

Att.: all Bodies with QMS and EMS accreditation

Our ref.: DC2015SPM110

Milano, 21/04/2015

Re: **ACCREDIA Department of Certification and Inspection Circular n. 13/2015**
Transition to standard ISO 9001:2015 and ISO 14001:2015 of certifications issued under ACCREDIA accreditation

This communication replaces DC2015SPM110. The changes are marked by a lateral line.

Foreword

Before the end of the year publication will take place of ISO 9001:2015 and ISO 14001:2015. The standard ISO 9001:2015 will replace ISO 9001:2008 which will be withdrawn but will continue to be valid during the transition period.

The standard ISO 14001:2015 will replace ISO 14001:2004 which will be withdrawn but will continue to be valid during the transition period.

IAF has issued the following resolutions:

- IAF Resolution 2013 - 15 was passed by the IAF General Assembly in Seoul on 23 October 2013 endorsing a 3 year transition period to ISO 9001:2015.
- IAF Resolution 2014 - 11 was passed by the IAF General Assembly in Vancouver on 17 October 2014 endorsing a 3 year transition period to ISO 14001:2015.

On the website www.iaf.nu in the section "Informative Documents" the relative IAF Guides to the transition are available with an outline of the main changes with respect to the previous versions. It is recommended to read the document *AAPG Paper – drafted 2015/04/11 Good practices for ABs and CABs in the Transition to ISO 9001:2015* which you can find attached.

a) CERTIFICATION ACTIVITIES

Validity of accredited certifications ISO 9001:2008 and ISO 14001:2004

For the three years following the publication of ISO 9001:2015 and ISO 14001:2015, certifications issued against ISO 9001:2008 and ISO 14001:2004 will remain valid, as will those issued against the new standards ISO 9001:2015 and ISO 14001:2015.

Only after 3 years from the publication of ISO 9001:2015 and ISO 14001:2015, will accredited certifications against ISO 9001:2008 and ISO 14001:2004 cease to be valid.

The expiry date of certifications against ISO 9001:2008 and ISO 14001:2004 issued during the transition period shall correspond to the end of the 3 year transition period.

Recommendations for Certification Bodies

CBs are recommended to:

1. Train their auditors and check the results for an adequate level of competence reached;
2. Inform their clients and agree with them a guide for managing the transition;
3. Plan the timeframe for the audit activities and the issue of the certification in accordance with the revised standard;
4. Take into consideration both the period established for the transition and the current period of certification;
5. Set out the agenda for audits to be performed at their existing client organizations;
6. Plan the timeframe regarding the certification decisions so as to adjust the certificates in good time;
7. Encourage organizations with certification against the previous version to introduce the new one right from the first phases, also taking into consideration any changes which may occur during the DIS (Draft International Standard) phase;
8. Encourage organizations which have not yet been certified to activate immediately the new version of the standard.

Implementation of the transition of accredited certifications

- from ISO 9001:2008 to ISO 9001:2015
- from ISO 14001:2004 to ISO 14001:2015

Whilst taking into consideration any changes which may occur during the DIS phase of the standard, it is permitted for CBs to anticipate activities related to planning and implementation with respect to the requirements of the new version.

CBs are asked to start informing their clients regarding the DIS phase, and they can – if requested – conduct activities concerning the existing differences between the current client management system and the DIS (Gap Analysis).

In pressing for the organizations to plan activities starting from the DIS phase, the CB should recommend them to be careful because until the publication of the FDIS (Final Draft International Standard) the DIS could sustain technical modifications.

The assessment activities undertaken by CBs during the DIS phase are not in themselves sufficient to complete the transition process. Every evaluation conducted before the publication of the standard shall be reviewed (in the light of the definitive version of the standard) before transition to ISO 9001:2015 / ISO 14001:2015. CBs shall keep records of all evaluation/audit activities carried out during the DIS phase so that a complete audit can be performed for transition to ISO 9001:2015 / ISO 14001:2015.

Accredited certification against ISO 9001:2015 / ISO 14001:2015 can be issued only after the organization has demonstrated the conformity of its own system with ISO 9001:2015 / ISO 14001:2015 to a CB accredited for the new standard.

For the transition, CBs shall perform an audit at the premises of every client against ISO 9001:2015 / ISO 14001:2015.

On the basis of the agreement with certified organizations, CBs may conduct transition activities on the occasion of a planned surveillance, renewal or special audit. When a transition audit is performed together with a planned surveillance or renewal (e.g. in the case of a *progressive* or *phased* approach) additional time will probably be necessary to be certain that all the activities are covered against the existing and against the new standard.

Certification activities

1. **New certifications and renewals:** certifications to ISO 9001:2008 / ISO 14001:2004 can be issued or renewed against ISO 9001:2008 / ISO 14001:2004 also at a date after the publication of the new standards. The date of expiry of certifications against ISO 9001:2008 and ISO 14001:2004 issued or renewed during the period of transition shall correspond to the end of the 3 year transition period.
2. **Withdrawals:** after 36 months from the publication of ISO 9001:2015 / ISO 14001:2015 certifications accredited against ISO 9001:2008 / ISO 14001:2004 will no longer be valid and shall be withdrawn.

Transition process

The CB shall communicate to its clients, as soon as it's able to, its availability with regard to the transition. It is recommended to do this during the phase of the last DIS or of the FDIS.

The CB shall develop a transition plan which deals with the following issues:

- a) The training and checking of the competence of auditors and other personnel (note: in pressing the CBs to start training activities from the DIS phase it could be necessary to conduct more training to fill in any gaps that may emerge afterwards between the DIS, the FDIS and the published standard).
- b) The disposition of the CBs regarding client communications.
- c) The dispositions of the CB for assessing conformity with the new standard. For example, if it is done by means of a single visit or by means of an approach regarding the subsequent phases.
- d) The modalities whereby the CB will ensure that throughout the transition process its clients will continue to conform with ISO 9001:2008 / ISO 14001:2004.
- e) The way the CB intends to use audit results with respect to the FDIS.
- f) The actions to be performed regarding clients who have not completed the transition in the three years following the publication of ISO 9001:2015 / ISO 14001:2015. For example, the level of audit necessary to restore certification.

The CB shall also ensure that:

- all situations for which the client performs actions to the new requirements are duly identified and signaled as documental findings;
- auditors recommend certification against the published standard ISO 9001:2015 / ISO 14001:2015 only when all situations of suspension have been appropriately dealt with and the effectiveness of the EMS/QMS against the new requirements has been shown;
- if a major NC is raised regarding the requirements of the new standards, the recommendation for certification against ISO 9001:2015 / ISO 14001:2015 shall be made only after the closure of CAs and the verification of their implementation and effectiveness;
- the conformity assessment of a client against the new requirements carried out during the transition period does not interfere with the conformity with ISO 9001:2008 / ISO 14001:2004;
- if the assessment activities have taken place during the FDIS phase, a review is performed by the certification decision-takers in order to be sure that such activities are deemed valid in the decision process.

b) ACCREDITATION ACTIVITIES

New applications for accreditation

From the date of publication of ISO 9001:2015 / ISO 14001:2015 ACCREDIA shall not accept any applications referring to ISO 9001:2008 / ISO 14001:2004.

Extensions against ISO 9001:2008 / ISO 14001:2004 will continue to be accepted.

Bodies already accredited against ISO 9001:2008 / ISO 14001:2004 - management of the transition

CBs shall ensure that, before handling certification files against the new standard, its personnel directly involved (operative staff, auditors, committees, impartiality committee) are informed for their level of competence with regard to the novelties introduced by ISO 9001:2015 / ISO 14001:2015 and the relevant implications.

ACCREDIA will assess the adequacy of the process of certification to the new standard (transition assessment) by means of a documental review lasting 0.5 days for each standard for which transition to the new version has been requested. It would be better if this activity were carried out directly on-site at the CB so that it would be possible to exchange information. If the transition assessment should coincide with other assessments such as surveillance or renewal, the time necessary for this shall be added to the time already programmed.

These assessments and subsequent accreditation can be conducted only after the publication of the FDIS.

If the outcome of the documental review is negative it may be necessary to perform a further assessment which might consist (depending upon the nature of the failure/s) of a supplementary documental activity, or an office witness assessment.

Unless otherwise specified, ACCREDIA will perform the documental review during the first due surveillances and renewals (with an increase of 0.5 days) as programmed in the normal accreditation cycle starting from 2017.

The ACCREDIA assessment team will verify the transition plan which shall contain the contents given in the attachment to the present document, including the planning of training courses on the new standard for all staff involved and the update of the checklist / guideline / instructions possessed by the CB for audit management.

To help the transition process an example is attached to this circular explaining how to structure a transition plan. The transition plan shall be made available to ACCREDIA for the transition assessment with the relative attachments. The ACCREDIA assessment team shall attach the transition plan to its assessment report and make a written appraisal.

Prior to this assessment, (which, if the result is positive, will be followed by the granting of the new accreditation certificate) the CB shall not issue accredited certifications against ISO 9001:2015 / ISO 14001:2015.

Regarding the accreditation process of a CB with respect to a new standard, any NCs raised during the transition assessments shall be managed by the CB using CAs which shall be communicated to ACCREDIA. Records shall be kept available showing that all NCs raised by ACCREDIA related to the new standards have been closed by the implementation of adequate CAs (assessment of implementation and effectiveness), before the ACCREDIA management can express a recommendation to its CSA for approval against ISO 9001:2015 / ISO 14001:2015.

Thirty-six (36) months after publication of ISO 9001:2015 / ISO 14001:2015 the remaining QMS/EMS accreditations still applying ISO 9001:2008 / ISO 14001:2004 shall be withdrawn..

Please contact us for any explanations or clarifications.

With kind regards,

Emanuele Riva

Director of the Dept. of Certification and Inspection

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E. Riva', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Attachment 1: Example of a transition plan to ISO 9001:2015 and ISO 14001:2015

Attachment 2: AAPG Paper – drafted 2015/04/11. Good practices for ABs and CABs in the Transition to ISO 9001:2015

Attachment 1

Example of a transition plan to ISO 9001:2015 and ISO 14001:2015

A CB intending to use this module shall complete it and make it available to the ACCREDIA assessment team during the transition assessment to the new standard.

If necessary, the CB can use one module for ISO 9001:2015, and one for ISO 14001:2015. It is also possible to attach further documentation if such is considered useful for a complete assessment.

N°	Application	Space reserved for ACCREDIA
1.	How will client communications be managed with regard to the transition? Attach evidence	Closure C <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> If open clarify:
2.	What are the modalities and timeframe for the conduct and evaluation of training for personnel involved in contract review and for those responsible for the audit program?	Closure C <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> If open clarify:
3.	What are the modalities and timeframe for the training of auditors?	Closure C <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> If open clarify:
4.	What are the modalities and timeframe for the training of decision makers?	Closure C <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> If open clarify:
5.	Which of your body's documents will require modification and what is the timeframe for their distribution and applicability? (Availability for the ACCREDIA assessment team)	Closure C <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> If open clarify:
6.	In what ways will organizations which are accredited to the previous version of the standard be encouraged to adopt the new revision starting from the first phases, taking into consideration any changes which may occur during the FDIS phase?	Closure C <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> If open clarify:
7.	Do you think additional time will be necessary for transition activities if the transition should coincide with a surveillance or renewal assessment?	Closure C <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> If open clarify:

8.	How have you planned to use the results of any audits carried out against the FDIS?	Closure C <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> If open clarify:
9.	Have you identified the actions to undertake with respect to clients who have not completed the transition in the 3 year period after the publication of ISO 9001:2015 / ISO 14001:2015 – e.g. the necessary audit level for the restoration of certification?	Closure C <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> If open clarify:
10.	Are you planning to do the transition with a single visit or in phases? (e.g. document review, gap analysis, FDIS assessment, assessment of new requirements every year...). With the use of which modalities can you ensure that during the transition the client's systems will continue to conform to the previous revision of the standard?	Closure C <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> If open clarify:

11.	The assessment shall be focused on the context in which the organization operates (relations with the internal and external interested parties). What evidences do you request that your auditors gather to show that the requirement has been verified? (E.g. reports of meetings with external bodies, partnerships, sponsorship, agreements with companies, impact of company changes, contracts, legislative changes).	Closure C <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> If open clarify:
12.	How will you modify the modalities for performing, planning and reporting an audit, given that every evaluation will have to be based on risk based thinking? (e.g. plan, in the contract review and in Stage 1, an initial risk assessment, an audit plan which focuses on the company's risks, training, sectoral guidelines which identify specific risks, justifications for the sampling criteria, relevance of the findings with respect to the risks, flexibility in fixing audit times concerning identified risks...). Bear in mind that it is not required of an organization to prepare and have available a risk analysis, but that the development, maintenance and evaluation of the management system is oriented towards an approach whereby risk assessment is of primary importance.	Closure C <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> If open clarify:
13.	How does the body intend to modify the audit modalities considering the fact that now the High Level Structure places attention on certain specific issues? (e.g. leadership, context, planning, performance assessment, improvement etc.).	Closure C <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> If open clarify:
14.	Further considerations that you wish to add to better explain how to manage the transition. It is important to remember to attach a plan for evidences and support documentation.	Closure C <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> If open clarify:

Attachment 2

AAPG Paper – drafted 2015/04/11

Good practices for ABs ad CABs in the Transition to ISO 9001:2015

Each CAB has to demonstrate the ability to deliver effective certification against the requirements of ISO 9001:2015 with the intent to improve the credibility of accredited certification.

This paper defines possible evidence to be obtained by the AB prior to accrediting the CAB to deliver certification to the new standard.

The following items should be considered:

- Demonstration of appropriate implementation of training program based on the requirements of ISO 9001:2015, including evaluation of achieved competence as result of such training. Such training should be tailored and delivered to all relevant functions of the CAB;
- Ability to audit the application of risk based thinking by the certified client. Understanding of risk analysis techniques (SWOT, FMEA etc.) will be necessary where required by the industry;
- Ability to verify the identified risks and opportunities, as well as actions to mitigate risks;
- Where needed, amended internal procedures and documents of the CB, which reflect the changed requirements of the standard;
- The style of reporting and the information submitted to decision making;
- Ensuring consistent process based approach among its audit teams;
- Ability to analyze whether the management system reflects the context of the organization;
- Ability to plan audits based on the context of the organization, with more emphasis on stage 1 audit which is used to understand organisational context;
- Alignment of audit program to reflect the requirements of new standard;
- Time interval between stage 1 and stage 2 audits;
- Understanding by auditors of internal and external factors, needs and expectations of related interested parties;
- Recognition of organisational boundaries.
If witnessed audits are required during transition process, the following should be specifically considered:
- Evidence of process approach used, e.g. auditing starts from the system up to the standard;
- Instead of focus on documentation, good techniques for interviewing and organising the audit are essential.
- Risks are identified throughout the processes and in the context of the organization;
- Selection of relevant interviewees to cover leadership;
- Understanding the implications of the new terminologies in the standard;
- Interaction between audit team members is vital.

The previous knowledge of AB regarding the performance of CABs should be considered during establishing the approach to transition.

The effective communication between ABs and sharing information on their approaches regarding the transition is welcomed.

It is recommended to establish the common and consistent approach between various ABs to the multi-national CABs.

It is also important to share their transition assessment results provided consent from the CAB is obtained.