

Title	Regulation for the accreditation of Verification Bodies verifying and validating GHG (greenhouse gas) emissions
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Director of Department	The Directive Council	The President	01-01-2018

0.1 SCOPE AND FIELD OF APPLICATION

The present Regulation is applicable to verification and validation bodies of GHG emissions (hereafter referred to as VBs):

- in the voluntary area:
 - verification of assertions regarding the quantification and reporting of GHG emissions and of their removal (hereafter referred to as GHG inventories) of an organization, in compliance with UNI EN ISO 14064-1;
 - verification and validation of the Carbon Footprint of products (hereafter CFP) in compliance with UNI EN ISO/TS 14067.
- in the regulated area:
 - verification of GHG emissions: EU Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS);
 - evaluation of the monitoring and verification plans of CO₂ emissions reports from maritime transport in compliance with Reg. (EU) 757/2015 (maritime MRV).

In particular, the conditions and procedures are established for the granting, surveillance, extension, renewal, reduction/self-reduction, suspension/self-suspension, restoration, renunciation and withdrawal of the accreditation of VBs, in compliance with the applicable standards and guides, with the relevant details in cases where the normative reference for such scheme gives only rather general requirements and in cases where they are not dealt with in the General Regulation RG-01.

The present Regulation shall not be used separately from General Regulation RG-01.

0.2 NORMATIVE REFERENCES

The normative references for the application of the present Regulation are given in the ACCREDIA document LS-12 "Reference standards and documents for the accreditation of verification and validation bodies", in the version in force.

It follows that, in the ambit of a certain scheme of accreditation, of certification or sector, the present Regulation is integrated by specific technical regulations/documents (RT and DT) and technical circulars, where such exist.

0.3 TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

The terms and definitions of General Regulation RG-01 and of the applicable standards shall be applied.

0.4 ACRONYMS

- ACCREDIA-DC: ACCREDIA Department of Certification and Inspection Bodies;
- CSA: Sector Accreditation Committee;
- DDC: Director of the Department of Certification and Inspection Bodies;
- FT: Technical Officer;
- VB: Verification/validation Body

PART 1 - GENERAL REQUIREMENTS REGARDING THE ACCREDITATION PROCESS

1. REQUIREMENTS AND INFORMATION FOR ACCREDITATION

1.1. GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1.1 Accreditation and the subsequent recording in the Register are accorded to bodies which operate against standards and reference documents applicable to them and filed in the ACCREDIA document LS-12.

Accreditation concerning verification or validation activities is issued referring to the applicable standards or normative references. In the ETS scheme accreditation is granted referring to the sectors (groups of activities set out in Annex 1 of the Reg. (EU) 600/2012).

1.1.2 The conditions whereby a VB may be accredited are as follows:

- it conforms with the requirements of General Regulation RG-01 and the present Regulation, with the standards and reference documents given in ACCREDIA document LS-12 and that it constantly maintains behavior which is correct, transparent and collaborative with ACCREDIA-DC;
- at the time of the initial assessment at its head office:
 - in the voluntary area: it has issued declarations of verifications of GHG inventories or declarations of verifications and validations of the CFP for at least 12 months (this is not applicable for bodies already accredited in other schemes);
 - in the regulated ETS area: it has a contract for ETS verification activities.

Any exemptions related to special cases shall be submitted to the relevant CSA for deliberation.

1.1.2.1 The accreditation of VBs for the verification of GHG inventories in accordance with UNI EN ISO 14064-1

The requirements contained in the reference circular are applicable.

1.1.2.2 The accreditation of VBs for the verification of the CFP in accordance with UNI EN ISO/TS 14067

The requirements contained in the reference circular are applicable.

1.1.2.3 The accreditation of VBs for maritime MRV

The requirements contained in the reference circular are applicable.

1.1.3 The VB shall send annually (within the first six months of the year) to ACCREDIA-DC, by means of the module, duly completed and available in the area of the ACCREDIA website reserved for bodies, the following data regarding activities conducted under accreditation:

- total annual revenue of the VB (including non-accredited activities);
- annual revenue for verification and validation activities (in the regulated and voluntary areas);

- n° of internal personnel involved in verification and validation activities;
- n° of verification and validation reports.

ACCREDIA-DC may extend these requirements to other data (e.g. revenue from training activities).

The aspects and data concerning the calculation of the above parameters shall be kept available for ACCREDIA-DC and/or for its assessors.

In cases of proven violation of the above requirements, the sanctions as set out in § 1.8 are applicable.

1.1.4 If a VB outsources one or more activities of the accreditation scheme it shall make sure that it is capable of demonstrating that such person/entity is competent to provide the service in question and, when applicable, to satisfy the requirements of UNI EN ISO 14065. The names of such persons shall be communicated to ACCREDIA-DC in advance, in the application.

1.2. PRESENTATION AND EXPLANATION OF THE APPLICATION FOR ACCREDITATION

The requirements of General Regulation RG-01 are applicable with the specification that the application for accreditation of a VB shall be presented to ACCREDIA-DC using the modules DA-00 and DA-07, available on ACCREDIA's website, together with all the necessary documents.

1.3. PROCESS OF ACCREDITATION

1.3.1 DOCUMENT REVIEW

The requirements of General Regulation RG-01 are applicable

1.3.2 ASSESSMENTS

1.3.2.1 The requirements of General Regulation RG-01 are applicable with the specification that the duration of the on-site assessment is determined bearing in mind the specifics of the scheme (e.g. the number and criticality of the activities requested, the number of locations to assess) and other factors such as the number of findings of the document review to be closed, the language, the transfer times etc.

1.3.2.2 If one or more Nonconformities are raised, § 1.3.2.5 of the Regulation RG-01, General Requirements, is applicable.

If the findings reported do not require supplementary assessment activities, the accreditation process continues by means of one or more witness assessments (if necessary and in accordance with the modalities of the specific accreditation scheme).

The sampling of activities to be assessed takes place as part of the voluntary area, considering the number and complexity of the GHG inventories or of the CFPs verified by the VB and, in the regulated area, considering the sectors in question (groups of activities reported in the Annex 1 of Reg. (EU) 600/2012 and the VB's auditors for the ETS or the type and number of monitoring plans approved or of the verifications issued for the maritime MRV).

1.3.2.3 For ETS verification activities (throughout the accreditation cycle) the VB shall send to ACCREDIA-DC, at least 10 days before the performance of the witness assessment, the following documents:

- Monitoring plan and relative annexes, monitoring procedures and risk analysis of the operator;
- Draft of the communication of the emissions prepared by the operator;
- Copy of the VB's evaluation procedures;
- Copy of the strategy analysis and of the risk analysis;
- Copy of the previous validation report, if available;
- Verification plan, including the plan for sampling and testing;
- Document for calculating the verification timeframes;
- Internal program of the VB with the various phases and timeframes for the verification (off site and on site);
- Contract with the operator;
- Qualifications and CVs of the members of the verification team;
- Letter of appointment of the verification team.

1.3.2.4 Regarding the duration of the witness assessment, for the ETS scheme, ACCREDIA-DC may be present during all the phases of the verification (articles 11 – 27 of Reg. (EU) 600/2012).

In particular, the preparatory phase (for the sake of clarity the term Stage 1 is used) will be evaluated using the following modalities:

- if the Stage 1 is performed at the premises of the operator/aircraft operator, ACCREDIA-DC may be present to perform a witnessing assessment. This activity shall be communicated in advance and also included in the notification template;
- if the Stage 1 is not performed at the premises of the operator, (back office) ACCREDIA-DC may be present at the activities performed at the VB's office, or this assessment shall be performed by means of documents. In both cases the possibility will be requested to interact with the VB's verifier.
- if the VBs should perform the verification of the management of the data gathered at the office of the operator/aircraft operator, ACCREDIA-DC may also be present in this conclusive phase.

1.4. DECISION-TAKING PROCESS AND GRANTING OF ACCREDITATION

The requirements of General Regulation RG-01 are applicable with the specification that, at the time of the granting of accreditation, ACCREDIA-DC formulates the scope of accreditation which has been decided and, for the regulated areas, shall send, if necessary, the decisions of the CSA to the competent authorities (e.g. ministries) for their deliberation.

The accreditation certificate lasts for five years.

1.5. SURVEILLANCE AND RENEWAL OF ACCREDITATION

1.5.1 SURVEILLANCE OF ACCREDITATION

1.5.1.1 General

The requirements of General Regulation RG-01 are applicable.

1.5.1.2 PROGRAMMED SURVEILLANCE OF ACCREDITATION

The requirements of General Regulation RG-01 are applicable, con le seguenti precisazioni:

- in exceptional cases the DDC may postpone the first surveillance to 12 months (e.g. if the VB has not acquired any new clients);
- the on-site and witness verifications are planned so as to enable a meaningful sampling of the scope of accreditation over the entire cycle of accreditation and the characteristics are established on the basis of factors such as the following:
 - operative sectors in the regulated ETS (groups of activities reported in Annex 1 of Reg. (EU) 600/2012);
 - progress on the VB in terms of quality during the previous period;
 - geographical operative areas;
 - number and complexity of declarations/attestations of verification or validation issued and relative increase;
 - if the VB operates in the voluntary or regulated area;
 - knowledge on the part of ACCREDIA-DC of the VB's auditors;
 - complaints or remarks received by ACCREDIA-DC.
- For greater effectiveness of the surveillance assessments, ACCREDIA-DC reserves the right to choose the VB's verification team and/or the organization evaluated by the VB.

1.5.1.3 UNPROGRAMMED ACCREDITATION SURVEILLANCE

The requirements of General Regulation RG-01 are applicable

1.5.1.4 DECISION-TAKING PROCESS AND GRANTING OF MAINTENANCE OF ACCREDITATION

The requirements of General Regulation RG-01 are applicable

1.5.1.5 VARIATION OF THE FIELD OF ACCREDITATION AND OF THE ACCREDITATION STANDARDS

The requirements of General Regulation RG-01 are applicable with the specification that at the time of variation to the field of accreditation, ACCREDIA-DC, for the regulated areas, shall send, if necessary, the decisions of the CSA to the competent authorities (e.g. ministries) for their deliberation.

1.5.1.6 TRANSFER OF ACCREDITATION BETWEEN ACCREDITATION BODIES

The requirements of General Regulation RG-01 are applicable with the specification that at the time of the transfer of accreditation, ACCREDIA-DC, for the regulated areas, shall send, if necessary, the decisions of the CSA to the competent authorities (e.g. ministries) for their deliberation

1.5.1.7 TRANSFER OF OWNERSHIP OF ACCREDITATION

The requirements of General Regulation RG-01 are applicable with the specification that at the time of the transfer of accreditation ACCREDIA-DC, for the regulated areas, shall send, if necessary, the decisions of the CSA to the competent authorities (e.g. ministries) for their deliberation

1.5.2 RENEWAL OF ACCREDITATION

1.5.2.1 PERFORMANCE OF THE PROCESS OF RENEWAL OF ACCREDITATION

The requirements of General Regulation RG-01 are applicable

1.5.2.2 DECISION-TAKING PROCESS AND GRANTING OF RENEWAL OF ACCREDITATION

The requirements of General Regulation RG-01 are applicable with the specification that at the time of the transfer of accreditation ACCREDIA-DC confirms the scope of accreditation decided and, for the regulated areas, shall send, if necessary, the decisions of the CSA to the competent authorities (e.g. ministries) for their deliberation.

Due to the fact that the duration of the accreditation certificate is five years, it is not possible to prolong the validity beyond the expiry date.

1.6. EXTENSION OF ACCREDITATION

1.6.1 GENERAL INFORMATION

In the voluntary area (GHG and CFP inventories):

- Extension of accreditation to other sectors is not possible because the accreditation is issued singly for the scheme, granted the requirement that the VB ensures the use of competent verifiers for all activity sectors in which it operates or shows interest in operating (e.g. the issuance of offers for GHG or CFP verification activities).

In the regulated area:

- ETS: extensions are issued with reference to groups of activities reported in the Annex 1 to Reg. (EU) 600/2012;
- Maritime MRV: the specific requirements of the reference circular are applicable.

1.6.1.1 PRESENTATION AND EXPLANATION OF THE APPLICATION FOR EXTENSION

The requirements of General Regulation RG-01 are applicable with the specification that the application for extension of accreditation of a VB shall be presented to ACCREDIA-DC using the modules DA-00 and DA-07 available on ACCREDIA's website together with the necessary documents.

1.6.1.2 DOCUMENT REVIEW

The requirements of General Regulation RG-01 are applicable

1.6.1.3 ASSESSMENTS

The requirements of General Regulation RG-01 are applicable with the specification that, following a positive outcome of the document review, the process of extension goes ahead with the performance of on-site or witness assessments in accordance with the type of verification and validation activity which is the object of the request for extension of accreditation.

In particular, in the regulated ETS area a witness assessment takes place for each new sector (group of activities set out in Annex 1 of Reg. (EU) 600/2012.

1.7. DECISION-TAKING PROCESS AND THE GRANTING OF EXTENSION OF ACCREDITATION

The requirements of General Regulation RG-01 are applicable with the specification that at the time of the extension of accreditation ACCREDIA-DC formulates the scope of accreditation decided and, for the regulated areas, shall send, if necessary, the decisions of the CSA to the competent authorities (e.g. ministries) for their deliberation

1.8. SUSPENSION, WITHDRAWAL AND REDUCTION OF ACCREDITATION

1.8.1 MINOR SANCTIONS MEASURES

The requirements of General Regulation RG-01 are applicable

1.8.2 MAJOR SANCTIONS MEASURES (SUSPENSION, REDUCTION, WITHDRAWAL)

The requirements of General Regulation RG-01 are applicable with the specification that, for regulated areas, ACCREDIA-DC shall send, if necessary, the decisions of the CSA regarding major sanctions measures imposed on accredited CBs, also to the competent authorities (e.g. ministries) for their deliberation.

1.8.3 SUSPENSION REQUESTED BY THE CB

The requirements of General Regulation RG-01 are applicable with the specification that, for the regulated areas, ACCREDIA-DC shall, if necessary, inform the competent authorities (e.g. ministries) of the suspension of accreditation requested by the VB, for their deliberation.

1.8.4 PROCEDURAL REDUCTION OF SCOPE AND RENUNCIATION OF ACCREDITATION

The requirements of General Regulation RG-01 are applicable with the specification that, for CBs operative in the regulated area, ACCREDIA-DC shall send, if necessary, the decisions of the CSA regarding reduction/renunciation of accreditation also to the competent authorities (e.g. ministries) for their deliberation.

1.8.5 RESUMPTION OF ACCREDITATION

The requirements of General Regulation RG-01 are applicable with the specification that, for CBs operative in the regulated areas, ACCREDIA-DC shall send, if necessary, the decisions of the CSA regarding resumption of accreditation also to the competent authorities (e.g. ministries) for their deliberation.

1.9. COMPLAINTS RESERVATIONS AND APPEALS

1.9.1 COMPLAINTS

The requirements of General Regulation RG-01 are applicable

1.9.2 RESERVATIONS

The requirements of General Regulation RG-01 are applicable

1.9.3 APPEALS

The requirements of General Regulation RG-01 are applicable

1.10. OBLIGATIONS OF THE VB

The requirements of General Regulation RG-01 are applicable

1.11. OBLIGATIONS OF ACCREDIA-DC

The requirements of General Regulation RG-01 are applicable

PART 2 – REQUIREMENTS CONCERNING VERIFICATION AND VALIDATION BODIES

Part 2 contains a series of requirements regarding the procedures of VBs with which the VBs are under obligation to conform as a part of conformity to the applicable normative references. In accordance with the present Regulation, it is possible to consider only VBs which are organizations, and therefore individual verifiers are not acceptable with regard to the present accreditation scheme.

Any specific requirements applicable to only one area of accreditation (e.g. GHG or CFP inventories) are reported in the circulars which are integral to the present Regulation.

2.1 COLLABORATION WITH ACCREDIA-DC

2.1.1 As already described, the VB shall allow ACCREDIA-DC to choose the verification team and/or the organization where the witness assessments shall be performed. For this purpose the CB shall submit to ACCREDIA-DC upon request, the updated controlled lists of the verifiers as well as the updated and complete programming relating to verification and validation activities and all other information necessary for the conduct of verifications by ACCREDIA-DC, in good time for the relative planning;

2.1.2 At the time of the assessment at the VB's location, the VB shall organize, if requested, a meeting between the ACCREDIA-DC assessors and an agreed sample of its verifiers

2.1.3 All news/information regarding, in any way, relations between ACCREDIA-DC and the accredited or applicant VB or between the VB and the organizations shall remain confidential and shall not be communicated to third parties unless:

- publication is envisaged by the rules of accreditation or of verification and validation;
- communication is envisaged in compliance with the present Regulation or is deemed necessary by ACCREDIA-DC to effectively perform its tasks, though it shall remain limited only to those who receive it;
- otherwise established by law or provided for by the Legal Authorities;
- the request, with justification, comes from another AB signatory to the EA or IAF MLA agreements;
- disclosure is made with the explicit and unanimous consent of all the parties involved.

Failure to observe the above rules may lead to the imposition of sanctions in accordance with § 1.8

2.2 IMPARTIALITY

2.2.1 The impartiality and independence of the VB shall be guaranteed on three levels:

- strategy and policy;
- verification and validation activities;
- decision regarding certification.

2.2.2 The VB shall show how it undertakes its own and, if necessary, other activities, so as to eliminate conflicts of interest and to reduce to a minimum any risk of impartiality. These measures include both internal activities and those of associated bodies, sub-contractors and experts/verifiers.

2.2.3 The VB shall explain the Concerns and NCs and the requirements but it cannot propose solutions or consultancy as a part of the verification or validation.

2.2.4 Any training activity undertaken by the VB by means of standard courses is not considered to be consultancy activity.

2.2.5 If an independent committee is chosen as an independent mechanism for safeguarding impartiality, it shall include participation of all the parties with significant interests in the system. It is axiomatic for all the parties to be allowed take part and that there is a balance of interests whereby no particular interest prevails.

2.3 COMPETENCES

The VB shall establish and adopt procedures indicating the responsibilities at the various levels and functions, including the criteria of qualification for the verifier, the TL, the experts (technical competences and specific experience) and for the issuance of the declaration of verification or validation, as is the case for the other roles which require different levels and kinds of competence.

2.4 PERFORMANCE OF VERIFICATION AND VALIDATION ACTIVITIES

2.4.1 The quotations shall be approved by qualified staff before being issued. Regarding assessments performed at the VB's location, the VB shall organize, if asked to do so, a meeting between the ACCREDIA-DC assessors and an agreed sample of its verifiers.

The contract between the VB and the organization shall include requirements whereby the organization shall:

- make the necessary arrangements for the on-site verification, guaranteeing access to documentation, to records and to staff entrusted with the performance of verifications or validations;
- not use in a misleading way the verification or validation report;
- confirm in writing that all the data and all the information have been properly prepared and made available.

2.4.3 The contract shall provide for the possibility to increase the duration of the verification or validation in case it becomes necessary after performing an analysis of the strategy or of the risks and in cases where critical NCs are raised due to insufficient data or if there are errors in the database.

2.4.4 The VB shall communicate the members of the verification team to the client with enough advance notice to permit any substitution of the team members following justified objections from the client.

2.5 COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

2.5.1 Personnel, including the VB's management, who have collaborated in any way with the organization in question, shall not handle any complaints or appeals.

2.5.2 When a complaint is received the VB shall find solutions in order to solve the problem quickly and effectively.

Complaints and appeals may result in disputes from which internal NCs within the VB may arise.

The procedures of the VB for handling complaints should include steps which:

- limit the consequences of a possible internal NC;
- restore conformity to the requirements of the verification as soon as possible;
- ensure that the NC is not repeated;
- evaluate the effectiveness of the corrective and preventive actions.

2.5.5 The documents regarding complaints and appeals shall be adequately archived and kept available for checking by ACCREDIA-DC.