

1. PURPOSE

This procedure describes the process for suspension, withdrawal, restoring and change of scope of a certificate.

2. SCOPE

This procedure applies to certification services provided according to ISO 9001, ISO 14001 and ISO 45001, AS 9100, AS 9110 and AS 9120 (see section 8 for specific AQMS requirements).

NOTE: Whenever a certification service is provided according to standards maintained under the accreditation of TUV NORD CERT GmbH, TUV USA will refer to their procedures.

3. REFERENCES

- ISO 17021-1 2015, Requirements for Bodies Providing Audit and Certification of Management Systems.
- AS9104-1:2012 Requirements for Aviation, Space, and Defense Quality Management System Certification Programs
- A00VA02 TUV NORD CERT Management System Certification
- CERT-310-AA-015 – TUV NORD CERT Procedure for Suspension, Withdrawal, Restoring, Renewing, Refusing and Cancellation on Certificates

4. SUSPENSION PROCESS

TUV USA is required to maintain an active certificate based on the demonstration that the certified organization maintains a quality management system that meets the requirements of a given standard (see ISO 17021-1, 9.6.1).

4.1. Suspension based on the audit result

TUV USA verifies the maintenance of an organization's QMS by performing regular audits (e.g. surveillances, recertification, etc.)

The suspension process might be initiated based on a recommendation of the audit team, after an on-site assessment due to:

- Failure to meet certification requirements, including requirements for the effectiveness of the management system
- Significant number or nature of major nonconformities discovered during audits

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- Improper use of the certificate or logos
- Required corrective actions not implemented
- Unacceptable changes to the quality system have occurred
- Certification system rules changes not implemented by the client
- The client ceases to do business with the product or service for an extended period

The auditor shall record the recommendation of suspension in the audit report with a justification (e.g. due to high the number of major nonconformities). Upon submission of the audit documents to Workflow, the auditor shall also communicate the recommendation via e-mail to the concerned Project Manager.

4.2. Request for Suspension

The Project Manager shall submit the request for suspension to an approved Technical Reviewer via Request for Change of Certification Status (P008F003). The audit report, communications between auditors and Project Manager (e.g. e-mails) and any other evidence provided by the auditor to support the recommendation for suspension, shall be attached to the request.

The Project Manager shall enter in the request the expected actions that shall be completed by the client in order to remove the suspension.

4.3. Decision for Suspending the Certificate

The Technical Reviewer responsible for deciding on suspending the certificate shall be different from those who carried out the audits.

The Technical Reviewer will review the information provided and decide on whether the certificate shall be suspended or not.

The Technical Reviewer may decide to contact the auditor and the client to obtain additional information, if necessary. The Project Manager will facilitate this communication.

The decision is recorded on the Request for Change of Certification Status (P008F003).

4.4. Communicating the Suspension

The Certification Manager is responsible for generating a letter using the form P008F001 that outlines the decision of TUV USA to suspend the client's certification. The letter shall

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contain:

- The reason for suspension
- The expected actions in order to remove the certification from suspension
- A statement that during the suspension the certificate is temporarily invalid
- A request for removal of any reference to the certificate (including graphics) from the organization’s website until the suspension is resolved
- A statement that If TUV USA, Inc. does not receive objective evidence of the completed actions within **six (6) months** from the date of suspension, the certificate will be withdrawn immediately
- Instructions on how the organization can appeal to the decision of suspension

The Certification Manager sends the Suspension letter to the client via e-mail with copy to the concerned Project Manager.

4.5. Update of Databases

The Certification Manager is responsible for updating the status of the certificate in Workflow.

For certifications provided under TNC accreditation as Critical Location, the status of the certificate shall be updated via International Interface.

As Non-Critical Location, TUV USA will inform the Q-Control Department of TUV NORD CERT.

NOTE: See section 8 for updates on OASIS.

4.6. Other reasons for suspension

The suspension process might also be initiated by office personnel (e.g. Project Manager, Finance) when:

- The client fails to meet financial obligations to TUV USA;
- At the request of the client due to business conditions;
- Substantiated complaints or feedback from end use customers;
- The certified client does not allow surveillances or recertification audits to be conducted at required frequencies.

NOTE: On December of every year, the TUV USA Quality Manager will generate a report

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out of Workflow that lists all the audits that were due in the year and check whether they were completed or not. This list shall be compared with the list of active certificates to determine if audits were conducted for all these certificates. When it is identified that a client did not have an audit conducted within the calendar year, TUV USA Quality Manager will check the reason for not having the audit conducted. TUV USA will suspend the certificate on those cases where the customer did not allow surveillances or recertification audits to be conducted. If the audit was not conducted due to problems generated at TUV USA (e.g. auditors not available, auditors cancelling the audit, etc.), TUV USA will not suspend the certificate and will keep record of the justification.

The Project Manager is responsible for tracking the suspension time to ensure it does not exceed 6 months. The Project Manager will remind the customer of the 6 months deadline and if the required actions are not taken within the required timeframe, the certificate shall be withdrawn.

- The surveillance 1 audit after initial certification was not performed within 12 months from the stage 2 certification decision
- When the client communicates the intention of not having the audit performed

NOTE: When the certified client communicates that they do not intend to proceed with an audit, TUV USA must assume that the client will no longer maintaining their QMS. In these cases, the Project Manager will:

1. Communicate formally in an e-mail to the client that audits are required in order to maintain their certificate.
2. The client is also notified that they have **5 (five) calendar days** to provide TUV USA with the decision on whether they wish to proceed with their next audit or not.
3. If the client decides they are not proceeding with the audit, the Project Manager will suspend immediately through the process described on this procedure
4. For AQMS audits, the certificate is suspended in the OASIS database once the client has confirmed receipt of the intent to suspend.
5. In case of transfer of certificate from TUV USA to another CB, the client will be notified (in writing) that in order to keep the certificate valid, a date of completion of the transfer has to be provided to TUV USA. The certificate is withdrawn after this date.

4.7. Restoring Validity/ Removing Suspension

Once the customer completes the actions required to remove the suspension from the certificate the Project Manager will request the removal of suspension using the Request for Change of Certification Status (P008F003).

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The Request is submitted to an approved Technical Reviewer. The Project Manager will submit evidence of completion of the actions (e.g. Audit Report with the recommendation of the Lead Auditor, evidence of closure of Nonconformities, confirmation of payment of invoices, etc.).

Upon decision of the Technical Reviewer of removal of suspension, the Certification Manager will send a letter communicating the decision to the client with copy to the concerned Project Manager.

The status of the certificate in all databases shall be updated accordingly.

5. Withdrawal Process

5.1. Withdrawal after Suspension

When the customer is not able to present evidence of completion of the required actions after **6 months** of suspension, TUV USA will withdraw the certificate.

The Project Manager will request the withdrawal through the Request for Change of Certification Status and assign it to a Technical Reviewer.

The Technical Reviewer will record the decision on the Request form (P008F003).

The Certification Manager creates and sends the letter communicating the withdrawal to the certified client via e-mail, with copy to the Project Manager.

The Withdrawal letter shall contain:

- The reason for withdrawal
- A statement that certificate is cancelled
- A request for removal of any reference to the certificate (including graphics) from the organization's website permanently
- Instructions on how the organization can appeal to the decision of withdrawal

The Certification Manager updates the related databases as described on 4.5.

Depending on the reason, TUV USA might withdraw the certification of a client without going through the suspension process first.

6. Reduction of Scope

TUV USA reduces the scope of certification to exclude the elements not meeting the requirements when the certified client has persistently or seriously failed to meet the certification requirements for those parts of the scope of certification. The reduction of scope is performed in line with requirements of the standard used for certification.

A reduction of scope of the client's certificate might be necessary during the certification

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cycle. The reduction of the scope might happen on the processes/ activities performed by the organization and/ or locations where the certified organization operates.

The reduction might be identified during an on-site audit or communicated by the client.

6.1.1. Reduction of Scope after On-Site audit

If the reduction of the scope is the outcome of an onsite audit, the Lead Auditor will submit a certificate application with the audit documentation.

The assigned Technical Reviewer assigned to the project will decide on the change of the scope.

NOTE: Audits performed using ICT can also be accepted for reduction of scope.

6.1.2. Reduction of Scope communicated by the Client

Certified Clients might also request the reduction of their scope during the cycle. In this case, the Project Manager shall request the change through Request for Change of Certification Status (P008F003). The Project Manager shall describe the change on the request and submit to an approved Technical Reviewer. The description of the change shall include what is being changed (e.g. removal of design from scope, removal of site, etc.). For changes on the description of the activities performed by the organization, the Project Manager shall complete a certificate application and request approval of the new description from the client and submit it to the reviewer together with the Request for Change.

After the Certification decision, the Certification Manager will issue an updated certificate.

If the certified client communicates their intention of closing a site that is part of the scope of certification and have no intention to proceed with the audit of this site, the Project Manager shall inform the client that TUV USA will remove immediately this site from the scope of the certificate through the process described above.

7. Appealing the Suspension, Withdrawal and Scope Reduction

When the client does not agree with the decision of TUV USA of suspending, withdrawing or reducing the scope of their certificate, an appeal can be submitted to TUV USA. The client is required to provide evidence that they meet the requirements related to the suspension, withdrawal or scope reduction. The appeal is managed according to the procedure GOP 016.

8. Specific Requirements for Certification according AQMS standards

The following requirements apply in addition to the requirements described on sections 4 to 7 of this procedure, when the certification activities are performed according to AS 9100, AS 9110 and AS 9120:

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In the case of Aerospace Quality Management System (AQMS) certifications, Suspension, Withdrawals and Reduction of Scope may be triggered by an OASIS feedback which may necessitate a review of the client's quality management system, which may include an onsite assessment.

TUV USA initiates the client certification suspension process when an organization fails to demonstrate that conformance to the applicable standard has been re-established within **60 days** from the issuance of a nonconformity report (NCR).

If auditors identify what they believe to be inaccurate, incomplete or unapproved changes to information represented as verbal or written objective evidence during the course of any type of 9100/9110/9120 certification audit (e.g. initial, surveillance, recertification or special audit) the Audit Team Leader shall classify the associated nonconformance in accordance with the 9101 definitions of Major or Minor. If the nonconformity is categorized as Major the audit team leader shall advise the certified organization that its certification status is in jeopardy as a consequence of this nonconformity. The CB shall initiate their certificate suspension or withdrawal process to determine whether the documented nonconformity warrants suspension or withdrawal of the certified organization's 9100/9110/9120 certificate.

For AQMS audits, the client's certificate is formally suspended in the OASIS database after the client has received the email with the letter and acknowledges its receipt.

The Project Manager initiates the suspension of the certificate in OASIS (after going through the Change of Certification Status process) and communicates the Technical Reviewer that finalizes the suspension of the certificate with a certification decision within **14 days**. To ensure that the Technical Reviewer is aware of the initial certificate suspension, the Project Manager notifies the Technical Reviewer via email of the actions taken and track the completion of the decision to ensure that the required timeframe is met.

8.1. Suspension based on extraordinary events

In the event that extraordinary events occur (such as a pandemic) that would cause a delay in ASD audits, the International Aerospace Quality Group (IAQG) and the Other Party Management Team (OPMT) issue alleviation notices to mitigate the risk of delayed audits and expired certificates. TUV USA is responsible for working with its clients where issues

associated with the impact of extraordinary events partially or fully prevent a physical on-site audit taking place in accordance with the requirements of ISO/IEC 17021-1, 9104-1 and 9101.

The following are requirements and actions for when recertification audits cannot occur due to recognized extraordinary events (such as a pandemic).

- TUV USA shall communicate with the client to review the unique situation for each

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client that cannot take part in a recertification audit due to the inability to take part in a partial or full onsite audit. Financial concerns on the part of the client are also considered.

- When it is apparent that the certificate will expire before the certification process can be completed, the certificate will go from active to expired. Once expired, there is a one-year grace period to have the re-certification audit performed and completed. Once completed, the certificate will be considered active with the original dates on the certificate.
- If an organization does not have a Surveillance audit within a calendar year due to an extraordinary event, they have 6 months to request and schedule the audit. If the audit does not occur, suspension will result.
- Formal notification occurs in written form and issued to the client via email. The notification contains the following statements:
 - A recertification audit was not performed prior to the certificate expiry date.
 - The suspension will be posted to the OASIS database.
 - Expired certificates will bear the certificate number appended with a unique number (IAF-ID3). This allows interested parties to recognize that the suspension occurred due to approved extraordinary circumstances.
 - References to the certificate (including graphics) shall be removed from the organization's website or other communication methods until a recertification audit is performed and approved.
 - Expiration can only be lifted by completing a recertification audit within 12 months of the expiry date.
 - Certificates may be reinstated utilizing an initial certification audit in OASIS, without a Stage 1 audit, using recertification audit criteria and audit duration.
 - If a recertification audit is not completed within one year (12 months) from the date of the expiration, the certificate will be withdrawn immediately from OASIS
 - Clients are required to provide immediate notification to ASD customer of the withdrawn certificate

8.2. Withdrawal of AQMS Certificates

TUV USA shall not withdraw a certificate in the OASIS database until a certification decision has been made by an appropriately competent and authorized person within TUV USA to withdraw the applicable AQMS certification.

TUV USA shall only use the upload of an initial certification audit to the OASIS database to change the status of a certification from 'withdrawn' to 'suspended' or 'certified'.

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TUV USA shall not use the upload of any audit, except an initial certification audit, to the OASIS database to change the status of a certification in the OASIS database from 'withdrawn' to 'suspended' or 'certified'.

Where the status of an issued certification is mistakenly changed to 'withdrawn' TUV USA shall approach ANAB and the applicable IAQG OASIS database administrator for their sector with an explanation and appropriate corrective action and request support for the reinstatement of the AQMS certification on the OASIS database.

ANAB shall assess conformance with ISO 17021 and 9104-001 requirements and positively confirm the validity of the TUV USA request. TUV USA shall only use the OASIS certificate modification process to re-instate a withdrawn certificate once the ANAB and applicable IAQG Sector OASIS administrator are satisfied that a 'mistake' was made and that appropriate corrective action has been implemented.

8.3. OASIS Entries

For certificates issued according to AQMS standards, the OASIS Database is updated accordingly. The updates include:

- Suspension of the Certificate
- Restore validity of the Certificate
- Reduce Scope of the Certificate
- Withdrawal of certificate

9. Records

- Form P008F001 Suspension, Withdrawal Letter
- Form P008F002 Letter for Removal of Suspension
- Form P008F003 Request for Change of Certificate Status
- Certificate Application
- Audit Reports
- Customer's certificate

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Revision History

Rev.	Date	Description of Change	Approved By / Date	Communication / Training
1	See historic files	See historic files	See historic files	
2	3/3/2014	Complete revision to include requirements AQMS certificates and OASIS	S. Gall / 3/3/2014	
3	03/16/2016	The format of the procedure was made consistent with the GOP procedures. No changes were performed in the content.	R. De Souza 03/16/2016	
4	05/01/2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Included reference to TNC Procedure CERT-310-AA-015 ▪ Included note on section 4.1 to describe the actions to be taken when a client decides to not proceed with an audit. ▪ Created section 4.7 and 4.8. to address OASIS and TNC requirements respectively ▪ Clarified Records to be maintained 	R. De Souza	Communicated via e-mail to office personnel
5	06/05/2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 4.1 added instructions for initial and technical decisions for suspension of AS certificates ▪ 4.1 Description of the required actions when a company is closing a site ▪ 4.2 Clarified client responsibility to remove references from website or other documentation to a suspended certificate 	R. De Souza	Communicated via e-mail to office personnel and released in Workflow
6	01/10/2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Section 4.2.1 created to address audits not conducted within the required frequency ▪ Section 4.4.1 created to 	R. De Souza	Released in Workflow

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		address the IAQG OPMT resolution #129		
7	1/27/2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The structure of the procedure was update ▪ Section 8 of the procedure contains specific requirements that apply to the AQMS standards ▪ Forms P008F001, P008F002 and P008F003 were introduced into the process ▪ It was made clear in all cases how TUV USA performs the certification decision on suspension, withdrawal and reduction of scope 	R. De Souza	Released in Workflow and Training to concerned personnel
8	3/5/2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Added section (8.1) for suspension of certificate due to extraordinary events. Renumbered succeeding sections. 	S. Gall	Released in Workflow

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