

To all accredited and applicant Certification Bodies

Our ref.: DC2016SSV002

Milan, 05/01/2016

Re: ACCREDIA Department of Certification and Inspection – Circular n. 1/2016

In the coming weeks, in accordance with the existing agreement between ACCREDIA and the accredited and recognized certification bodies (CBs) and in accordance with ACCREDIA regulations RG-01, RG-01-01, RG-16 and RG-16-01, you will receive our quotation for the maintenance of your accreditation or recognition with regard to EA sector 28 – scheme ISO 9001.

At the start of the new year it is necessary to make a program for future activities on the basis of experience gained in the past.

During 2015 many difficulties were encountered regarding QMS certification in the construction sector, and these difficulties resulted, in some cases, in the withdrawal or the suspension of accreditation or recognition, whilst in a considerable number of other cases supplementary activities were needed. In the course of this period we have found the instrument of Market Surveillance useful, regulated by the document IAF ID 04¹.

Briefly, the Market Surveillance assessment takes place at the location of the certified organization, performed directly by ACCREDIA personnel and not by the CB.

The assessment is conducted also by means of a questionnaire (attached to IAF ID 04) and in the presence of the organization's personnel (usually only the Quality Manager) and of the CB (if possible with the participation of a member of the audit team which conducted the last audit).

This audit activity is not a part of the surveillance or renewal activities, but it is a one day activity set aside specifically. The organization which is the object of the Market Surveillance is chosen directly by ACCREDIA on the basis of certain risk factors such as the scope of the certificate, the size of the organization, the location and the audit team.

Any findings raised are classified in the usual way: Nonconformity, Concern or Comment.

For 2016, the ACCREDIA Management has decided to replace witness assessment activities for EA sector 28, QMS, with Market Surveillance activities. Although it is a new instrument for many bodies (despite the fact that the relevant IAF document goes back to 2012), we believe it is necessary to improve the effectiveness of assessments, nevertheless keeping the costs of accreditation as near as possible to those currently applied.

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http://www.iaf.nu/upFiles/IAFID42012_Market_Surveillance_of_Certified_Organizations_Word_R2.pdf

The decisions were taken in accordance with::

- ISO 17011:2004, § 7.11.2²;
- RG-01, § 1.5.1.3³;
- RG-16 rev.02, § 1.5.3⁴
- IAF MD 17⁵, (application forthcoming).

The costs applied by ACCREDIA for CBs will be almost identical to those applied to other programmed witness activities, with the certainty, however, that the duration of the assessment will always be one day on-site (as well as one day of back office work and for drawing up the report). Assessments shall not last any longer, giving a sure and direct benefit In favor of accredited bodies.

There will be some extra effort involved on the part of CBs and of ACCREDIA, but we are convinced that it will strengthen trust in accredited certification – a factor which is strongly and widely requested – especially in this sector.

With many thanks for your collaboration and with our warmest wishes for the New Year,

The Department Director
Dr. Emanuele RIVA



² ISO 17011:2004, § 7.11.2. *The accreditation body shall establish procedures and plans for carrying out periodic on-site surveillance assessments, other surveillance activities and reassessments at sufficiently close intervals to monitor the continued fulfillment by the accredited CAB of the requirements for accreditation.*

³ RG-01 Rev.3, § 1.5.1.3. *Other control methods may be used by ACCREDIA to assess the CB's operations (e.g. a request for information made by ACCREDIA to organizations or consultancy operators, for the participation of assessors or Technical Officers of the Department at Impartiality Committee meetings or other methods of control in accordance with the regulations).*

⁴ RG-16, Rev.3, § 1.5.3. *Other control methods may be used by ACCREDIA to assess the CB's operations (e.g. a request for information made by ACCREDIA to organizations or consultancy operators or other methods of control in accordance with the regulations).*

⁵ IAF MD 17:2015, § 2.2.1. *ABs shall have a policy to cover the scope for each applicant and accredited CB through the use of the various mechanisms that are available, including: i). office assessment activities ;ii) witnessing activities; and iii). other assessment activities, as defined by the AB according to the needs identified.*