

# Industry Compliance and Certification Authority of South Africa

## ICCASA Certification Process



### Scope

This document covers the requirements relating to the implementation, control and maintenance of the management system certification schemes administered by ICCASA, referred to in this document as ICCASA Certification.

This ICCASA certification procedure follows the structure of ISO/IEC 17021-1 Conformity assessment - Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems Part 1: and is therefore aligned to and based on the requirements of ISO/IEC 17021-1, the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) Guidelines/Mandatory documents and other management system standards, as applicable.

The management system certification schemes administered by ICCASA Certification are available to all organizations of all types and sizes of industries whose systems conform with the requirements of the relevant system management system standard.

### Aim of ICCASA Certification

ICCASA seeks to ensure that certification is conducted in a non-discriminatory manner through the following certification approach:

- Encourage organizations to introduce and apply in a cost-effective manner, management systems that will lead to more efficient use of resources and improved financial performance; improved risk management and protection of people and the environment; and increased capability to deliver consistent and improved services and products that increase value to customers and stakeholders.
- Follow prescribed processes/procedures to conduct independent audits of such systems to determine and ensure continued compliance with the requirements of the relevant management system standard.
- Certify that the system/s of the registered organization satisfies the requirements of the relevant management system standard and publish and update at regular intervals, a publicly available register of such organizations.
- Comply with the requirements of ISO/IEC 17021 and its associated guidance documents and shall maintain an acceptance of its management system certification scheme through accreditation.
- Not place any undue financial or other marketing conditions on the certified organizations or their certification personnel that provide the management certification scheme services; not limit access to applicants on conditions such as the size of the organization, its membership of any representative association or group, nor the number of organizations or sites already certified.

### Outsourcing

ICCASA does not outsource any part of its certification activities to any other certification body. Decisions for granting, maintaining, renewing, extending, reducing, suspending or withdrawing certification are not outsourced or subcontracted.

### **Legal Responsibility and Authority for Certification Decisions**

ICCASA is a registered legal entity and operates as an independent (Pty) Ltd company as defined by the Companies Act, Act no. 71 of 2008. ICCASA is legally responsible for all its decisions relating to certification, including the granting, refusing, maintaining of certification, expanding or reducing the scope of certification, renewing, suspending or restoring following suspension, or withdrawing of certification.

### **Responsibility**

ICCASA carries out its responsibility in assessing sufficient objective evidence from the client upon which to base a certification decision on. This is based on the audit conclusions which allows ICCASA to make a decision to grant certification, if there is sufficient evidence of conformity.

### **Impartiality**

Being impartial, and being perceived to be impartial, is necessary for ICCASA to deliver certification that provides confidence. All internal and external personnel involved in the management system certification activities are aware of the need for impartiality. ICCASA recognizes that a source of revenue is its client paying for certification and that this is a potential threat to impartiality. To obtain and maintain confidence, ICCASA's decisions are based on objective evidence of conformity obtained by ICCASA, and decisions are not influenced by other interests or by other parties.

ICCASA will further determine whether consultancy relating to the development of the management system to be certified has been provided and if so, ICCASA will not certify the management system for a minimum of two years following the end of the consultancy. Conducting training for a client, is not considered consultancy, provided that, where the training course relates to management systems or auditing, it is confined to the provision of generic information; i.e. the trainer should not provide client-specific solutions.

### **Confidentiality**

Any information gained in the course of certification activities about a particular commodity or organization shall be confidential to the organization and ICCASA will not disclose to a third party without the written consent of the organization. Where the law requires information to be disclosed to a third party, the organization shall be informed of the information provided as permitted by the law.

### **Competence**

Competence of ICCASA personnel in all functions involved in certification activities is necessary to deliver certification that provides confidence. ICCASA has an implemented process for the establishment of competence criteria for the personnel involved in the audit and other certification activities and conducts performance evaluations against these criteria.

### **Openness**

ICCASA provides public access to, or disclosure of, appropriate and timely information about its audit process and certification process, and about the certification status (i.e. the granting, maintaining of certification, expanding or reducing the scope of certification, renewing, suspending or restoring, or

withdrawing of certification) of any organization, in order to gain confidence in the integrity and credibility of certification. To gain or maintain confidence in certification, ICCASA will provide appropriate access to, or disclosure of, non-confidential information about the conclusions of specific audits (e.g. audits in response to complaints) to specific interested parties.

### **Responsiveness to Complaints**

ICCASA maintains an appropriate balance between the principles of openness and confidentiality, including responsiveness to complaints, in order to demonstrate integrity and credibility to all users of ICCASA Certification. ICCASA investigates all complaints and establishes whether these complaints are valid. Complaints are appropriately addressed and reasonable efforts are made by ICCASA to resolve them. Effective responsiveness to complaints is an important means of protecting ICCASA, our clients and other users of certification against errors, omissions or unreasonable behaviour.

### **Risk-based Approach**

ICCASA recognises the risks associated with providing competent, consistent and impartial certification and manages them accordingly. Such risks include, but are not limited to, those associated with the objectives of the audit; the sampling used in the audit process; real and perceived impartiality; legal, regulatory and liability issues; the client organization being audited and its operating environment; impact of the audit on the client and its activities; health and safety of the audit teams; perception of interested parties; misleading statements by the certified client; use of marks.

### **ICCASA Regulatory Requirements**

Since auditing and granting certification are two distinct processes, these processes are regulated through an independent Approvals Board, which verifies the recommendations for certification, suspension and withdrawals of certificates. ICCASA's certification conditions are granted and regulated through a formal certification agreement. ICCASA reserves the right to decline an application for certification if any conflict of interest or conflict with other ICCASA policies, resources or impartiality exists.

### **Transferring Organizations**

Organizations which have been registered by accredited certification bodies other than ICCASA who wish to transfer such registration to ICCASA, must formally apply to ICCASA for such transfer. A transfer review and recommendation are then made taking into consideration the status, stability and maturity of the organization's management system before such transfer is affected. The minimum requirements of IAF MD 2 Mandatory Document for the Transfer of Accredited Certification of Management Systems, in terms of Eligibility of a Certification for Transfer, Pre-transfer Review and Transfer of Certification will be used.

### **Directory of Certified Clients**

A list of organizations which have been registered by ICCASA is publicly accessible on the ICCASA website. Details of organizations whose management system have been suspended or withdrawn is available on request.

### **Reference to Certification and Use of Marks**

All requirements with respect to the use of ICCASA certification marks, processes with regards to granting, suspending or withdrawal of certification, confidentiality, changes to client information and the scope of registration is documented in the contract between ICCASA and the client.

There shall be no ambiguity in the use of the certification mark or its accompanying text. The organization may not imply that the certification applies to activities that are outside the scope of certification. The organizations' use of the mark in communication media such as the Internet, brochures, advertising, billboards, etc. shall not make any statement that is misleading in any manner whatsoever. The certification mark shall not be used on a product or product packaging in any way that may be interpreted as denoting product conformity. When placed under suspension, the organizations' management system is temporarily invalid.

The organization shall for the period of suspension, refrain from further promotion of their certification. Organizations certified by ICCASA are not entitled to use the logos of ICCASA' accredited bodies in any way. Subsequent to the cancellation of its certification, the organization shall discontinue all use of advertising material that contains any reference to a certified state. ICCASA will exercise proper control of ownership and shall take action to deal with incorrect references to certification status or misleading use of certification documents, marks or audit reports.

### **Certification Agreement**

ICCASA has a legally enforceable agreement with each client for the provision of certification activities in accordance with the relevant requirements of this part of ISO/IEC 17021. In addition, where there are multiple sites of a client, ICCASA will ensure that there is a legally enforceable agreement between ICCASA granting certification and the client which covers all the sites within the scope of the certification.

## **MANAGEMENT SYSTEM CERTIFICATION PROCESS PRECERTIFICATION ACTIVITIES**

### **Application for Initial Audit**

The applicant organisation shall provide the relevant information to ICCASA by completing the management system certification application form (FN-C01), enabling ICCASA to establish the desired scope of the certification and providing relevant details required by the specific certification scheme, information on the location and number of sites, processes and operations, human and technical resources, functions, relationships, outsourced processes and any relevant legal obligations. ICCASA reserves the right to also request supplementary information, where additional information is required.

### **Application Review**

The application is reviewed by the certification Manager to ensure that the information about the applicant organisation and its management system is sufficient to develop and audit programme. Any known differences in understanding between ICCASA and the applicant organization, is also resolved during the application review.

Following the application review, ICCASA will either accept or decline an application for certification. When ICCASA declines an application once the review has been concluded, reasons for the declined application will be documented and made available to the Client applicant.

### **Determination of Audit Duration**

The determination of the audit time for a client will consider the time needed to plan and accomplish a complete and effective audit of the client's management system. In determining the audit duration ICCASA will consider the size of the client, the location, 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. Audit time for integrated management systems audits will be determined in accordance with IAF MD 11:2019 IAF Mandatory Document for the Application of ISO/IEC 17021-1 for Audits of Integrated Management Systems.

### **Multi-site Sampling**

Where multi-site sampling is used for the audit of a client's management system covering the same activity in various geographical locations, ICCASA will develop a sampling programme to ensure proper audit of the management system. The rationale for the sampling plan will be documented for each client.

### **Audit Plan**

ICCASA will ensure that an audit plan is established prior to each audit identified in the audit programme to provide the basis for agreement regarding the conduct and scheduling of the audit activities. The audit plan shall be communicated on email to the client and to the audit team. The dates of the audit will be agreed upon, in advance, with the client.

### **Audit report**

ICCASA will provide a written report for each audit to the client. The audit team may identify opportunities for improvement but will not recommend specific solutions. Ownership of the audit report will be maintained by ICCASA. The audit team leader will ensure that the audit report is prepared and will be responsible for its content. The audit report will provide an accurate, concise and clear record of the audit to enable an informed certification decision to be made and the audit report template will meet the requirements of ISO 17021-1 standard.

### **Cause analysis of nonconformities**

ICCASA will require the client to analyse the cause and describe the specific correction and corrective actions taken, or planned to be taken, to eliminate detected nonconformities. The corrective action plan must be sent to ICCASA within 30 days of receipt of the first issue of the audit report.

### **Effectiveness of corrections and corrective actions**

ICCASA will review the corrections, identified causes and corrective actions submitted by the client to determine if these are acceptable. ICCASA will verify the effectiveness of any correction and corrective actions planned or taken and provide feedback to the client.

### **Initial Certification Audit**

The initial certification audit of a management system shall be conducted in two stages: a stage one (1) and a stage two (2) audit.

#### **Stage 1 Audit**

The stage 1 audit planning seeks to ensure that the objectives of stage 1 can be met. The client will be informed of any onsite activities during stage 1. The objectives of the stage 1 audit are to review the client's management system documented information, evaluate the client's site-specific conditions and to undertake discussions with the client's personnel to determine the preparedness for stage 2, review the client's status and understanding regarding requirements of the standard, in particular with respect to the identification of key performance or significant aspects, processes, objectives and operation of the management system, obtain necessary information regarding the scope of the management system and agree the details of stage 2 with the client by providing a focus for planning stage 2 by gaining sufficient understanding of the client's management system and site operations in the context of the management system standard or other normative document and lastly to evaluate if the internal audits and management reviews are being planned and performed and that the level of implementation of the management system verifies that the client is ready for stage 2.

#### **Stage 2 Audit**

The stage 2 audit evaluates the implementation, including effectiveness, of the client's management system. The stage 2 will take place at the site(s) of the client. It shall include the auditing of information and evidence about conformity to all requirements of the applicable management system standard or other normative documents, performance monitoring, measuring, reporting and reviewing against key performance objectives and targets (consistent with the expectations in the applicable management system standard or other normative document), the client's management system ability and its performance regarding meeting of applicable statutory, regulatory and contractual requirements, operational control of the client's processes, internal auditing and management review and management responsibility for the client's policies.

### **Initial Certification Audit Conclusions**

The audit team will analyse all the information and audit evidence gathered during the stage 1 and stage 2 and agree on the audit conclusions. That for any major nonconformities, it has reviewed, accepted and verified the correction and corrective actions and that for any minor nonconformities it has reviewed and accepted the client's plan for correction and corrective action. Thereafter a recommendation on whether or not to grant certification shall be made.

### **Information for Granting Initial Certification**

The information provided by the Certification Manager to the Approvals Board shall include all relevant documents. The Approvals Board making the certification decision shall be independent from those who carried out the audit. The Approvals Board shall make the certification decision on the basis of an evaluation of audit findings and conclusions and any other relevant information.

### **Certification Decision**

ICCASA shall ensure that the persons that make the decisions for granting or refusing certification, expanding or reducing the scope of certification, suspending or restoring certification, withdrawing certification or renewing certification are different from those who carried out the audits. The individual(s) appointed to conduct the certification decision shall have appropriate competence.

### **Information for Granting Recertification**

ICCASA shall make decisions on renewing certification based on the results of the recertification audit, as well as the results of the review of the system over the period of certification and complaints received from users of certification.

### **Maintaining Certification**

ICCASA shall maintain certification based on demonstration that the client continues to satisfy the requirements of the management system standard. ICCASA may maintain a client's certification based on a positive conclusion by the audit team leader without further independent review and decision provided that the Certification Manager monitors the auditor's surveillance activities, including monitoring the reporting by its auditors, to confirm that the certification activity is operating effectively.

### **Surveillance Activities**

ICCASA conducts surveillance activities so that representative areas and functions covered by the scope of the management system are monitored on a regular basis and take into account changes to the certified client and its management system. Surveillance activities include on-site auditing of the certified client's management system's fulfilment of specified requirements with respect to the standard to which the certification is granted. Other surveillance activities may include enquiries from ICCASA to the certified client on aspects of certification; reviewing any certified client's statements with respect to its operations (e.g. promotional material, website); requests to the certified client to provide documented information (on paper or electronic media) and any other effective means of monitoring the certified client's performance.

### **Surveillance Audit**

Surveillance audits are on-site audits, and are not necessarily full system audits and shall be planned together with the other surveillance activities so that ICCASA can maintain confidence that the client's certified management system continues to fulfil requirements between recertification audits. Each surveillance for the relevant management system standard shall include internal audits and management review, a review of actions taken on nonconformities identified during the previous audit, complaints handling, effectiveness of the management system with regard to achieving the certified client's objectives, and the intended results of the respective management system, including progress of planned activities aimed at continual improvement, continuing operational control, review of any changes and use of marks and/or any other reference to certification



### **Recertification Audit Planning**

The purpose of the recertification audit is to confirm the continued conformity and effectiveness of the management system as a whole, and its continued relevance and applicability for the scope of certification. A recertification audit shall be planned and conducted to evaluate the continued fulfilment of all of the requirements of the relevant management system standard or other normative document. This shall be planned and conducted in due time to enable for timely renewal before the certificate expiry date.

### **Recertification Audit**

The recertification audit shall include an on-site audit that addresses the effectiveness of the management system in its entirety in the light of internal and external changes and its continued relevance and applicability to the scope of certification, demonstrated commitment to maintain the effectiveness and improvement of the management system in order to enhance overall performance and the effectiveness of the management system with regard to achieving the certified client's objectives and the intended results of the respective management system(s).

### **Special audits**

#### **Expanding Scope**

ICCASA shall, in response to an application for expanding the scope of a certification already granted, undertake a review of the application and determine any audit activities necessary to decide whether or not the extension may be granted. This may be conducted in conjunction with a surveillance audit.

#### **Short-notice Audits**

It may be necessary for ICCASA to conduct audits of certified clients at short notice or unannounced to investigate complaints, or in response to changes, or as follow up on suspended clients. In such cases ICCASA will make known in advance to the certified clients the conditions under which such audits will be conducted. ICCASA will exercise additional care in the assignment of the audit team because of the lack of opportunity for the client to object to audit team members.

#### **Suspending, withdrawing or reducing the scope of certification**

ICCASA shall suspend certification in cases when the client's certified management system has persistently or seriously failed to meet certification requirements, including requirements for the effectiveness of the management system; when the certified client does not allow surveillance or recertification audits to be conducted at the required frequencies; when the certified client has voluntarily requested a suspension.

Under suspension, the client's management system certification is temporarily invalid. ICCASA shall restore the suspended certification if the issue that has resulted in the suspension has been resolved. Failure to resolve the issues that have resulted in the suspension in a time established by ICCASA shall result in withdrawal or reduction of the scope of certification.

ICCASA shall reduce the scope of certification to exclude the parts not meeting the requirements, when the certified client has persistently or seriously failed to meet the certification requirements for those parts of the scope of certification. Any such reduction shall be in line with the requirements of the standard used for certification.

### **Client records**

ICCASA 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. ICCASA shall keep the records (retained information) 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. Records of certified clients and previously certified clients shall be retained for the duration of the current cycle plus one full certification cycle.

### **Validity of Certificates**

The management system certificates are valid for a period of 3 years. Formal continuation of certification shall be subject to at least one annual surveillance audit in year 1 and year 2 with a full recertification audit in year 3. The three-year certification cycle begins with the initial certification decision and the three-year certification cycle shall be maintained over the life span of the certificate.

## **ANNEXURE A – ISO 17021-1 Certification Process**

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