




SUSPENSIONS, WITHDRAWALS AND RE-INSTATEMENT OF ACCREDITED

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1. Purpose and Scope

This document describes the procedure to be followed when sanctions, such as suspension or Withdrawal of accreditation or compliance or part thereof, are imposed on accredited /compliant organizations, including the procedures for re-instatement of suspended organizations. This procedure applies to all ACCB accredited bodies compliant facilities.

2. Definitions and References

2.1 References

PM-ACCB: Policy Manual

References, Acronyms and Definitions

ACCB Terms and Conditions of Accreditation

ACCB Terms and Conditions of Compliance

Conditions for the use of Accreditation Symbols, Reference to Accreditation and Combined Marks

2.2 Acronyms and Definitions: Organization in the context of this document refers to a assessment body and compliant facility. Terms and Conditions means the ACCB Terms and Conditions of Accreditation and of Compliance

3. General

In order to ensure compliance to the relevant accreditation compliance, and where applicable, regulatory requirements, safeguard the integrity of the accreditation compliance system and the reliability of results produced by an any accredited/compliant organization, ACCB applies various sanctions to accredited/compliant organizations found to have contravened any requirements relating to accreditation compliance, as applicable, including those specified in any accreditation standard, guide, regulation and mandatory document which applies to an organization, the Act and any policies, procedures and requirements of ACCB which applies to an organization.

Sanctions may include suspension of an organization's accreditation/compliance or part thereof, or where warranted, withdrawal of an organizations' accreditation/compliance status or part thereof.

A decision to suspend and withdraw an organization's accreditation/compliance can have a major impact on both its employer and employees and therefore ACCB does not take such decisions lightly. Both suspensions and withdrawals could either be self-imposing (voluntary) or imposed by ACCB, as described in sections 4 and 7 of this document.

ACCB procedure "Handling of Complaints and Appeals" sets out the process that must be followed by an organization should it wish to appeal against a suspension or withdrawal of their Accreditation.

4. Suspension of Accreditation/Compliance

4.1 Suspension of accreditation/compliance means that accreditation/compliance is temporarily made invalid for the full scope of accreditation/compliance, or part thereof. Suspension of an organization may result from:

- 4.1.1 Voluntary suspension, which is normally requested by an organization for reasons which includes, but is not limited to:
- ✓ Loss of all technical signatories or competent staff members;
Relocation of the organization, part thereof or movement/change of equipment that may have an impact on the results produced;
 - ✓ Restructuring or changes that affects the organization's ability to produce reliable results;
 - ✓ A breakdown of the organization's management system;
 - ✓ Any other reason that might compromise the integrity of the results produced by the organization or compliance with the accreditation/compliance requirements;
 - ✓ Where during an assessment / inspection or special investigation, ACCB finds that the organization no longer complies with accreditation / compliance requirements; or
 - ✓ Any other circumstances that ACCB may deem appropriate warranting the suspension of an organization.

The organization must apply to the Accreditation Approval Committee in writing, with valid reasons and the effective date, to be placed under suspension. Organization's that are placed in voluntary suspension shall give an undertaking to adequately address the circumstances that caused the request for suspension within three months of the effective date of suspension. The Accreditation Approval Committee may approve an organization's written request, if received prior to the deadline and containing valid reasons, to extend the period for the clearance of non-conformances. (Refer to 7.5).

4.1.2 Suspension enforced by ACCB for the full scope of accreditation/compliance or part thereof. ACCB shall, in its sole and absolute discretion, immediately suspend an organization's accreditation/compliance or part thereof, by means of written notification, for conditions as specified in the ACCB Terms and Conditions.

5. Withdrawal of Accreditation Compliance

5.1 Withdrawal of accreditation means the cancellation of the statement of conformity for the full scope of accreditation or part thereof. Withdrawal may be either:

5.1.1 Voluntary (self-imposed) withdrawal, as requested by an organization; or

5.1.2 Withdrawal imposed by ACCB.

5.2 ACCB shall, in its sole and absolute discretion, immediately withdraw an organization's Accreditation or part thereof, by means of written notification, for conditions as specified in the ACCB Terms and Conditions.

6. Process of Implementing a Suspension or Withdrawal

6.1 The CEO may delegate the authority to suspend accreditation to the relevant Senior Manager (SM), in consultation with the relevant Accreditation Approval Committee.

6.2 Withdrawal of accreditation imposed by ACCB shall be authorized by the ACCB's CEO on written recommendation and with valid reasons by the relevant SM.

6.3 ACCB will issue a letter of suspension or withdrawal, as is relevant, detailing amongst others:

- The effective date of the suspension/withdrawal;
- The reasons for suspension/withdrawal;
- The extent of the suspension/withdrawal;
- The implications and conditions during the suspension period/withdrawal;
- The conditions for re-instatement in the case of suspensions.

6.4 During the period of suspension the ACCB Terms and Conditions will remain valid subject to the conditions contained in this document as well as in ACCB document "Conditions for the use of Accreditation Symbols".

6.5 A record of the reasons for suspension or withdrawal, the duration of suspension and a record that all suspension and withdrawal procedures have been adhered to will be maintained by the relevant Accreditation Manager.

7. Conditions of Suspension or Withdrawal of Accreditation

7.1 An organization shall, upon suspension or withdrawal of ACCB accreditation/compliance, immediately cease to issue certificates and any other materials displaying the ACCB accreditation symbol, or containing references to ACCB accreditation.

7.2 In the case of partial suspension, reports shall clearly identify the scopes for which accreditation compliance cannot be claimed. Failure to comply with this requirement is a criminal offence and can result in prosecution. There are "Conditions for the use of Accreditation Symbols".

7.3 In the case of Accreditation Bodies (AB), withdrawal of accreditation has consequences on the customers of the AB. ACCB requires the AB's to provide their customers with information on the withdrawal of their accreditation and on its consequences. (Refer to "Transfer of accredited certification of management systems")

7.4 An organization is required to immediately return their certificate and schedule of accreditation to ACCB as soon as withdrawal of their accreditation is effective.

7.5 An organization may not be under suspension for longer than 3 months without the written authorization of the Accreditation Approval Committee. It is the organization's responsibility to apply to the relevant Accreditation Approval Committee, in writing, with valid reasons and no later than two (2) weeks prior to the expiry of the suspension period, to extend their suspension for each additional one-month period, but for no longer than 6 additional months, after which accreditation will be withdrawn.

7.6 Where an application for extension of the suspension period has not been received, ACCB has the right to elect by means of written notification, to withdraw all or part of the organization's scope of accreditation. Withdrawal of accreditation will result in the organization having to re-apply for accreditation as a new applicant with the associated costs and penalties. (Refer to "ACCB Fees").

7.7 The organization shall be responsible for all costs associated with a suspension or withdrawal, such as any additional on-site visits or re-instatement visits as required by ACCB and any costs associated the handling of an appeal against such adverse decisions (refer to “Handling of Complaints and Appeals”). An organization shall remain liable for all fees whilst in suspension. If withdrawal of accreditation has occurred then a pro-rata percentage of their annual fees are still due to ACCB for the financial year. If the organization was assessed/inspected in the same financial year as their withdrawal, they will also be liable for the travel and subsistence costs of the assessment/inspection.

8. Re-instatement of Accreditation

8.1 Re-instatement of suspended organizations

8.1.1 An organization under suspension is required to submit to ACCB evidence of appropriate corrective action taken, prior to the end of the suspension period.

8.1.2 ACCB shall evaluate the non-conformances/reasons that led to the suspension during the re-instatement assessment/inspection and subsequent assessments/inspections if necessary.

8.1.3 In the case of loss of all technical signatories, the organization shall remain under suspension until such time that ACCB has verified the competence of any new proposed technical signatory for the relevant accredited scope(s).

8.1.4 Where an organization has been suspended for non-payment of fees, ACCB shall re-instate the accreditation of an organization immediately upon receipt of payment made within the suspension period of any outstanding amounts due to ACCB.

8.1.5 Where an organization has received Accreditation Approval Committee approval for a suspension period of longer than 6 months, the re-instatement visit will be treated as a full re-assessment/ re-inspection.

8.1.6 Once an organization has satisfactorily addressed the issues which resulted in suspension, accreditation may be re-instated on approval by the relevant Authority and, where a re-instatement visit is required, on approval by the AAC.

8.1.7 An organization that is under suspension may be required to have an on-site Assessment/inspection, at the discretion of the relevant Manager, where the reasons for the suspension indicated that the competency of the organization was affected. A positive recommendation by the assessment/inspection team is required prior to re-instatement of accreditation / compliance. The extent of such an assessment/inspection will be determined by the relevant Accreditation Manager based on the reasons for suspension and the associated risk. All costs will be for the account of the organization.

8.1.8 Notification of re-instatement of accreditation will be sent to the organization, detailing the scope that the re-instatement applies to.

8.1.9 The organization’s accreditation certificate will be restored on the ACCB website once accreditation has been re-instated.

8.1.10 ACCB reserves the right not to reinstate accreditation of an organization should the organization be successfully prosecuted in terms of the Accreditation Act, or obtain any other judgment and/or order and/or restraint including an interdict against such an organization that operates, amongst others, in a manner that brings accreditation or ACCB into disrepute.

8.2 Re-instatement of Accreditation that has been withdrawn

8.2.1 Should an organization wish to re-instate accreditation after it has been withdrawn, the organization will be required to re-apply for accreditation as a new applicant with the associated costs.

8.2.2 Where the full scope of accreditation has been withdrawn, the previous accreditation number will be made obsolete, and the organization will be issued a new ACCB accreditation number once re-accredited has been granted again.

AMMENDMEND RECORD:

Posted By	Section	Change