

	Prime Certification & Inspection			
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1.0 Purpose

To describe a procedure for granting or refusing certification, expanding or reducing the scope of certification, suspending or restoring certification, withdrawing certification or renewing certification.

2.0 Scope

This procedure covers overall activity for certificate issue, suspension and withdrawal of certificate; expanding or reducing the scope of certification and renewal of the certification for all types of certification activities carried out by Prime C&I.

3.0 Responsibility

- 3.1 All certificates shall be reviewed by respective country **Technical Manager** and approved by respective country **Certification Manager / National Head / Country Head** prior to issue. The operations In-charge is responsible to issue the certificate to the customer. Technical Manager is authorized to communicate to the customer regarding Certification Committee's decision on granting or refusing certification; expanding or reducing the scope of certification; withdrawal or restoring certification and renewal of the certification.

Reference: Doc. No. P-74A - Authority / Designated Person for Certificate Decision, Certificate Issue, Suspension, Withdrawal and Renewal.

4.0 Description of Activity

4.1 Receipt and Review of Audit Report

- 4.1.1 The audit team leader is responsible for submission of audit report documents, which shall include at least the audit report, non-conformances, if any, identified during the audit, corrective action plans submitted by the customer along with the evidence/s in case of major non-conformances; assessor notes etc.
- 4.1.2 The audit reports are reviewed at multiple steps detailed below:

Step-01: includes an administrative review in which, the submitted set of documents are reviewed for completeness by the operation manger or operations in-charge. A deviation note (P/34) will be issued to the team leader if he/she finds any variation / deviation in the completeness of the documents during the review. The documents along with the deviation note and the response from the team leader shall be forwarded to the Certification Committee for the technical review and decision-making process.

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Step-02: includes a technical review, in which the member of the Certification Committee responsible for the technical review shall conduct the review of the report. The technical reviewer shall not be the one who was part of the particular audit. The technical review shall cover at least:


- Confirm that the information provided by the audit team is sufficient with respect to certification requirements and the scope of certification;
- The details of the non-conformities, if any, identified during the audit and the corrections and corrective actions taken by the client, if applicable.
- In case of any major non-conformities, the audit team has reviewed, accepted and verified the correction and corrective actions;
- Confirm that the audit objectives have been achieved

If any deviations from the above stated are identified during the step-02, the technical reviewer shall issue a deviation note (P-34) to the audit team leader and response is sought. In case, where additional information's are required, which is inevitable to make a decision with regards to the certification; the technical reviewer may contact the audit team leader and/or the respective audit team member for further clarifications. On completion of the technical review, the report shall be presented in the certification committee for a decision-making process as detailed in Step-03.

Step-03: Includes decision making process by certification committee. Based on the outcome of the administrative and technical review; decision shall be taken by the committee members. In the event of conflict of decision between the members of the committee; an additional member from the pool of the members for certification committee shall be added, who is competent in the particular scheme under review, and the decision is put for voting. On decision which received the majority of vote shall be considered as the final decision of the Certification Committee, which shall be informed to the Technical Manager to communicate to the customer. In case of routine surveillance audit reports, it may not be required to be reviewed by the Certification Committee, except where the Audit team leader has identified major non-conformities which may lead to the suspension or withdrawal; expanding or reduction of the scope etc. In all such cases, the reports shall be reviewed by the Technical Manager and/or the technical member, where the technical manager was involved in the audit process. During the decision making by the Certification committee, factors such as complaints received against the customer, media reports; changes in the scope; new regulations or requirements; etc are also taken into consideration. The committee along with the approval shall indicate the date of commencement of the certification and its validity period.

For the Halal certification case the decision-making process by certification committee includes three members which including an Islamic affairs expert. Based on the outcome of the administrative

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and technical review; decision will be taken by the committee members, the decision will be taken unanimously, not by majority of votes.

Step-04: Based on the outcome of the Step-03; if a new certificate needs to be issued, the administrative secretary and/or Operations In-charge shall prepare the certificate (Refer Clause 4.2) and forwarded to the Technical Manager for review. A Draft copy of the certificate is also forwarded to the customer for verification. Upon getting the confirmation, the original certificate shall be prepared and issued to the customer with the approval of the Certification Manager. All certificates shall be issued along with the procedure for use of certificate and certification mark and acknowledgement on receipt of the certificate and the procedure by the customer is maintained in the respective customer file.

Along with the issue of the Certificate, the Administrative Secretary and/or Operations In-charge shall update the client database as per the latest certificate details.

4.2 Certificate Preparation and Issue

4.2.1 Certificates are issued to clients following initial audit, extension or reduction to accredited scope, triennial audit, or change in company details (name, address etc). Prior to prepare the certification document, the person needs to check reference documents like P_52 Basic certificate information to understand and confirm the customer and certification details which is specified in the document. In case of significant changes the information in proposal / certification agreement and contract review has to be verified before the preparation of certificate. Once the certification document prepared which is forwarded to certification manager review and approval/ signature. Certification manager needs to verify the prepared certificate which is based on the Prime C&I accreditation scope approval / service areas / certification covered geographical locations, final audit report(Stage -2 / verification audit / final audit or inspection) decision followed with the reference of documents like P_52 Basic certificate information, Proposal, Certification agreement and Contract Review.

4.2.2 Each certificate issued by Prime C&I shall carry a unique certificate number of the format as follows:

The **16-character Alpha-Numeric Unique Certification Number** is proposed as below:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Acc. Sch.	Acc. No.		Cal. Year		Sub-Sch.		Location		Cert / Report Number						

The details of Unique Certificate Number are as follows:

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- The Unique Certificate Number for Certificates & Reports issued under NABCB accreditation shall be a 16-digit alpha-numeric code.
- The first two characters (Character 1 & 2) shall represent the Accreditation Scheme as described below:

Scheme	Digits Used	Scheme	Digits Used
QMS	QM	FSMS/FSSC	FS
EMS	EM	HACCP	HP
OHSMS	OH	HALAL	HL
SA8000	SA	GMP	GM
PCB	PC	GHP	GH
EffCI	EF	GCP	GC
IC	IC	GVP	GV

- The next three characters (Character 3, 4 & 5) shall represent the numeric digits of the Accreditation CAB Number as given in the accreditation certificate issued by accreditation bodies, and as described below:

For NABCB Accreditation			
Acc. Cert. No.	Digits used	Acc. Cert. No.	Digits used
QM-064	064	EnM-XXX	XXX
FSMS-019	019	OHSMS-XXX	XXX
PRDT-014	014		

For EIAC Accreditation			
Acc. Cert. No.	Digits used	Acc. Cert. No.	Digits used
063-CB-FSMS (Prime UAE)	063	063-CB-HACCP (Prime UAE)	063
HBN-006-CB (Prime UAE)	006	002-CB-PRD (Prime UAE)	002
HBN-027-CB (Prime Philippines)	027		

- The next two characters (Character 6 & 7) shall be the last two digits of the calendar year [01 January 20xx – 31 December 20xx] in which the accredited certificate / report is issued. e.g. if the certificate/report is issued in year 2019, the digits shall be used as 19.
- The next two characters (Characters 8 & 9) shall represent the sub-scheme within the main accreditation scheme as given below:

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Food Safety Management System			
Sub-Scheme Name	Digits used	Sub-Scheme Name	Digits used
FSMS	01	FSSC	02

Product Certification			
Sub-Scheme Name	Digits used	Sub-Scheme Name	Digits used
Generic (Food Products)	01	Drinking Water	02
Energy Drinks	03	Milk Products	04
Juices & Beverages	05	Metrology System	06
Honey	07	Tobacco Products	08
Detergents	09	Cosmetics & Personal Care	10
Perfumes	11	Food Contact Materials	12
Petroleum Products	13	Organic Products	14
OBD Plastic	15	PPEs	16
Construction Materials	17	Electrical Products	18
BRC	19	Global GAP	20

These two characters will be numeric, and the selection of these two characters will be done as per the table provided above.

Where the sub-scheme is not applicable or not relevant, the two characters to be used invariably shall be “00” [Zero Zero].

- The next two characters (Characters 10 & 11) shall be identification of the office location of the CAB by a numeral, “00” [Zero Zero] being always the location of the Main Office, and numeral “01” onwards for the Branch/Key Offices of the CAB. e.g.

Office Name	Digit Used	Office Name	Digit Used
Dubai - UAE Office	01	Philippine Office	02
India Office	03	Japan Office	04
Europe Office	05	KSA Office	06

- The last five characters (Characters 12 to 16) shall be the date-wise, running sequence number of certificates and/or reports issued by CABs under NABCB accreditation, starting from 00001 to 99999. This number shall restart from 00001 on 1st of January each year.

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8. The alphabets to be used in Unique Certificate Number shall always be in CAPITALS. There shall be no gaps in the last five characters (sequence number) while issuing certificates/reports.
9. Prime C&I shall have to invariably use Unique Certificate Number on all the certificates / reports issued by them under ISO/IEC 17021, ISO/IEC 17065, ISO/IEC 17020 and GSO UAE.S 2055-2 accreditation.
10. In case of any amendment to accredited certificate / report is issued by Prime C&I, it shall carry the same unique certificate number but bearing the date of amendment on the certificate / report reissued.

Specimen of NABCB UIC for Accredited Certificates / Reports are depicted as below:

F	S	0	1	9	2	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
P	C	0	1	4	2	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	1
I	B	0	0	1	2	0	0	5	0	3	0	0	0	0	1
Acc. Sch.	Acc. No.	Cal. Year	Sub-Sch.	Location	Cert / Report Number in Seq.										

Note. For EQM certifications the certificate format is as per ESMA- United Arab Emirates procedure / rules. Before issuance of EQM & ECAS certificate, Operation Manager will verify the validity of legal registration (like Trade License, Commercial License etc.) of relevant client. If the legal registration is not valid then EQM & ECAS certificate will not be issued.

- 4.2.3 In case for FSSC 22000/other certificates issued by Prime C&I shall carry following additional details; -Certificate decision date, - Issue / Re-issue date.
- 4.2.4 In case of re-certification; the initial certification date shall be reflected in the certificate. The initial certification date will be applicable only when there is no gap between the initial certification expiry date and the re-certification date.

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4.2.5 In case of Multi-site certifications operating a common system with the same scope of certification, all the addresses on the client locations, which are certified is included in the certificate. The client may request for individual certificate for each site or in case where the scope of activities at each location is different, in such cases, the serial number in the certificate shall be appended with ‘/1’ for the 1st site, ‘/2’ for the second site and so on.

4.2.6 Customers may have integrated system where certificates for multiple standards are issued, in such cases separate certificates are issued for each of the standard.

4.2.7 Once the Certification Decision has been made by the Certification Committee, no member has the authority to change the decision unless the decision is appealed formally in the Appeal Committee. The decision of the appeal committee will be binding to all the members as well as the customers.

4.2.8 One original of the signed certificate is sent to the client at his address or any other address specifically requested by the customer. Additional copies of the certificates may be issued depending on the contract agreement.

4.2.9 The certificate shall only be issued to authorized representative of the client unless the client has requested in writing to hand over to another representative.

4.2.10 Along with the issue of the certificate, the following document/s shall be submitted to the customer. The cover letter shall indicate all the attachments and acknowledgement of receipt from the client representative is obtained.

- Covering Letter
- Certificate (Original)
- Additional certificate copies (if requested)
- P-11 - Procedure for Use of Certificate & Certification Mark
- CD containing soft copy of the logos.
- Customer Satisfaction Survey Form (P/35)

4.2.11 A copy of the certificate together with all other documents supporting the approval and decision making shall be maintained in

4.3 Change in Certificate

4.3.1 The client may request for change in certificate. This may be due to –

- ❖ Change in ownership
- ❖ Change in name of the company

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- ❖ Change in location
- ❖ Increase or decrease in scope (products, services offered etc.)
- ❖ Increase or decrease in locations (opening / closing of site etc.)

4.3.2 Client may request for change in certificate or reduction / expansion in scope to Technical Manager. Technical Manager shall review the request and decide for a special audit if the next audit is not due in near future or if the next audit cannot be proposed. Technical Manager also determines if the changed scope is within accreditation scope of Prime Certification & Inspection.

4.3.3 In case of change in name of company or location without any change in management, the client shall submit ROC approval for the change. Where the management has changed, the details of M&A and ROC approval shall be submitted along with the request.

4.3.4 The duration for the special visit shall be decided by Technical Manager and communicated to the client. The lead auditor submits a descriptive report detailing the changes, justification for reduction / expansion of scope and review of the impact of change in the scope (use of logos etc.) Where expansion of scope is requested, the compliance to QMS for the respective activities and impact on other processes is verified. In case the special visit is carried out as a part of routine surveillance, the descriptive report is added to the surveillance report.

The report is reviewed as detailed in 4.1 and 4.2 above. A new certificate is issued with the same expiry date on successful completion of the above process. Technical Manager reviews the contract to determine change in contract w.r.t. duration for further visits etc.

4.4 Suspension and Withdrawal or Cancellation of Certificates

4.4.1 This instruction covers suspension procedures through withdrawal or cancellation of the certification certificate and revision of the register of approved firms.

- Grounds for action are brought to the attention of the Certification Manager / Technical Manager, who reviews the information and forward to the Certification Committee for appropriate decision.
- If the committee agrees with the decision of the audit team; the customer shall be notified in writing for an immediate correction / corrective action to prevent a suspension / withdrawal of the certificate. Specific time period (usually 7 days, may be reduced to extended depending on the criticality, nature of the problem identified) is allocated for the customer to respond with the detailed correction and corrective actions taken.

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- The affectivity of the actions taken by the customer shall be verified, if required onsite, the report shall be submitted to the Certification Committee to withdraw the decision of suspension.
- If the customer has not positively responded to the notification within the allocated time period; the committee shall proceed with the decision of suspension of the certificate and shall inform the same to the client in writing. The suspension normally will be for a period of 7 days, within which customer is advised to take all the necessary corrections and corrective actions.
- The customer is also advised to avoid using the certificate or certification logo in any of the advertisements, or on labeling during the period of suspension.
- In the event of customer responding within the specified time period with the detailed corrections and corrective actions; the effectiveness of the actions shall be verified and confirmed by the audit team, if required, through on-site assessment.
- The recommendations of the audit team are forwarded to the Certification Committee, who shall review the evidences and take appropriate decision. The authority to resume the certification shall rests with the Certification Committee.
- Where in case the customer has not responded positively to the suspension notification and/or has not effectively implemented the corrective actions within the time frame; the certificate shall be withdrawn with immediate effect. The customer shall be notified of the decision of withdrawal and advise the customer to return all the original copies of the certificates; refrain from using the certificate or certification mark.
- Once the certificate has been withdrawn; the client needs to re-apply for certification which shall follow the same procedure as that of initial certification.
- In the event of withdrawal or cancellation of the certificate; Prime C&I, if required shall publish the details of the certification cancelled through its website. The customer shall be removed from the list of the certified customers.

4.4.2 The following reason/s are considered grounds for suspension or cancellation:

- Major non-conformance(s) or effective corrective action not implemented within a specified time period.
- Improper use of the certificate, symbol or logo not remedied to the satisfaction of Prime Certification & Inspection
- Client ceases to supply product or service of the certified quality system for an extended period of time.
- Client's certified management system has persistently failed to meet any of the requirements for certification including requirements for the effectiveness of the management system.

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- Client fails to meet financial obligations to Prime Certification & Inspection
- Client makes a formal request to withdraw certification.
- Infringement by the client of any contractual conditions between the client and Prime Certification & Inspection
- Client is unable or unwilling to ensure conformance to revisions of standards.
- Existence of a serious complaint, or a large number of second- or third-party complaints, which indicate that the quality management system is not being maintained.
- Client does not allow routine surveillance to be conducted at the required frequency.

4.4.3 The suspension or cancellation can be initiated if the client does not allow the routine surveillance to be conducted at the required frequency. The routine surveillance is carried out not more than 12 months from the last audit. In case the audit is not done within 12 months (13 months in case of yearly surveillance), the certificate is suspended, and a letter is sent to the client requesting him to agree for the audit. In case of a delay up to 3 months (15 months from the last audit), the audit time shall be extended by 50% of the routine surveillance time (at least 1 man-day). Successful completion of the audit within 15 months shall not impact the certification.

In case the audit is not done within 15 months, the certificate is cancelled, and the client shall be considered as a fresh case for certification.

The above are for special conditions like strike, natural calamities, business operations (case to case basis) etc.

4.5 **Conditions for Suspension or Cancellation of Client Certification***

4.5.1 Subject to actions by the client, the following steps will be taken leading to possible suspension or cancellation of the client's certification:

- Unless a reply is received to the letter accompanying notification within 7 days, certification will be suspended, and a notification of suspension may be published at the discretion of Prime Certification & Inspection
- The client's response to the accompanying letter will be reviewed and the proceedings may be put on hold while clarification is sought.
- Where mutually agreed-upon corrective action is to be implemented, a time period for implementation will be specified and a review of the corrective action undertaken at the appointed time. This may be the subject of a special surveillance visit or of review of submitted objective evidence, at the discretion of Prime Certification & Inspection Should the corrective

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action not be considered adequate or not be completed by the appointed time, certification will be automatically suspended.

- In the case of serious circumstances, Prime Certification & Inspection may invoke suspension during the period pending the implementation of corrective action.
- Where suspension has been invoked, unless otherwise specified, the client must advise Prime Certification & Inspection every 7 days of the current situation of corrective action. Failure to meet this requirement will result in cancellation of the client's certification.
- Where suspension has been invoked due to failure to conduct surveillance audit, the client shall give justification for failure and offer suitable date. An additional man-day shall be added to routine surveillance days. The date shall not be later than 15 months from last audit. Failure to offer for audit within 15 months shall result in cancellation of certification.
- When corrective action to resolve the problem(s) taken by the client has been verified, certification will be resumed. The period of certification will not be revised to cover the period of suspension.
- Cancellation of certification will be invoked where, following suspension of certification, the client fails to respond to Prime Certification & Inspection communications within the 7 days grace period or fails to implement corrective action within the appointed time period.
- In extreme circumstances Prime Certification & Inspection may invoke the cancellation of certification with immediate effect without recourse to initial certification suspension.
- Cancellation of certification will require the client to assume the status of non-approval and return all certification documentation to Prime Certification & Inspection
- Use of certification documents, symbols, or logos by the client following certification cancellation may result in legal action being taken against the client.
- Re-approval after certification cancellation will be on the same basis, and follow the same process, as that of initial application for a new client. This will require a full assessment, with optional document review at the discretion of Prime Certification & Inspection
- The de-certification will be published as a separate list and will be available at the Prime Certification & Inspection office and made available upon request.
- The client has the right to appeal any decisions of Prime Certification & Inspection and a copy of the appeals procedures will be made available upon request.
- AE shall remove the companies where the certificate has been cancelled. During suspension, suspension remark shall be placed in the registered of approved firms.
- The client files for all cancelled cases shall be archived for a period of 3 months and then destroyed.

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Title	Procedure for Certificate Issue, Suspension, Withdrawal and Renewal			
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Prepared by	Technical Manager		Approved by	Certification Manager

- Respect to EQM/ECAS certification, Prime C&I will inform ESMA during suspension, cancellation, recall and if any change in certificate status related to EQM certifications.

4.6 Reduction in Scope of Certificates Issued

Prime Certification & Inspection shall wherever applicable reduce the scope of certification if during the time of routine surveillance audits / Re approval or Renewal audits it finds that the certified client has continually / seriously failed to meet the certification requirements for those parts of the scope of certification. The reduction in scope will be approved by the Certification Committee.

Note: Prime C&I will inform Emirates Authority for Standardization and Metrology (ESMA) in case of certificate suspension, withdrawal and cancellation for EQM & ECAS Certifications. The communication mode will be email/any other possible mode by Operations/Technical Team members.

5.0 Reference

- 5.1 ISO/IEC 17021 - Conformity Assessment - Requirements for Bodies Providing Audit and Certification of Management Systems;
- 5.2 ISO/IEC 17065 - Conformity Assessment - Requirements for Bodies Certifying Products, Processes and Services;
- 5.3 ISO/IEC 17020 - Conformity Assessment - Requirements for the operation of various types of bodies performing inspection;
- 5.4 GSO UAE.S 2055-2 - Halal Products - Part Two: General Requirements for Halal Certification Bodies;
- 5.5 ISO 19011 - Guidelines for Management Systems Auditing;


5.0 Enclosure

Nil

6.0 Formats / Exhibits

- 7.1 P/31 - Decision about Certificate Suspending
- 7.2 P/32 - Decision on Validity Renovation of Suspended Certificate
- 7.3 P/34 - Deviation Note
- 7.4 P/35 - Customer Satisfaction Survey Form
- 7.5 P/36 - List of Registered Companies (Approved Firms / Withdrawn Firms / Suspended Firms)
- 7.6 QP-11 - Procedure for Use of Certificate and Certification Mark
- 7.7 QP-11 - Annex A - Usage of Halal Certificate and Halal Logo/Mark
- 7.8 QP-11 – Annex B – Usage of Conformity Certificate & Mark

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7.9 Draft Certificate Formats

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