

1. Application Review

A review shall be carried out of the application, information obtained and any supporting documents to ensure that

- Information about the client and product is sufficient for the certification / assessment process
- Any known difference is resolved
- The scope of certification / assessment sought is defined
- PTS has the means to perform all evaluation activities including competence and capability of certification personnel (Contract Review)

2. Certification Process

2.1 Audit Planning

Once the certification audit / assessment contract received, PTS plans and programmes the audit / assessment on the basis on audit / assessment time allocation and audit / assessment assignment, for audits, which is defined as below and raise the audit plan in duplicate, which states the requirements of the relevant management system standard; size and complexity, name, address and scope of the client, date of audit and the audit team. It shall be sent to the auditors at the earliest opportunity (at least giving fourteen working days notice.) On receiving acknowledgement from the lead auditor / auditors, the audit assignment register will be completed and the statement of confidentiality and no conflict of interest will be obtained. The Audit programme shall be sent to the client there after.

The Certification Manager shall confirm the date(s) for the auditor & technical expert detail with the client. If the assessment/audit is to be subcontracted, agreement in writing shall be gained from the client.

For European assessments, the process shall follow all steps as required in CPR (EU) No 305/2011 regulation and PTS internal T procedures.

2.2 Audit Information

The audit programme shall be sent to the client at least ten working days prior to the audit. Confirmation of receipt and acceptance of the date(s) shall be attached to the office copy of audit programme.

2.3 Audits

2.3.1 Stage 1 Audit

The stage one audit is performed by lead auditor at client's premises, to audit the client's management system documentation and to evaluate the client's location and site-specific conditions and to undertake discussions with the client's personnel to determine the preparedness for the stage 2 audit. The auditor shall ensure the following are confirmed:

To evaluate if the internal audits and management review are being planned and performed, and that the level of implementation of the quality management system substantiates that the client is ready for the stage 2 audit.

To review the clients status and understanding regarding the requirements of the standard, in particular with respect to the identification of key performance or significant aspects, processes, objectives and operation of the management system

To collect necessary information regarding the scope of the management system, processes and location(s) and any statutory and regulatory aspects

The client shall be informed of all non-conformities. The client shall be provided with information regarding the additional evaluation tasks needed to verify that the non-conformities have been corrected.

To provide a focus for planning for stage 2 by gaining a sufficient understanding of the clients system

At least part of the stage 1 audit shall be conducted at the clients premises

4.3.2 Stage 1 Review

The interval between stage 1 and stage 2 audits shall be determined and consideration shall be given to the needs of the client to resolve areas of concern identified during the stage 1 audit. PTS shall also consider any revisions to its arrangements for stage 2 audit.

4.3.3 Stage-1 Audit Report

After the stage one audit the lead auditor shall submit his finding & advise by written report.

4.4 Stage-2 Audits

Stage two audit is to evaluate the implementation, including effectiveness of the clients management system.

The stage 2 audit shall take place at the site(s) of the client.

Any links between normative requirements, policy, performance objectives and targets, legal requirements, responsibilities, competence of personnel, operations, procedures, performance data and internal audit findings and conclusions

The client shall be informed of all non-conformities. The client shall be provided with information regarding the additional evaluation tasks needed to verify that the non-conformities have been corrected

4.4.1 Stage-2 Audit Report

After the stage two audit the auditor shall submit his finding & advise by written report.

4.5 Review

The audit team shall analyse all the information / evidence gathered at both stage 1 and stage 2 audits to review and agree audit conclusion. All the information provided by the audit team shall be forwarded to PTS Certification Management team to enable decision to be made, by the decision committee, information shall include audit reports, comments and non-conformities and where applicable the correction and corrective actions taken by the client, confirmation of the information provided as used in the application review and a recommendation whether or not to grant certification together with any conditions or observations.

4.6 Surveillance audits

Surveillance audits are carried out on site bi-annually/annually to ensure that the certified management system is in compliance and demonstrates continual improvement in terms of Systems, products and resource management. These may be part audits and shall be planned together with other surveillance activities.

For Environmental Audits to EN ISO 14001 - All subsequent surveillance and reassessment audits shall be consistent in line with Stage 2 requirements as section 4.4 above, to enable verification of the management of legal compliance based on demonstrated implementation of the system

The date of the first surveillance audit following initial certification shall not be more than 6 months from the last day of the stage 2 audit.

Surveillance audits shall cover representative areas and functions covered by the scope of the clients management system on a regular basis as above with a 3 year re-certification whereby all areas of the scope shall be audited.

5. Granting Certificate

The Certification Management Team is appointed from the auditors and experts working with PTS to consider specific recommendations made in relation to granting, maintaining, extending, reducing, suspending and withdrawing certification. Members of the impartiality committee will be independent from the auditing activity. Technical requirements will be arranged as necessary, where technical expertise will cover the certification scope being considered. The technical expertise is impartial & free from commercial or financial pressure.

6. Appeal, Complaints and Disputes

Any appeals, complaints and disputes shall be dealt with in accordance with Certification Management Processes

7. Actions Prior to Making A Decision

Prior to making a decision PTS shall confirm

- That the information provided by the audit team is sufficient as per the requirements of the scope of certification
- That all findings have been reviewed, accepted and verified for the effectiveness of correction and corrective actions for all non conformities that represent

Failure to fulfil one or more requirements of the management system standard or a finding/situation causes significant doubt about the ability of the clients management system to achieve its intended inputs and it has reviewed and accepted the clients planned correction and corrective action for any other nonconformities

8. Certification Decision

PTS shall ensure that persons or committees that make certification or recertification decisions are different from those who carried out the audits, the decision for granting, maintaining, renewing, extending, reducing, suspending or withdrawing certification shall not be outsourced

9. Certification Documents

PTS shall provide certification documents to the client by any means they choose. No certification documents shall be provided/issued prior to the effective date of the certification decision.

10. Directory of Certification

PTS shall maintain a directory of information on certified products and clients. The directory shall contain at least-

- Identification of the product
- The standard(s) and other normative document(s) to which conformity has been certified
- Identification of the client

PTS shall make available / provide information, upon request, about the validity of a given certification.

11. Maintaining Certification

PTS shall maintain a client's certification based on the demonstration that the client continues to satisfy the requirements of the management system standard.

Any nonconformities or other situation that may lead to suspension or withdrawal of certification, PTS shall require the audit team leader to report the need to initiate a review by persons other than those involved in the audit to determine whether certification can be maintained.

The certification management team shall monitor surveillance activities, including reports from auditors to confirm that the certification activity is operating effectively

12. Changes Affecting Certification

All new or revised changes to requirements for certification activities that affect the client shall, following full consideration of effective date of changes and review shall be notified to all clients. PTS shall check that each certified client makes necessary adjustments within the reasonable specified time frame. PTS shall verify the client complies with the new requirements. PTS shall also consider other changes affecting certification, including changes initiated by the client and decide upon the appropriate action necessary.

Certified clients are required to notify PTS without delay of matters that may affect the capability of the management system ie legal or commercial organisation status or ownership, contact address and sites, management and organisation, scope, major changes to the management system and processes, etc. PTS shall also be informed of any intended modification in the product, production process or quality system which may affect product conformity, the client agrees that product shall not be released until PTS has been notified and PTS has determined if investigation is required.

Actions to implement changes affecting certification shall include, if required an evaluation, review and a decision on the changes.

Revised formal certification documentation to either extend or reduce the scope of certification shall be issued, along with issuance of formal certification documentation of revised surveillance activities to either extend or reduce the scope of certification shall be issued.

Records shall be maintained and shall also include the rationale for excluding any activities.