



**International Aerospace Quality Group  
Other Party Management Team**

**September 23, 2020**

**NOTICE:**

**Management of Extraordinary Events or Circumstances Affecting ABs, CBs  
and Certified Organizations - Novel Coronavirus - COVID-19**

The IAQG Other Party Management Team (OPMT) accepts that the impact of Novel Coronavirus - COVID-19 is an extraordinary event potentially affecting AQMS certified organizations. Our intention is to work with Certification Bodies (CBs) and Accreditation Bodies (ABs) to ensure that the ICOP scheme does not adversely impact industry stakeholders at a time when they are dealing with this difficult situation. This notice is issued and updated under the authority of IAQG OPMT Resolution #157.

***As stated in our previous communication:***

Any CB that is prevented from carrying out planned audits on-site due to this or any other extraordinary event or circumstance shall apply its process for the proper maintenance of certification in accordance with the requirements of IAF Informative Document (ID) 3 and IAQG OPMT Resolution #98.

CBs shall review and ensure compliance with all local laws and regulations

For each certified organization affected, a CB shall:

- assess the risk for continuing certification, and
- understand the certified organization's current and expected future situation in accordance with ID 3, and
- establish a reasonable planned course of action for affected clients, and
- apply the requirements of IAQG OPMT Resolution #98, and
- ensure that the accrediting AB has accepted the planned course of action for all clients before using the OASIS database feedback system to provide awareness to the IAQG OPMT Chair.

Upon receipt of CB plans, the IAQG OPMT will evaluate any OASIS database guidance that may need to be updated

Note 1): The IAQG OPMT expectation is to submit a single plan for all affected clients. There is no need for awareness of the plan for each certified organization affected.

Note 2): IAQG OPMT Resolution #150 may not be applicable for certified organizations affected by COVID-19 that prevents the conduct of on-site audits.



### **Update March 17, 2020:**

To maintain the integrity of the ICOP certification scheme and to support CB efforts to address client access and auditor resource issues; the IAQG OPMT has agreed the following update:

- CBs shall develop a six-month forward-looking risk analysis and associated risk mitigation plan that addresses audit schedules and nonconformity verification activities.
- CBs may utilize the following alleviations as part of risk mitigation for audits affected by the impact of COVID-19:
  - Suspension of certificate due to a planned audit date being missed is not required
  - *A 90-day extension may be used for processing nonconformities and re-establishing conformance (9104-1, Clause 8.4). This includes extending the corrective action plan submittal due date, with the exception there is no extension provided for containment timeframes (i.e. 7 days to report and 14 days to reach agreement – 9101, Clause 4.2.4).*
  - The date of the first surveillance audit shall occur within 18 months of the initial certification decision date.
  - *Remote* auditing may consume more than 30% of the calculated audit duration. Any *remote* auditing shall be conducted in accordance with IAF MD 4:2018.
    - » 2020 surveillance and recertification activities may be up to 100% *remote*.
    - » Activities that cannot be evaluated during this surveillance/recertification audit shall be moved to the 2021 client surveillance or recertification plan and shall result in increased audit duration.
    - » The use of video and live streaming is recommended to enhance the audit value.
    - » The audit plan and 9101 audit report shall clearly indicate use of *remote* auditing.
  - Expired certificates shall be eligible for reinstatement for up to 12 months beyond the expiry date provided the certificate number has been appended with the following unique number [IAF-ID3].
    - » Certificates may be reinstated utilizing an initial certification audit in OASIS, without a stage 1 audit, using recertification audit criteria and audit duration.
- ABs and Other Party (OP) Assessors may utilize remote auditing (IAF ID 12:2015) to support the assessment of CB's including file reviews for the remainder of 2020.
- OP Assessors may also utilize remote auditing to support all other required oversight assessments.
- *A 90-day extension may be used for the processing and verification of AB or oversight nonconformities (9104-1, Clause 5.3.8 and 9104/2, Clause 7.15). This includes extending the corrective action plan submittal due date.*

Note: Text in *italics* is amended or added to the original text because of an update



***Update March 25, 2020:***

**Remote Audits for Transfer of Certification**

The alleviation to conduct up to 100% *remote* audits is extended to special audits in support of certification transfers. All other transfer requirements still apply.

Note: The IAQG OPMT does not recommend any new certification transfers during this COVID-19 crisis. Certification transfer activities must be included in the risk analysis plan submitted to the accrediting AB.

***Update April 2, 2020:***

The alleviation concerning the CB completion of nonconformance verification activities has been amended:

- A 90-day extension may be used for processing nonconformities and re-establishing conformance (9104-1, Clause 8.4). This includes extending the corrective action plan submittal due date, with the exception there is no extension provided for containment timeframes (i.e. 7 days to report and 14 days to reach agreement – 9101, Clause 4.2.4).

The alleviations concerning AB and oversight assessment has a new alleviation added:

- A 90-day extension may be used for the processing and verification of AB or oversight nonconformities (9104-1, Clause 5.3.8 and 9104/2, Clause 7.15). This includes extending the corrective action plan submittal due date.

***Update June 11, 2020:***

The term 'virtual' when applied to auditing has been corrected to state 'remote'

The available alleviations concerning CB on-site audits of suppliers have been updated:

- CBs may utilize the following additional alleviation as part of risk mitigation for audits affected by the impact of COVID-19:
  - Stage 1 audits for initial AQMS certification may be conducted by remote audit in accordance with IAF MD 4:2018 subject to the CB:
    - Documenting the rationale for needing the remote audit,
    - Documenting the risks and mitigations associated with conducting the audit remotely
    - Receiving documented acceptance of the above documentation for each supplier from the accrediting AB.



## **Use of Remote Audits for Auditor Authentication**

Audits conducted using the remote audit alleviation (i.e. audits with more than 30% remote audit content) shall not be used to meet the 9104-3 “Requirements for Aerospace Auditor Competency and Training Courses”, Table 1 – 9100 and 9120 Auditor and Aerospace Experienced Auditor Requirements nor Table 2 - 9110 Auditor and Aerospace Experienced Auditor Requirements witness audit requirements

### ***Update September 23, 2020:***

The restriction on the use of remote audits was updated to correct the reference to 9104-3 Table 3 to 9104-3 Table 2.

Auditors may use remote audits to fulfil the QMS or AQMS Audit Experience requirements within the 9104-3 “Requirements for Aerospace Auditor Competency and Training Courses”, Table 1 – 9100 and 9120 Auditor and Aerospace Experienced Auditor Requirements and Table 2 - 9110 Auditor and Aerospace Experienced Auditor Requirements.

The alleviations concerning OP Assessor oversight assessments have had new alleviations added:

- Due to ongoing travel restrictions and the risks associated with COVID-19 each SMS and CBMC shall ensure that remote oversight assessments are conducted whenever possible, in lieu of face to face assessments.
- Travel is not authorized for Office Assessments. Other Party (OP) Assessor travel may be authorized for on-site witness audits, as an exception. The requesting OP Assessor, SMS or CBMC Oversight Chair must provide a justified need to the IAQG Executive Committee and must obtain their authorization before travel is started.
- The minimum annual shared oversight witness audit for each accredited CB should be accomplished remotely, however if a CB remote witness audit is not possible in 2020 then the SMS or CBMC shall conduct an audit report review using the 9104-002 Form N check list. When entering the assessment report in the OASIS oversight module, the OP Assessor shall indicate the use of this alleviation.
- During 2021 oversight planning, each SMS and CBMC shall evaluate audit report review results and shall consider increasing the witness audit activity as a risk mitigation action.

We greatly appreciate your continuing efforts in addressing the current situation. The IAQG remains committed to ongoing communication and will provide updates to the above if needed.

Marie-Laurence Petit  
IAQG OPMT Chair