and replaced by Mrs. Meseret Tessema.</li> </ul>



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