

4.8 **Suspension and Withdrawal of Accreditation**

- 4.8.1 A suspension or withdrawal may be made against an accredited certification body for any or all scopes included in the scope of accreditation for such period as the CCMP may determine if it is satisfied that the certification body has:
- Not maintained a standard of practice complying with the accreditation criteria;
 - Violated the terms and conditions for the accreditation stipulated in § 26.01;
 - Failed to provide reasonable facilities for the assessors to discharge their duties;
 - Failed to rectify the nonconformities within the agreed time frame;
 - Failed to submit the corrective actions within the agreed time frame without valid reason; or
 - Failed to pay all necessary fees levied by § 26.01 from time to time.
- 4.8.2 Where any failure to comply with any criteria of accreditation is, in the opinion of the CCMP, of a temporary nature and rectification will not be immediate, § 26.01 may retain accreditation on a suspended basis for any or all of its accredited scopes.
- 4.8.3 § 26.01 shall withdraw the accreditation when departures from the accreditation criteria, which lead to suspension of accreditation, are not rectified within the stipulated time frame which is normally one year.
- 4.8.4 § 26.01 shall inform the accredited certification body in writing of the suspension or withdrawal and the reasons for the suspension or withdrawal. The certification body shall have the right to appeal to the ABIS Council.
- 4.8.5 No accreditation shall be suspended or withdrawn unless ABIS has:
- a) Served at least two weeks' written notice to the accredited certification body, stating the grounds for the suspension or withdrawal; and
 - b) Considered any written appeal from the accredited certification body received during these two weeks.
- 4.8.6 During the two weeks' notice, the status of accreditation of the certification body is considered to be in temporary suspension and no accredited certificate shall be issued.
- 4.8.7 If a written appeal has been received, the ABIS Council shall convene an Appeal Committee chaired by a ABIS Council member and comprising of members not involved in the evaluation of the certification body to consider the explanations given, and if the accredited certification body so wishes, shall provide an opportunity for the accredited certification body to be heard as soon as possible. Where necessary, appropriate technical experts may be co-opted to assist in hearing the appeal.

- 4.8.8 If no appeal has been received by the ABIS Council against the notice of suspension or withdrawal, or if in the opinion of the ABIS Council the explanations submitted are not satisfactory, ABIS shall, on the expiry of the notice, suspend or withdraw the accreditation and inform the certification body in writing. Relevant stakeholders will be informed of the suspension or withdrawal. The suspension or withdrawal will also be uploaded in the ABIS website.
- 4.8.9 Any accredited certification body may voluntarily withdraw its accreditation by giving two weeks written notice to ABIS.
- 4.8.10 A certification body whose accreditation has been voluntarily withdrawn, withdrawn by ABIS or suspended shall not issue ABIS accredited certificates or represent or imply in any way to any party that its accreditation under ABIS is operative.
- 4.8.11 A certification body whose accreditation has been withdrawn shall return the Certificate of Accreditation and all other appropriate documents to ABIS immediately.

4.9 **Reinstatement of Accreditation**

- 4.9.1 A certification body whose accreditation has been suspended in part or in full may have its accreditation reinstated subject to a re-assessment. The certification body shall satisfy all the criteria of a formal assessment and the award of accreditation as per clauses 4.4 and 4.5.

4.10 **Re-application**

- 4.10.1 A certification body whose accreditation has been withdrawn by ABIS may re-apply one year after its withdrawal date and shall be considered as a fresh applicant.
- 4.10.2 A certification body that has withdrawn its accreditation may re-apply and shall be considered as a fresh applicant.

4.11 **Prohibition of Issue of Certificates to Accreditation Standards**

- 4.11.1 A certification body cannot issue certificates based on accreditation standards such as ISO/IEC 17025. If a certification body provides such certification, ABIS shall initiate its process of suspension of accreditation. Further decisions shall be based on the actions taken by the certification body.

Note: It is accepted that a certification body may have to assess subcontractors to confirm that they meet the certification body's requirements which may include accreditation standards e.g. ISO/IEC 17025.

Documentation issued to subcontractors as a result of a successful assessment should clearly state that this is only for the purpose of the subcontract and is not certification or accreditation in accordance with ISO/IEC 17011.

5. Branch Offices

- 5.1 An accredited certification body shall seek approval from ABIS if it wishes to set up a branch office to conduct certification covered in the scope of accreditation. The certification body shall not issue ABIS accredited certificates unless accreditation has been extended to cover the work performed in the branch office.
- 5.2 If an accredited accreditation body wishes to seek accreditation for its branch office, it shall apply formally to ABIS to request for an extension of the accreditation to the branch office.
- 5.3 ABIS may consider on a case to case basis the accreditation of overseas branch if it meets the following:
- The HQ overseas and controls the management system and its implementation in the branch office; and
 - The branch offices must operate to the same management system and procedures as the HQ.

6. Safety

- 6.1 Safe working conditions are essential to good certification practice and management. The certification body shall observe all necessary safety precautions to ensure that its certification activities are performed in a safe working environment.
- 6.2 ABIS will not arrange for on-site assessment if it considers the certification body premises to be unsafe.
- 6.3 It is the certification body's responsibility to comply with relevant health and safety requirements.

Annex 1

WITNESSED ASSESSMENTS

Stage 1 audit

At least one Stage 1 certification audit will be witnessed for each cycle, for each scheme, unless the certification body has not conducted any stage 1 audit during the cycle.

Stage 2 audit

The audit witnessed at Stage 1 will normally be witnessed at Stage 2.

The selection of witnessed assessments, during an accreditation cycle (1st surveillance to re-certification) shall be based on Table 1.

Table 1 - No of witnessed audits (Stage 2) for each scheme

		No of Certificates Issued				
		1 to 50	51 to 150	151 to 300	301 to 500	More than 500
No of witnessed audits	Management System (for Each Scheme)					
	1 initial audit /re-certification audit and 1 surveillance	2 initial audits /re-certification audit and 1 surveillance	3 initial audits /re-certification audit and 1 surveillance	3 initial audits /re-certification audit and 1 surveillance	4 initial audits /re-certification on audits	
	Product (for certification systems with factory inspection)					
	1 initial audit /re-certification audit and 1 surveillance	2 initial audits /re-certification audit and 1 surveillance	3 initial audits /re-certification audit and 1 surveillance	3 initial audits /re-certification audit and 1 surveillance	4 initial audits /re-certification audits	

Notes

- a. Witnessing of audits will be conducted on critical scopes, wherever possible
- b. 50% of the initial audits / re-certification audits can be replaced by surveillance which has to cover all critical processes
- c. Two surveillance are considered as 1 initial / re-certification audit
- d. The number of certificates issued is based on the last submission by the certification body for the annual billing of the accreditation fees