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Organisation internationale de normalisation
International Organization for Standardization
Международная Организация по Стандартизации



TO THE MEMBERS OF CASCO AND ORGANIZATIONS IN LIAISON

Your ref.
Our ref. CASCO 12/2010 rev.1

Date 2010-04-21

INTERPRETATION REQUEST – ISO/IEC 17021 CLAUSES 7.5.2, 8.2.3 and 7.2.4/7.2.7

Dear Sir or Madam,

In accordance with CASCO interpretation procedure (QS CAS-PROC/025) and CASCO plenary resolution 12/2009 please find below a request for interpretation submitted by an A liaison organization. The CPC have reached consensus on the interpretations and they are provided below.

CASCO members are requested to review the consensus result of the CPC and to indicate if they are in favor or against the proposed interpretation for each question.

Your vote (in favor or against) cannot be made dependant on any comments being accepted. The balloting form does not contain any information on the conditions or motivations for the CPC consensus result as this is given below.

The electronic ballot will be initiated on 2010-03-04 with a closing date of 2010-04-01.

CONSENSUS RESULT OF THE INTERPRETATION REQUEST

Note: Two of the requests were submitted without referencing clause numbers in ISO/IEC 17021:2006. The interpretation panel identified the applicable clause numbers for requests 2 and 3.

Interpretation request 1

Clause 7.5.2 of ISO/IEC 17021:2006

"Decisions for granting, maintaining, renewing, extending, reducing, suspending or withdrawing certification shall never be outsourced."

Question 1

Does this imply that only persons who are full-time salaried to the Certification Body's legal entity that is accredited are considered as meeting this requirement?

The consensus result of the panel is:

The use of external persons for decision making by the certification body is acceptable provided the relevant parts of the standard e.g. 5.1.3, 5.2.2, 5.1.12, 5.1.13, 7.1, 7.2 etc. are met.

Motivation

The standard allows for the use of individual external auditors and experts by the certification body (refer to 7.3 and the Note to 7.3). Part time and external individuals are considered to be included in personnel wherever used in the standard. Clause 7.5.1 makes it clear that "outsourcing" is "subcontracting to another organization to provide part of the certification activities on behalf of the certification body".

Interpretation request 2 – Multi site certificates

Clause 8.2.3 of ISO/IEC 17021:2006.

"The certification document(s) shall identify the following:

- a the name and geographic location of each client whose management system is certified (or the geographic location of the headquarters and any sites within the scope of a multi-site certification);
- b the dates of granting, extending or renewing certification;
- c the expiry date or recertification due date consistent with the recertification cycle;
- d a unique identification code;
- e the standard and/or other normative document, including issue number and/or revision, used for audit of the certified client;
- f the scope of certification with respect to product (including service), process, etc., as applicable at each site;
- g the name, address and certification mark of the certification body; other marks (e.g. accreditation symbol) may be used provided they are not misleading or ambiguous;
- h any other information required by the standard and/or other normative document used for certification;
- i in the event of issuing any revised certification documents, a means to distinguish the revised documents from any prior obsolete documents."

Question 2

If an organization has a single management system covering a number of site / locations, is it acceptable to have several sites covered under one certificate for

- a) the Quality Management System*
- b) the Environmental Management System*
- c) the Workplace Health & Safety Management System*
- d) a fully integrated Management System*

The consensus result of the panel is:

It is acceptable to have several sites covered under one certificate when an organization has a single management system covering a number of sites/locations.

Conditions

Any such certificate is required to include the management system standard references, the date of granting, expiry etc for each management system covered by the certificate and other information required by the standard for each management system covered. The certificate must reference the scope for each individual management system standard. It would not be acceptable for the certificate to **only** reference an integrated management system standard.

Interpretation Request 3 – Demonstrating Auditor Competence

Clause 7.2.4 and 7.2.7 of ISO/IEC 17021:2006

7.2.4 "The certification body shall have defined processes for selecting, training, formally authorizing auditors and for selecting technical experts used in the certification activity. The initial competence evaluation of an auditor shall include a demonstration of applicable personal attributes and the ability to apply required knowledge and skills during audits, as determined by a competent evaluator observing the auditor conducting an audit."

7.2.7 "The certification body shall use auditors and technical experts only for those certification activities where they have demonstrated competence.

NOTE Assignment of auditors and technical experts to teams for specific audits is addressed in 9.1.3."

Question 3

If a CB can show through documentation that an auditor has significant experience in a particular field (e.g. through a Career Resume indicating that the person has many years experience working in a particular branch of industry), can this be considered sufficient to demonstrate the auditor's Technical competence prior to assigning him/her to an audit mission in that branch?

The consensus result of the panel is:

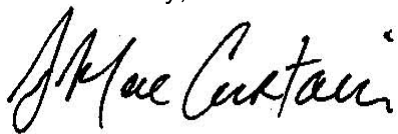
Documentation that an auditor has significant experience in a particular field (e.g. a career resume/CV) CANNOT be considered sufficient to demonstrate the auditor's technical competence.

Motivation

Experience itself is not sufficient evidence of competence. Although a resume (CV) can make a valuable contribution it does not demonstrate ability, knowledge and skills. A resume in itself does not satisfy 7.2.4 and 7.2.7.

I would like to thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Yours faithfully,



Sean Mac Curtain
Head, Conformity assessment
CASCO Secretary