

1.0 Purpose.

To describe activities and rules and activities for Suspension and Cancellation of Certifications granted by International Compliance Group, Inc.

2.0 Scope.

This Procedure applies to all Certificates issued by International Compliance Group, Inc. and the corresponding Certification Agreements (Contracts).

3.0 Responsibility.

The Certification Committee is responsible to implement described in this Procedure.

Program Quality Manager is responsible to revise and update regularly this Procedure.

4.0 Definitions.

Suspension: It means that a Certification is not valid temporarily. Implies the restriction to the certified client for announcing and promoting its certification actively.

Withdrawal: Certification granted by ICG is withdrawn, certificate is returned to ICG and ICG's mark, Accreditation Symbol and Owner Scheme Trademark or Logo are not used anymore.

Cancelation: It means Termination of the Certification Agreement based on the withdrawal of Certificate.

ICG: International Compliance Group, Inc.

5.0 Description of Activity.

5.1 Suspension of Certificate.

5.1.1 There are three main Reasons for Suspension.

5.1.1.1 Suspension initiated by ICG is a result of one of these situations:

- There is a persistent failure of the client's management system to meet certification requirements – this includes effectiveness of management system;
- A major NCR if raised during a surveillance audit and not closed within the specified time frame or during an on-site follow up audit, which indicates that insufficient action was taken by the client to solve raised non-conformities;
- Non-submission of an acceptable corrective action plan for minor NCRs within the defined time frame;
- Failure to accept a surveillance audit within the specified time period defined by the program.
- Improper use of ICG's mark, including Accreditation Symbol and Owner Scheme Trademark or Logo, was discovered and has not been resolved effectively by the client after notification by ICG;
- Non-payment of audit fees;
- The certified client has voluntarily requested a suspension.

5.1.1.2 The client may request a voluntary suspension because of system change or deterioration that is expected to result in major NCRs at the next routine surveillance. ICG shall require necessary corrective actions and continuance of the routine surveillance plan to document

the actual situation. After the visit the client has 180 days to solve any NCR, a special surveillance shall then be arranged.

- 5.1.1.3 In some cases, the suspension can be a reduction of scope if the standard requirements are not met in some parts of the client management system. This shall be done in line with the standard/ scheme requirements and following the normal decision and certificate issuance processes.

5.1.2 Suspension Process.

- 5.1.2.1 The decision of suspension shall be made by the Certification Committee for a particular accredited scheme. The suspension letter documents the decision and shall be sent to the client & evidence for the same maintained.
- 5.1.2.2 Suspension may be initiated by the Certification Committee, but the decision to enforce suspension and/or subsequent removal/withdrawal shall only be authorized by Certification Committee. If a suspension is initiated by a Certification Committee this is recorded on the Suspension & Cancellation Control Form (**D48**), unless otherwise specified for specific product or scheme, and submitted to Certification Committee for decision-making.
- 5.1.2.3 Based on Certification Committee review & approval, Program Quality Manager shall then issue a suspension letter to the client. A copy of the suspension letter and subsequent /withdrawal or revoke issued to the client shall be submitted to Certification Committee. The period of suspension which is usually not more than six months shall be defined by Certification Committee in the suspension letter and shall be monitored by the Program Quality Manager. Suspension letter shall be sent with acknowledge of receipt.
- 5.1.2.4 During the period of suspension, the certificate is temporarily invalid and the client shall not promote or advertise its certification. Unless the suspension is lifted and the certificate validity is reinstated, recertification or transfers shall not be performed.

5.1.3 Suspension Lifting.

- 5.1.3.1 The total suspension period shall not exceed six months, within which another Special Surveillance visit shall be arranged to review the situation. This depends on the reason for issuance of suspension (e.g. non-closure of earlier audit NCRs, serious customer complaint, etc.). The suspension period shall be properly managed by the Certification Committee; therefore it is expected that there shall be regular communication with the client (which is recorded.) Generally the first suspension should be for three months and subject to further extension for 3 months. If it is demonstrated that client is taking action to clear nonconformities, but has not completed effective implementation, it is possible for the Lead Auditor to recommend an extension on the initial suspension period.
- 5.1.3.2 If it can be demonstrated that the Client is in compliance with requirements, and reason for suspension is eliminated, the suspension shall be lifted and regular routine surveillance plans shall be re-instated.
- 5.1.3.3 If, in the opinion of the Lead Auditor conducting the Special Surveillance, the Client has been unwilling or unable to clear the non-conformity, withdrawal of Certificate shall be recommended to the Certification Committee. The Certification Committee reviews Special Surveillance report.
- 5.1.3.4 Lifting of a suspension is a decision certification process, therefore all information to support the lifting of a suspension shall be sent to the Certification Committee for approval.

5.2 Withdrawal of Certificate.

- 5.2.1 Withdrawal of certificate shall be initiated only when it is apparent that corrective action output, including suspension, does not bring compliance with the requirements.
- 5.2.2 The Certification Committee shall make a written notification to the client's senior executive.
- 5.2.3 The Certification Committee shall advise the Client's Senior Executive for the return of certificates issued and accompanying logos. Claims to certification made on company websites, advertising material etc. shall also be removed. A website check shall be made by the Program Quality Manager.
- 5.2.4 The client shall be notified of ICG's Complaints & Appeals Process (**QP07**) and advised that an appeal may be raised within ten days of the said notification. Records of this activity shall be maintained.
- 5.2.5 Contract shall be cancelled.
- 5.2.6 Where a client has one certificate with multiple standards, based on the reason for withdrawal ICG shall decide if the certificate is reissued with the standards not affected by the withdrawal.

E.g. Joint ISO 9001/ ISO 14001 certificate, ISO 14001 withdrawn, no impact on ISO 9001 management system, certificate reissued for ISO 9001.

5.3 Cancellation of the Contract.

- 5.3.1 Cancellation of the contract may be self-initiated or enforced by ICG and shall be undertaken in accordance with the provisions of the Certification Agreement (**D24**).
- 5.3.2 In all cases, every reasonable effort shall be made by ICG to preserve a contract with a complaining client or a client found to be non-compliant, but genuine, in its intent to take necessary corrective actions.
- 5.3.3 If the Certification Agreement is cancelled at the client's request, the Certification Committee shall acknowledge cancellation in writing to the client and request that certificates and marks, logos and/or symbols be returned.
- 5.3.4 If the Certification Agreement is cancelled the client's Senior Executive shall be advised in writing at the same time as the withdrawal of the certificate.
- 5.3.5 In either of the above cases the client shall be requested to return all certificates and marks, logos and/or symbols.
- 5.3.6 If appeal is upheld and certification is reinstated, the original certificate cycle and validity is maintained.

6.0 References.

QP07. Complaints & Appeals.

7.0 Formats / Exhibits.

D48. Suspension & Cancellation Control.
Notifications of Suspension and Cancellations.