 Auriga Research Pvt. Ltd. (Certification Division)		
Prepared by: Quality Manager	Doc No: ARPL-QP-29	Issue no.01, Revision no.02
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Purpose

This document provides a description of the process for reducing the scope of, suspending and withdrawing certifications.

Scope

Applies to all certifications provided by ARPL (Certification Division) to relevant audit criteria, throughout all stages of the certification process. At all times, ARPL (Certification Division) shall be able to confirm the status of any certification as valid, suspended, withdrawn, or reduced in scope.

Responsibility

The Head - Operations are responsible for implementing this process and monitoring it for efficiency and effectiveness. Certificate Authority personnel are responsible for implementing this process as it applies to their respective program(s)

1.0 Definitions

- 1.1 Suspension is a temporary status which can only end by full reinstatement or withdrawal of certification. During this period, the client's certification is temporarily invalid.
- 1.2 Reduction of scope may occur when the client has persistently or seriously failed to meet the certification requirements for parts of the scope of certification. With any such occurrence, those parts of the scope of certification may be excluded. Any such reduction shall be in line with the requirements of the audit criteria used for certification.
- 1.3 Cancellation: Withdrawal of the certification at the client's request
- 1.4 Withdrawal: Action by ARPL (Certification Division) to terminate the validity of the certificate
- 1.5 Closing of corrective action: a corrective action is considered to be closed once the of the implementation and effectiveness of corrective actions have been verified and confirmed.


2.0 Suspension General

A certificate's validity is subject to ongoing requirements for surveillance audits, recertification audits, and other conditions specified in the client's contract with ARPL (Certification Division). The process may begin when any of the following occur:

- a) The client's certified management system has persistently or seriously failed to meet certification requirements, including requirements for the effectiveness of the management system.
- b) Surveillance or recertification audits are not conducted at the required frequencies.
- c) The certified client has voluntarily requested a suspension.
- d) Corrective Actions are not closed within the specified timeframe.
Note: After 60 days of non-receipt of corrective actions from the client, notification will be sent to the client notifying them of the potential of suspension. If further delay occurs and the 90-days' time limit is exceeded, the Quality manager, Head - Operations, or designated certification authority personnel shall provide direction on the suspension of the certificate.
- e) Violations of ARPL (Certification Division) contract (includes unpaid invoices).
- f) As a result of investigation conducted on a complaint against a certified client.

3.0 Suspension and reduction of scope

Based on any of the above-identified conditions, any personnel may recommend the suspension of a client's certification or, except for items b) and e) above, the reduction of the scope of certification of the client. Reduction in the scope of certification is done to exclude the parts 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.

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The recommendation and justification shall be submitted to the appropriate Certification Authority Personnel for approval. The approved decision shall include the conditions for lifting the suspension or reinstating the complete scope of certification.

Suspension is not to exceed 180 days unless approved by the Quality manager or the Head - Operations and/or when required, by the Accreditation Body or Sector Authority Organizations.

ARPL (Certification Division) will update the status of the client certification in its directory of certified clients and take any other measures it deems appropriate.

In the case of multi-site organizations, suspension applies to the certification of the entire organization, although the issue may relate to one or more of the sites only once the approval of the decision of suspension or reduction of scope is completed, the affected client will be notified in writing of the suspension of its certification. The letter typically indicates:

- a) Reason for suspension or reduction of scope.
- b) Maximum duration of suspension or reduction of scope.
- c) Conditions for the suspension or reduction of scope to be lifted (i.e. timeline submission of corrective actions, special surveillance visit, etc.).
- d) Failure to resolve the issues that have resulted in suspension or reduction of scope in the specified timeframe shall result in withdrawal or permanent reduction of the scope of certification.
- e) Notification that for the duration of the suspension, the client shall refrain from further promotion of its certification
- f) ARPL (Certification Division) will notify other parties as applicable and communicate with client if other parties need to be included.
- g) The client is to be notified that the suspension decision may be appealed (please provide the reference to ARPL-QP-05 Complaints and Appeals Process).

3.1 Subsequent actions relating to closure of corrective actions

If the client submits a timely response to corrective action closure, follow-up verification shall be performed as per the disposition of the conditions for lifting the suspension or reinstatement of the complete scope of certification. If satisfactory, the results are to be forwarded to Certification Authority personnel for reinstatement of the certification. Certificate authority personnel, depending on the level of the correction actions will determine if a special visit is required or not.

If the results are unsatisfactory, or if the client fails to respond adequately to ARPL (Certification Division)'s request, Certification Authority shall initiate the withdrawal of the certification per section 5.0 of the present document

4.0 Process Monitoring

Technical Review and Certificate Authority personnel are responsible for reviewing suspended certificates to ensure the specified time limits of the suspensions are not exceeded.

5.0 Withdrawal - General

A certificate's validity is subject to ongoing requirements for surveillance and recertification audits, and other conditions specified in the client's contract with ARPL (Certification Division). The withdrawal process may begin upon verification when any of the following examples occur:

- a) Client wishes to cancel and sends formal notification (in writing);
- b) Deficiency in certified client's management system is identified;

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- c) Corrective Actions are not closed within specified timeframe;
- d) Incorrect/inappropriate use of certificate(s) and/or certification mark(s);
- e) Lack of payment;
- f) Violations of ARPL (Certification Division) contractual requirements;
- g) The client ceases to exist as a legal entity in its form as certified;
- h) When a client refuses or fails to schedule required maintenance surveillance audits, special surveillance, or re-certification;
- i) In the case of corporate certification, decertification is caused by one or more of the sites no longer fulfilling the necessary criteria for maintaining the certification.
- j) Recommendation as a result of the escalation of a suspension decision (Ref: section 3.0 of the present document).

6.0 Withdrawal

Based on any of the above identified conditions, any Management or Certification Authority personnel may recommend the withdrawal of a client's certification.

The process is initiated with a formal letter to the client indicating the reason and the effective date of the withdrawal of the certification. Additionally, the following information is included:

- a) The client is advised to discontinue the use of its certificate and all advertising material that contains any reference to its certified status or shows ARPL (Certification Division) and or the Accreditation Body(ies) mark(s).
- b) If it is a requirement of the applicable audit criteria, the client is required to send written notification to its customers who require certification, advising them that they are no longer certified.
- c) The client is to be notified that the withdrawal decision may be appealed.

7.0 ARPL (Certification Division) internal requirements

Certificate authority personnel will enter all required information into the operating system to initiate the suspension process)

- a) Record of notification sent to client.
- b) If withdrawal is due to a product safety recall or regulatory issues, the Quality manager will be notified and will consider if any public agency requires notification, and take appropriate action.

The withdrawal status of client's certification will remain in the directory of certified clients for a period of at least 90 days

8.0 Records

Annex A22 Data Base of Certificates Issued and Withdrawn
ARPL-QP-05 Complaints and Appeals Process