



NATIONAL ACCREDITATION BOARD FOR CERTIFICATION BODIES (NABCB)

Quality Council of India (QCI), World Trade Centre, J 200, Block J, Nauroji Nagar, New Delhi-110029

Phone: [011- 26186680](tel:011-26186680) Web: www.qcin.org; E-mail: nabcb@qcin.org

GUIDELINES

FOR

TENDERS FOR CERTIFICATION

TO

ISO 9001 AND OTHER MANAGEMENT

SYSTEMS STANDARDS



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GUIDELINES FOR TENDERS FOR ISO 9001 etc CERTIFICATION

Introduction:

It has been observed that Government Departments, PSUs, MNCs and some private sector organizations are inviting tenders for getting the services of certifications to various Management system standards like ISO 9001, ISO 14001 etc and Consultancy services for preparing them for implementation of these standards for certification.

Many times the requirements prescribed in the tenders are not in line with the internationally acceptable norms like conflict of interest, impartiality etc. and leave room for unethical practices which undermine the objectives of such certifications.

Scope:

This document provides guidance to organizations issuing tenders for ISO 9001, ISO 14001 etc certifications.

Guidelines:

1. There are a number of certification bodies (CBs) in the market of various kinds – Multinationals, Indian, branches of multinationals, franchisees of foreign certification bodies, govt, private, non-profit etc. The **only recognized means of keeping an oversight over the certification bodies is that they are accredited** as per the applicable international standard (ISO 17021). **It should be ensured that the certification body selected is accredited.**
2. Further, there is a system of international equivalence of accreditations and in turn certifications under the aegis of the **International Accreditation Forum (IAF)**. Therefore, **it is necessary that the tenders for certification prescribe accreditation from an IAF member body, which is signatory to their Multilateral Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MLA), for the certification bodies as a requirement.** The member accreditation bodies are under IAF's oversight through a process of peer evaluation. Please see link http://www.iaf.nu/articles/IAF_MEMBERS_SIGNATORIES/4. All accreditation bodies signatory to IAF MLA are considered equal and certificates issued under any accreditation are internationally acceptable.
3. It may be added that India is part of the international system through the **National Accreditation Board for Certification Bodies (NABCB)** which has also earned international equivalence by signing IAF's MLA and thus international equivalence is available in the country itself. Please see website www.qcin.org/nabcb.



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4. Given the system of international equivalence of accreditations, prescribing accreditation by an IAF MLA signatory for the certification body is sufficient. **Asking for more than one accreditations from certification bodies adds to the cost of certification for the organization and at the same time, unnecessarily restricts competition among CBs and is not desirable.**
5. An organization can insist on **IAF MLA mark** on the certificate issued by the Certification body along with accreditation body's logo to enhance international acceptability of the certification. Please see link http://qcin.org/nabcb/iaf/use_of_iaf_mark.php for a list of certification bodies authorized by NABCB to use IAF MLA mark.
6. IAF MLA is available for QMS, EMS, FSMS and ISMS – for other schemes like OHSAS or EnMS or ITSMS, IAF MLA has not yet been developed but ABs signatory to QMS MLA can be considered equivalent for the time being.
7. NABCB is signatory to IAF MLAs for QMS since 2002, EMS since 2007, and ISMS and FSMS since 2015. It is among only 3 accreditation bodies worldwide to sign the IAF MLA for ISMS and one among 11 accreditation bodies worldwide to sign IAF MLA for FSMS.
8. **It may be added that there are private accreditation bodies in the market who are neither members of IAF nor signatory to the IAF MLA, and whose credentials are largely unknown since they are not under any oversight.**
9. The accreditation to certification bodies is granted for various technical sectors (Please Annex 1) and therefore each organization has to ensure that the **certification body chosen is accredited for the sector applicable to them.** Sometimes, there may be more than one technical sectors applicable to an organization. The organizations themselves may find it difficult to identify the right scope sector. This can be easily ensured by prescribing in the tender that **the ISO 9001 certificate issued to the organization should carry the AB's logo.**
10. The certification bodies quote the cost of certification largely based on the mandays of the audits to be carried out which in turn is dependent on the manpower strength of each organization as per international norms. It is therefore necessary that organizations declare in the tender their manpower with breakup of permanent, temporary, contractual and part time etc to enable the certification bodies to estimate the cost in a realistic manner.
11. All accredited certification bodies need to follow the guidelines for manday estimation issued by IAF, viz IAF MD 5 – please see link <http://www.iaf.nu/upFiles/IAFMD5QMSEMSAuditDurationIssue311062015.pdf> It is not expected that organizations tendering should read this document but reference is given for awareness. **If there are significant variations in mandays**



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quoted by different CBs, you should ask them to explain their calculations in line with IAF MD 5. Or contact NABCB and we will help.

12. Consultancy and certification by the same body are considered unacceptable risk to impartiality due to inherent conflict of interest and therefore certification bodies are barred from offering consultancy as per the international norms of accreditation. Therefore, separate tenders should be floated for each service. A circular issued by the Performance Management Division of the Cabinet Secretariat on 21 Aug 2013 in this regard is given in Annex 2 and Office Memorandum issued by Deptt. of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance dated 12 May 2020 as Annex 3.
13. Any consultant who bids for consultancy and certification by tying up with a certification body is also unacceptable since it represents risk to impartiality of the certification body. Hence, consultants should not be invited to bid for certification. The consultant can certainly be asked to help an organization select a CB and help in addressing non-conformities raised by CB in certification audits.
14. In case, any one comes across a tender which is for both consultancy and certification, it may be referred to NABCB and NABCB would take up the matter with concerned organization which has issued the tender.
15. These guidelines apply irrespective of any accreditation that the CB may hold and if need be, NABCB can take up the matter with other ABs.

Information and Assistance:

*In case any organization has any queries regarding status of certification bodies or accreditation, they may contact the **National Accreditation Board for Certification Bodies**, C/o Quality Council of India, World Trade Centre, J 200, Block J, Nauroji Nagar, New Delhi-110029*

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- 01 Agriculture & Fishing & Forestry
- 02 Mining and Quarrying
- 03 Food products, beverages and tobacco
- 04 Textiles and textile products
- 05 Leather & Leather products
- 06 Wood and wood products
- 07 Pulp, paper, and paper products
- 08 Publishing Companies
- 09 Printing companies
- 10 Manufacture of coke and refined petroleum products
- 11 Nuclear fuel
- 12 Chemicals, chemical products and fibres
- 13 Pharmaceuticals
- 14 Rubber and plastic products
- 15 Non-metallic mineral products
- 16 Concrete, cement, lime, plaster etc.
- 17 Basic metals and fabricated metal products
- 18 Machinery and equipment
- 19 Electrical equipment, Optical and precision equipment and Medical and surgical equipment
- 20 Shipbuilding
- 21 Aerospace
- 22 Other transport equipment
- 23 Manufacturing not elsewhere classified
- 24 Recycling
- 25 Electricity supply
- 26 Gas supply
- 27 Water supply
- 28 Construction
- 29 Wholesale & retail trade; Repair of motor vehicles, motorcycles and Personal and household goods
- 30 Hotels and Restaurant
- 31 Transport, storage and communication
- 32 Financial intermediation; Real estate; renting
- 33 Information technology
- 34 Engineering services
- 35 Other services
- 36 Public Administration
- 37 Education
- 38 Health and social work
- 39 Other social services



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Annex-2



No. P-26013/1/2013-PMD
Government of India
Cabinet Secretariat
Performance Management Division (PMD)

1st Floor, 5th Wing, Hotel Janpath,
Room No. 107 Janpath, New Delhi-110001.
Dated 21st August, 2013.

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

Subject : Calling for combined tenders for consultancy and certification for ISO 9001:2008 certification - clarification reg.

The Performance Management Division, Cabinet Secretariat had earlier pr relevant guidelines and a template for engaging consultants to the Ministries/ Depa in order to obtain ISO: 9001 certification.

Many Ministries/ Departments have since engaged consultants and gone ahead the subsequent steps of this journey like (i) Training of Departmental officials by the consultant, (ii) Conduct of Gap Analysis by the consultant (iii) Planning and Documentation for ISO compliant Quality Manual, Standard Operating Procedure, Forms and Formats, (iv) implementation of new system, (v) Internal Quality audit and review, (vi) Successful certification audit and award of ISO 9001 certification etc.

In this process, an instance has come to our notice in which one Responsibility Center, under a Department, has issued a combined tender for consultancy and certification for ISO 9001. This was discussed with National Accreditation Board for Certification Bodies (NABCB), a body under the Quality Council of India, who have opined that this practice is undesirable.

Therefore, it is clarified that the process of floating combined bid for consultancy and certification for ISO 9001 is unhealthy since consultancy is regarded as conflict of interest with certification and certification bodies are barred from offering consultancy. Such a tender would invariably lead to compromise in impartiality of certification process and therefore would not yield the full benefits of ISO 9001. **Therefore it is necessary that separate tenders for consultancy and certification are issued.**

Further, we are already in the process of developing a separate template for Request for Proposal for hiring of Certification Body in consultation with Quality Council of India. The same would be shared with the Ministries/Departments shortly. However, in case any Department intends to go ahead with the bidding process to hire the services of a Certification Body, they may do so in consultation with the **National Accreditation Board for Certification Bodies**, C/o Quality Council of India, 2nd Floor, Institution of Engineers Building, Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg, New Delhi - 110002, Phone - 011-2337 9321, 9260, 8057, Fax- 011-23378678, Email: ceo.nabcb@qcin.org.

(Jugna Gupta)
Director
Tel.No. 23741165

To the RFD Coordinators of the Ministries/ Departments.



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Annex-3

F.No.12/17/2019-PPD
Ministry of Finance
Department of Expenditure
Public Procurement Division

North Block, New Delhi
Dated the 12th May, 2020

Office Memorandum

Subject: Use of National Regulations or National Standards or Building Codes in case of Public Procurement in terms of Rule 144(iii) of GFR 2017.

Attention is invited to the above Rule, which states that the National Technical Regulations or recognized National Standards or Building Codes needs to be specified in the public procurement, wherever such standards exists. The Rule also provides that wherever such standard exists, if a procuring entity intends to adopt any other technical specification, he shall have to record his reasons in writing for doing so.

2. It has come to the notice of this Department that even in cases where Indian Technical specifications exist; the procuring entities specify foreign Quality Certifications and Accreditations. It is reiterated that wherever Indian Technical specifications and Quality Certifications exists, the procuring entity should prescribe them. In those rare or exceptional cases where, despite the existence of Indian technical specifications, the procuring entity intends to specify foreign Technical Certifications and Accreditations, it must record its reasons in writing for adoption of such other technical specifications. Needless to say, this may also be subject to matter of audit.

3. This issues with the approval of Secretary (Expenditure).

PS
12.5.20

(Sanjay Aggarwal)

Director (PPD)

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011-23094961

To

Secretaries of all Ministries/ Departments, Govt of India