

Prot. DC2018SSV257

Milan, 07-09-2018

To certification bodies accredited to ISO 17021-1

To the associations of conformity assessment bodies

Object: Department of Certification and Inspection – Informative circular 13/2018
IAF CERTSEARCH Database

We have pleasure in updating you regarding the development of the IAF database which will constitute an authoritative source for verifying accredited certifications issued all over the world.

The project was started in 2014, and it was officially approved in October 2017 during the IAF General Assembly.

The program was developed by a working group: Database Management Committee (DMC) of IAF, consisting of accreditation bodies (including ACCREDIA), certification bodies and representatives of industry.

The governance of activities was set up in America (in compliance with the Delaware Law) on 9/11/2017 by a Limited Liability Company, IAF Database LLC, 100% owned by International Accreditation Forum, Inc. (IAF). ACCREDIA is a member of the company board.

In May 2018 an agreement was formalized following an international competitive tender with Quality Trade for the development and management of the database.

The database has been officially named IAF CERTSEARCH and in the coming months it will be accessible at www.IAFCERTSEARCH.org. The organizations in the database will be able to publish on their own website the logo of IAF CERTSEARCH which will use the database for checking the validity of its certification.

IAF CERTSEARCH has gained significant support from government agencies, from industry and from all levels of the accreditation system. In Italy it has the backing of CONSIP.

Whilst this is a voluntary database, IAF CERTSEARCH has already received a considerable quantity of commitments to adhere, and it will be launched in 2019 with over 700,000 certifications.

The value of IAF CERTSEARCH

Currently it is very difficult to check the validity of an accredited management system certification issued by a certification body accredited by an accreditation body which is a member of IAF. In some cases, it is impossible or impractical to check the validity of a certificate as there are few accreditation bodies which have developed a database for certifications. The difficulty of this verification makes improper use easier and reduces the value of accredited certification.

IAF CERTSEARCH will provide a single solution for all management system certifications accredited by any IAF member accreditation body, increasing the efficiency of controls and reducing improper use.

IAF CERTSEARCH will give greater visibility to accredited certification and to accredited bodies it will increase the value and integrity of accredited certification.

IAF CERTSEARCH is a tool whereby users can verify accredited certifications in cases where the validation user knows the company/organization name or the identity of the certification. Users will not be able to create lists of certified organizations as this could negatively affect certification bodies. Certification dates will not be visible, just an indication regarding the certification status.

No certification body or accreditation body will be able to view the list of the certifications of another CB or AB.

IAF and its members are working to create the digital structure necessary to protect, educate and promote accredited certification, and IAF commits to make the network of accredited certifications grow globally.

IAF CERTSEARCH will manage all required security and privacy requirements, whilst not increasing cost to the network.

We can confirm that:

1. All the processes of transmission of data to IAF will be managed by ACCREDIA. Your body is already providing your certification data to ACCREDIA. From now on, ACCREDIA will send certification data (the publicly available data already on the ACCREDIA register) to the IAF register.
2. ACCREDIA will not communicate to Quality Trade or to IAF any of the personal data of your clients (names, emails, phone numbers) because it does not possess them. The only data communicated to Quality Trade are the data already published on ACCREDIA's website (related to accreditation and certification). We will communicate to IAF the references of accredited bodies, for contact, where necessary.
3. With regard to communication and marketing activities, your clients will not receive communication from Quality Trade, unless explicitly requested. You can contact Quality Trade asking for more information.

In the coming months, when you access ACCREDIA's website to upload the data of certified organizations, you will receive detailed information regarding the transmission of data to IAF. Once in possession of this information, you will receive the access credentials for the IAF CERTSEARCH website and the relative link.

Through the IAF CERTSEARCH website you will be able to decide freely whether to provide to IAF CERTSEARCH the contact information of your clients, in case your clients are interested in making their products visible in the Marketplace managed by Quality Trade <https://www.qualitytrade.com/>

It is therefore confirmed that each individual certification body will be able to decide freely whether to transmit to IAF CERTSEARCH the contact information of some or all of its clients. Following receipt of this information, every organization will be contacted by Quality Trade which will guide it for free entry in the Marketplace.

The birth of Marketplace, managed by Quality Trade, although a voluntary participation for all certified organizations, will guarantee the necessary revenue to cover all the costs of this worldwide database, in consideration of the transactions which will be generated on Marketplace. Economic contributions will therefore not be requested from certification and accreditation bodies.

We are available for any clarifications.

Kind regards,

Emanuele Riva
Director of the Department of
Certification and Inspection

