


<b>CERTIFICATION BODY</b>	CERTIFICATION SYSTEM		
LEVEL 0: DOCUMENT #:	<b>ICG-021</b>		
TITLE:	<b>GRANTING, SUSPENSION, WITHDRAWAL AND REDUCTION OF CERTIFICATION PROCEDURE</b>	Date:	November 22, 2023
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**REVISION RECORD**

REVISION	DATE	DESCRIPTION OF REVISION	PARAGRAPH / APPENDIX
0	Nov-2023	Issued	

**1.0 PURPOSE**

The purpose of this document is to establish a procedure for ISO Certifications Group (ICG) to grant, suspend, withdraw, or reduce the client's scope of certification, along with subsequent actions.

**2.0 APPLICATION**

This document applies to ICG and the clients' management system(s) concerning the granting, suspending, withdrawing, expanding, or reducing the client's scope of certification.

**3.0 RESPONSIBILITIES**

**3.1** The President shall be responsible for:

- Establishing standards that require competent personnel to provide competent, consistent, and impartial certification services.
- Being aware of ICG's status as a legal entity that can be held responsible legally for all certification activities and certification decisions.

**3.2** The Client Support Manager (CSM) shall be responsible for:

- Remaining impartial before, during, and after all certification activities to ensure the integrity of all certification decisions; (See ICG-011 Operational Controls)
- Reviewing the file for completeness before submitting to the Certification Auditor

**3.3** The Lead Auditor

- Performing the certification activities and audit(s) of the Client's management system;
- Assessing, evaluating, and confirming all objective evidence to determine if the Client's management system is in conformance with requirements for desired certification(s).

**3.4** The Certification Auditor shall be responsible for:

- Assessing sufficient objective evidence upon which to base a certification decision;

- Determining if further information is required and make final decision if certification is granted, suspended, or withdrawn
- Making the decision to certify, suspend, withdraw, or revoke, and expand or reduce the scope of certification for the Client's management system.

## **4.0 PROCEDURE**

### **4.1 General**

1. ISO Certifications Group (ICG) has established this procedure to grant, suspend, withdraw, expand, or reduce the client's scope of certification that may occur due to the Client's failure to maintain its management system certification requirements.
2. ICG's certification shall validate that the Client's management system meets the requirements to carry out critical business functions, which subsequently assures the public's confidence in the client's organization.
3. In order for ICG to certify the Client's management system, the Lead Auditor and Audit Team member(s) as applicable shall audit the client's management system per ICG-017 Conducting Audits, considering potential or actual risks. See ICG-009 Risk Management.
4. The Certification Auditor and Lead Auditor shall also engage in ICG's required certification activities in a manner to ensure that the results of all activities are fair and impartial. These certification activities shall be completed in accordance with ICG-011 Operational Controls.
5. The CSM shall ensure that ICG personnel (e.g., Certification Auditor) who make decisions to certify, suspend, withdraw, expand, or reduce the Client's certification are different from those who carried out the audits.

### **4.2 Granting, Suspending, Withdrawing, Reducing, and Expanding the Certification Scope**

1. Upon receiving the required instructions from the CSM, the Lead Auditor and Audit Team member(s) as applicable shall audit the Client's management system. See ICG-017 Conducting Audits.
2. After the required audits and certification activities are complete, the results of the audit of the Client's management system shall be provided to the CSM. See the ICG-F07 Audit Report.
3. After the CSM verifies that the certification information and file is complete and accurate, the CSM shall submit the certification file to the Certification Auditor. The Certification Auditor shall review the certification file and shall make a certification decision using ICG-F29 Certification Decision Authorization. See ICG-018 Conducting Reviews Prior to Making Certification Decisions.

#### **4. Granting Certification**

- a) Upon reaching a favorable decision, ICG shall provide certification documents to the newly certified client in accordance with ICG-F52 Certification Rules and Instructions. The certificate (see ICG-F51 Certification Template) shall contain ICG's management certification mark and indicate the certified areas of the client's management system.
- b) After ICG certifies the Client's management system, ICG shall maintain the certification based on the Client's continued demonstration to satisfy the requirements of the management system standards.
- c) ICG may continue to maintain the Client's certification based upon the Lead Auditor's favorable conclusion. This can occur without further independent review and decision if:
  - The CSM requires the Lead Auditor to report the need to initiate a review by competent personnel for any nonconformity or other situation leading to suspension or withdrawal of certification.
  - The CSM selects competent personnel (see ICG-F27 Personnel Competency Evaluation) who continuously monitors its required surveillance activities, including monitoring the reporting by the Audit Team member(s) to confirm the certification activity is operating effectively.

#### **5. Suspending the Scope of Certification**

- a) The Certification Auditor recommend suspension of the client's management system certification for a number of reasons including, but not limited to, any of the following:
  - The Client's certified management system persistently or seriously fails to meet the minimum certification requirements, including requirements for the effectiveness of the management system;
  - The certified Client does not correct or respond to detected major or minor nonconformities (defined as non-fulfillment of a requirement) within a defined time frame; See ICG-027 Nonconformities and Corrective Actions;
  - The certified Client does not allow surveillance or recertification audits to be conducted at the required frequencies, or refuses an unannounced audit;
  - The certified Client's organization is involved in illegal activity;
  - The certified Client makes significant changes that impact the management system;
  - The certified Client has voluntarily requested a suspension.
- b) During suspension, the Client's management system certification shall be

temporarily invalid. In most cases, the suspension shall not exceed six months.

- c) When the Client's certificate has been suspended, the certificate shall be temporarily invalid and shall go into effect immediately. During this time, the client shall not refer to the certificate, and/or use or display ICG's certification mark.
- d) Failure to resolve the issues that have resulted in the suspension in a time established by ICG shall result in withdrawal or reduction of the scope of certification.

#### **6. Withdrawal of Certification**

- a) The CSM shall withdraw the Client's management system certificate for a number of reasons including, but not limited to, any of the following:
  - The Client's certificate is already suspended, but the client continues to refer to ICG's certificate, and/or use or display ICG's certification mark in violation of ICG's certification rules. See ICG-F52 Certification Rules and Instructions;
  - The Client does not allow ICG personnel to supervise certain parts of the scope of certification;
  - The Client failed to resolve the issues that resulted in the initial suspension in a time established by ICG;
  - The client's assets have been declared bankrupt;
  - The client no longer wishes to cooperate, and requests termination of the cooperation.
- b) Upon withdrawal of the client's management system certification, the Client shall discontinue the use of all advertising matter that contains a reference to certification, as directed by ICG;

#### **7. Expanding the Scope of Certification**

- a) The Certification Auditor shall review the Client's certification application in response to the Client's request to expand the scope of a certification already granted,
- b) The Certification Auditor shall determine any audit or certification activities necessary to decide whether or not to grant the extension. This may be conducted in conjunction with a surveillance audit.

#### **8. Reducing the Scope of Certification**

- a) ICG shall reduce the scope of certification to exclude the parts not meeting the requirements if the certified client has persistently or seriously failed to meet the certification requirements for those parts of the scope of certification.
- b) Any such reduction shall be in line with the requirements of the standard used for certification.

#### **4.3 Subsequent Actions by ICG for Suspended, Withdrawn, or Reduced Certifications**

1. The CSM shall restore the suspended, withdrawn, or reduced certification if the issues resulting in the Client's certification status have been resolved.
  - a) To ensure the issues have been resolved, the CSM and Lead Auditor shall conduct surveillance activities so that "sample" 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.
  - b) A recertification audit shall be planned and conducted to evaluate the continued fulfillment of all of the requirements of the relevant management system standard or other standard, normative document.
    - For any major nonconformities, the Lead Auditor and audit team member(s) as applicable have reviewed, accepted, and verified the correction and corrective actions;
    - For any minor nonconformities, the Lead Auditor and audit team member(s) as applicable have reviewed and accepted the client's plan for correction and corrective action.
2. If the Client disagrees with ICG's certification decisions, then the Client can initiate the appeals process in accordance with ICG-028 Appeals Management.

## 5.0 APPLICABLE FORMS

ICG-F07	Audit Report
ICG-F51	Certification Template
ICG-F52	Certification Rules and Instructions

## 6.0 REFERENCES

ICG-008	Personnel Competency and Training
ICG-009	Risk Management
ICG-011	Operational Controls
ICG-013	Selection, Training and Formal Authorization of Auditors and Technical Experts
ICG-017	Conducting Audits
ICG-018	Conducting Reviews Prior to Making Certification Decisions
ICG-027	Nonconformities and Corrective Actions
ICG-028	Appeals Management