



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

April 2, 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:

In order 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.
 - Virtual auditing may consume more than 30% of the calculated audit duration. Any virtual auditing shall be conducted in accordance with IAF MD 4:2018.
 - » 2020 surveillance and recertification activities may be up to 100% virtual.
 - » 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 virtual 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 as a result of an update



Update March 25, 2020:

Virtual Audits for Transfer of Certification

The alleviation to conduct up to 100% virtual 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.

We greatly appreciate your 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