



SUSPENSION AND WITHDRAWAL

17021-1:2015 9.6.1
9.6.5

ISO

17065:2012 7.11

14065:2013

Revision	Comment on the changes	Review	Approval	Date
2.22	The word "audit(s)" now replaces "visit(s)".	F. Gomes	F Joly de Brésillon	October 9th, 2023
2.21	bvchhasasukbranch@bureauveritas.com replacing bvchhas@bureauveritas.com in § 2 withdrawal of certificate.	F. Gomes	F Joly de Brésillon	July 19, 2023
2.20	bvchhasasukbranch@bureauveritas.com as the only mailbox to be used to receive communications from the network regarding suspension UKAS and ANAB accredited certifications.	F. Gomes	CER MS Committee	June 01, 2023
2.19	Timelines of the suspension/revoke/withdrawal processes. Added section for TL9000 Information related to Suspension & Withdrawal (§2) moved from Certification Decision SA8000.	F. Gomes G Lemos	CER MS Committee	March 22, 2023
2.18	Requirements for using Client suspension/Withdrawal form and clarity on timelines for the same. Added the Escalation Matrix at § 10	D. Kumar	CER MS Committee	May 24, 2022
2.17	Clarification about the instruction to local certification entities to communicate BVCHSAS Mailbox only in case of UKAS certifications suspensions and withdrawals	F. Gomes	CER MS Committee	Apr 2022
2.16	Removal of NSQ100	F. Joly de Bresillon	CER MS Committee	Nov 29, 2021
2.15	Reformatting in § 8.2.2 MSC Fishery, 8.3 ASC Farm and 9 FSSC	F. Gomes	CER MS Committee	Aug 18, 2021
2.14	Reformatting	F. Gomes	CER MS Committee	Jun 24, 2021
2.13	For FSC transfer, specific letter used - Definition of timeline when process initiated, and date of effective suspension/withdrawal – General procedure to keep records of receipt MSC CoC: information sent to the client recorded on E-Cert	E Gruber	CER MS Committee	Apr 19, 2021
2.12	New version of table containing schemes with additional instructions	M. Picouleau	CER MS Committee	Nov 27, 2020
2.11	FSC suspension and withdrawal: letter sent by SSC if no communication received from local offices – FSC termination notification – Blocking certificate holders MSC update: Reason for suspension, new reference to standard MSC General Certification Requirements version 2.4.1 ASC Farm: management of suspension in case of multi-site certification	E. Gruber	S. Ter Horst	Sep 9, 2020
2.10	Appendix FSSC clarified to comply with FSSC V5	R. Gomez	S. Ter Horst	Dec 13, 2019
2.9	Update in § 2 Withdrawal of certificate	E. Gruber	CER MS Committee	Dec 13, 2019
2.8	Precision about the management of suspension in case of ICC/CL or LAO; simplification of the process in case of withdrawal. Update regarding the new version of MSC General requirements Ver 2.4.1 (And ICC replaced by Hub) and MSC&ASC CoC suspension withdraw review form added	E. Gruber	P Jeanmart	Nov 6, 2019
2.7	Addition of appendix 6 related to Data Protection Certification Scheme	Working group ICC	P. Jeanmart	Jan 15, 2019
2.6	Management on suspension for MSC ASC CoC, and update regarding the new version of ASC Certification and Accreditation Requirements Version 2.1 And MSC General Certification Requirements version 2.2	E. Gruber	F. Joly de Brésillon	May 23, 2018
2.5	Clarifications on reasons for suspension in §1.1	S. Ter-Horst	F. Gomes	Apr 12, 2018
2.4	Appendix for FSSC scheme added	E. Gruber	F. Joly de Brésillon	Mar 23, 2018
2.3	Additional appendix 2 FSC: timeline for suspension (12 months or 18 if justified, surveillance audit if suspended 18 months, necessary modifications to formal certification documents, public information and authorizations for use of FSC trademarks	E. Gruber	F. Joly de Brésillon	Feb 8, 2018
2.2	Additional appendix 4 for MSC - ASC CoC scheme	X. Lagadec	E. Gruber	Apr 20, 2017
2.1	Procedure revamped to include technical review in suspension process	R. Sharma	P. Jeanmart	Dec 19, 2016
1.2	Amended rules for communication to AB in §2	S. Reemers	P. Jeanmart	Aug 3, 2016
1.1	Clarified instructions in § 1	F. Boigelot	P. Jeanmart	Feb 22, 2016

Suspension is part of certification decision process



Procedure "Complaints and Appeals"



Template "Client Suspension Control Form"

For additional instructions that apply, see below per product:

1. AS EN 91X0 services (9104/1 as accreditation standard)
2. FSC
3. MSC - ASC CoC
4. FSSC
5. Data Protection Certification Scheme
6. TL 9000
7. SA8000

This document defines generic instructions applicable to all schemes and products.

Some products and services require additional instructions, defined in separate documents. Please, refer to the list below:

QHSE	Transportation	Enterprise Risk Management	Energy Sustainability &	Social Responsibility	Food / Feed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ none 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Aerospace ▪ IATF 16949 ▪ IRIS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ none 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ FSC ▪ RSPO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ MSC ASC CoC

1 Suspension of certificate

1.1 Reasons for suspension

There are three main reasons for suspension:

1. Suspension initiated by BVC as a result of one of these situations:
 - There is a persistent failure of the client's management system to meet certification requirements – this includes effectiveness of management system;
 - A major NCR is raised during a surveillance audit and not closed within the specified time frame or during an on-site follow up audit, which indicates that insufficient action was taken by the client to solve raised non-conformities;
 - Non-submission of an acceptable corrective action plan for minor NCRs within the defined time frame;
 - Failure to accept a surveillance audit within the specified period defined by the program;
 - Improper use of BVC logo was discovered and has not been resolved effectively by the client after notification by BVC;
 - Non-payment of audit fees;
 - The certified client has voluntarily requested a suspension.
2. The client may request a voluntary suspension because of system change or deterioration that is expected to result in major NCRs at the next routine surveillance. BVC shall require necessary corrective actions and continuance of the routine surveillance plan to document the actual situation. After the audit, the client has 180 days to solve any NCR, a special surveillance shall then be arranged.
3. In some cases, the suspension can be a reduction of scope if the standard requirements are not met in some parts of the client management system. This shall be done in line with the standard requirements and following the normal decision and certificate issuance processes.

1.2 Suspension process

The decision of suspension shall be made by the International Competence Centre (ICC), the (Regional) Critical Location ((R)CL) or the Local Certification Entity (LCE) for a particular accredited scheme. The suspension letter documents the decision and shall be sent to the client and evidence for the same maintained.

For schemes managed through ICCs or RCLs, suspension may be initiated by the CL or Performing Country (PC) Local Technical Manager (LTM), but the decision to enforce suspension and/or subsequent removal/withdrawal shall only be authorized by the ICC or RCL.

For schemes where the local certification entity is a CL, the suspension can be initiated and decided by the LTM.

Suspensions are recorded on the Client Suspension Control Form, unless otherwise specified for specific scheme.

Once suspension is approved, the local certification entity shall then issue a suspension letter to the client. A copy of the suspension letter and subsequent withdrawal or revoke issued to the client shall be submitted to ICC or RCL, as appropriate.

For UKAS and ANAB accredited certifications, a copy of the suspension letter and subsequent withdrawal or revoke issued to the client shall be submitted to the BVCH SAS UK Branch mailbox (bvchasasukbranch@bureauveritas.com).

The period of suspension, which is usually not more than six months, shall be displayed in the suspension letter, and shall be monitored by the LTM.

Suspension letter shall be sent with acknowledgement of receipt.

During the period of suspension, the certificate is temporarily invalid, and the client shall not promote or advertise its certification. Unless the suspension is lifted and the certificate validity is reinstated, recertification or transfers shall not be performed.

If a certificate is recorded in Siebel, the process of suspension is also managed through Siebel.

Client Suspension Control Form should be submitted to ICC or RCL within 10 days of due date of suspension. ICC or RCL will approve the suspension after review. Effective date of suspension shall be same as of approval date. Once the suspension letter is issued to client, a copy of same shall also be submitted to ICC or RCL.

Initially suspension period should be for three months. Once initial three months are over and the suspension needs to be extended due to valid reasons, the same process should be followed for suspension extension for another three months. Same form should be used for suspension extension. Once the suspension extension letter is issued to client, a copy of same shall be submitted to ICC or RCL.

1.3 Suspension lifting

The total suspension period shall not exceed six months, within which another special audit shall be arranged to review the situation. This depends on the reason for suspension (e.g., non-closure of earlier audit NCRs, serious customer complaint, etc.). The suspension period shall be properly managed by the local certification entity. Therefore, it is expected that there shall be regular recorded communication with the client. Generally, the first suspension should be for three months and subject to further extension for 3 months. If it is demonstrated that client is acting to clear non-conformities, but has not completed effective implementation, it is possible for the Lead Auditor to recommend an extension on the initial suspension period.

If it can be demonstrated that the client follows requirements, and reason for suspension is eliminated, the suspension shall be lifted, and regular routine surveillance plans shall be re-instated.

If, in the opinion of the Lead Auditor conducting the special surveillance, the client has been unwilling or unable to clear the non-conformity, withdrawal of certificate shall be recommended to LTM. LTM reviews any special surveillance report.

Lifting of a suspension is a decision process, therefore, for schemes managed through ICCs or RCLs, all information to support the lifting of a suspension shall be sent to the respective ICC or RCL for approval before a suspension is lifted.

Client Suspension Control Form should be submitted to ICC or RCL within 10 days of due date of suspension lifting. ICC or RCL will approve the suspension revoke after review. Effective date of revoke shall be same as of approval date. Once the suspension revocation Letter is issued to client, a copy of same shall be submitted to ICC or RCL.

2 Withdrawal of certificate

Withdrawal of certificate shall be initiated only when it is apparent that corrective action output, including suspension, does not bring compliance with the requirements.

The LTM shall make a written notification to the client's senior executive, requesting the return of certificates issued and accompanying logos.

Claims to certification made on company websites, advertising material etc. shall also be removed. A website check shall be made by the local certification entity.

The client shall be notified of BVC Appeal and Complaint Process and advised that an appeal may be raised within four weeks of the said notification. Records of this activity shall be maintained.

The LTM shall notify any other BVC subsidiary, holding accreditation for a certificate issued to the client in question, at this stage that withdrawal of that certificate has been enforced. This means that for UKAS and ANAB accredited certifications, a copy of the withdrawal letter shall be sent to the BVCH SAS UK Branch mailbox (bvchasasukbranch@bureauveritas.com).

Contract shall be cancelled.

Where a client has one certificate with multiple standards, based on the reason for withdrawal the local certification entity shall decide if the certificate is reissued with the standards not affected by the withdrawal.

E.g., Joint ISO 9001/ISO 14001 certificate, ISO 14001 withdrawn, no impact on ISO 9001 management system, certificate reissued for ISO 9001.

If a certificate is recorded in Siebel, the process of withdrawal is also managed through Siebel.

Client Suspension/Withdrawal Control Form shall be submitted to ICC or RCL for certificate withdrawal purpose. ICC or CL/LAO will approve the withdrawal of certificate after review. Effective date of revoke shall be same as of approval date. Once the withdrawal letter is issued to client, a copy of same shall be submitted to ICC or RCL.

3 Timelines of the suspension/revoke/withdrawal processes

Request of suspension/revoke/withdrawal must be submitted to ICC or RCL within 10 days from due date.

Concerned ICC or RCL shall process these requests within maximum 72 hours.

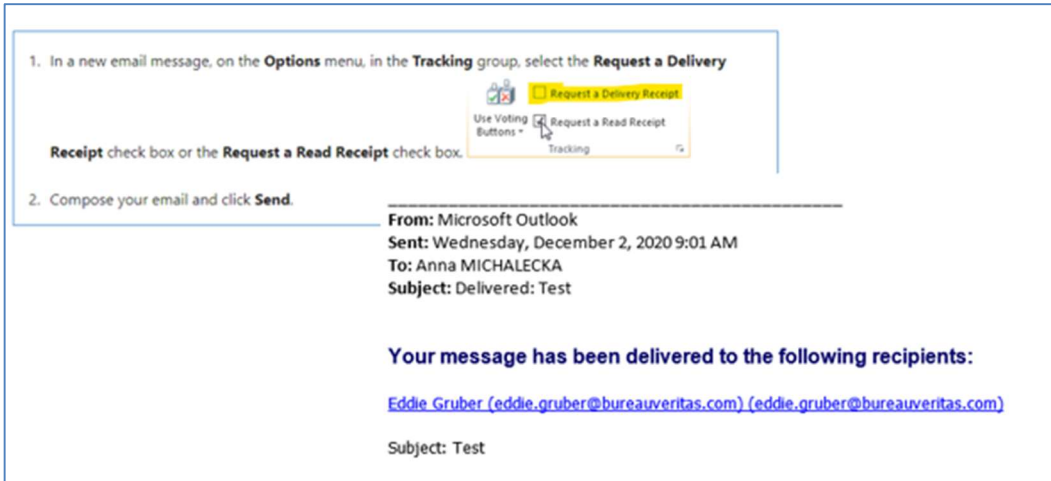
If request is delayed, approval is required from the LCE Certification Manager, and it must be reported as internal incident by ICC or RCL as initiator and LCE LTM as incident owner.

Even if such submissions are delayed, first suspension period shall be calculated from due date and shall not exceed 90 days. Suspension extension and withdrawal dates shall also be the dates from when it is due and not the actual date of decision.

Data of repeat defaulters on account of delayed submissions will be analysed by TQR for further action and even may lead to internal suspension of a LCE.

4 Acknowledgement of letters

When we send any letter of suspension or withdrawal, we must be sure that the letter has been received by the client. If the letter is sent by email, the option to receive a delivery receipt must be activated, and the evidence of receipt must be kept.



5 Cancellation of the contract

Cancellation of the contract may be self-initiated or enforced by BVC and shall be undertaken in accordance with the provisions of the contract.

In all cases, every reasonable effort shall be made by BVC to preserve a contract with a complaining client, or a client found to be non-compliant, but genuine, in its intent to take necessary corrective actions.

If the contract is cancelled at the client's request, the LTM shall acknowledge cancellation in writing to the client and request that certificates and logos be returned.

If the contract is cancelled the client's Senior Executive shall be advised in writing at the same time as the withdrawal of the certificate.

In either of the above cases the client shall be requested to return all certificates and logos.

Notification shall also be made to BVC Oversight bodies as required (e.g., IATF).

If appeal is upheld and certification is reinstated, the original certificate cycle and validity is maintained.

6 91X0 services

This defines additional instructions for suspension and withdrawal of aerospace certificates.

The accredited entity shall:

- Manage the process
- Update OASIS database when 91X0 certificates are suspended or withdrawn.

The CB shall perform the update within 14 calendar days to reflect any change in certification status.

7 FSC

This defines additional instructions for suspension and withdrawal of FSC certificates. The decision to suspend or withdraw a certificate are taken by the Hub, and for CoC, a specific task is created in the workflow tool and assigned to the authorized person.

When the decision has been done, the Siebel and the FSC database's information are also updated. For client blocked by FSC, the status 'Suspended and Blocked' or 'Terminated and Blocked' will be indicated.

The templates to be used are the following:

- FSC Notification Letter Suspension
- FSC Notification Letter Termination Withdrawal
- FSC Notification Letter Transfer

7.1 Suspension

The FSC certificate may be suspended for a maximum period of 12 months (upon justification and at the discretion of Bureau Veritas Certification the timeline may be increased to eighteen (18) months to allow the client to correct nonconformities).

Possible reasons of suspension:

Criteria	Process initiated	Process initiated by		Date of effective suspension
		CoC	FM	
Absence of a valid License Agreement for the FSC Certification Scheme (FSC-STD-20-001 §4.3.17)	When information received	Local office	Local office	+ 10 calendar days
Major non-conformities not implemented within the maximum timeframe (FSC-STD-20-001 §4.3.18)	30 days before the deadline	SSC	Hub	Date of major NCR closure (*)
Audit surveillance not performed on-time (FSC-STD-20-001 §4.7.1)	30 days before the deadline	SSC	Hub	Date the audit must be done (*)
Occurrence of five (5) or more major nonconformities in a surveillance audit	When information received	Local office or SSC	Local office or Hub	+ 10 calendar days
Refusal to pay FSC AAF Fees (FSC-STD-20-001 §1.4.5)	When information received	Local office	Local office	+ 10 calendar days
Refusal to pay all specified fees and costs in a timely manner (SF05 part 2)	When information received	Local office	Local office	+ 10 calendar days
Investigation conducted by FSC and/or ASI reveals that there is clear and convincing evidence that your company deliberately made a false claim (ADVICE-40-004-18)	When information received	Hub	Hub	+ 10 calendar days
More than 2 false claims with negligence within a 5-year period (ADVICE-40-004-18)	When information received	SSC	Hub	+ 10 calendar days
Transfer audit not done within three (3) months of the agreed transfer date (FSC-PRO-20-003 §3.2f)	30 days before the deadline	SSC	Hub	Date of agreed date of transfer (*)
Failure of a group evaluation (FSC-STD-20-007 §8.19)	When information received		Hub	+ 10 calendar days

(* the day of effective suspension, the situation on Workflow tool has to be checked again; in case of changes, the process will be cancelled)

A suspension notification will be prepared by the entity indicated on the table, using the template FSC Notification Letter Suspension. This notification is sent to HUB for review. Once the suspension is approved (copy SSC), the notification is sent by the local office (copy SSC) to the Client and the evidence that the Client has received the notification letter is recorded in CMX, which can be client's written acknowledgement of receipt, a letter sent back with the agreed conditions or the delivery receipt from the email service.

SSC will then update the certificate status in FSC database together with effective date and reason of suspension within three (3) business days of suspension decision.

If SSC has not received any feedback from the LO about the information sent to the CH, the letter will be sent by SSC to the CH the day the suspension starts, after a final agreement of the Hub.

Specific requirement of FSC CoC Group or Multi-site Certification Suspension

BVC shall result in suspension of the entire certificate, if Five (5) or more major non-conformities are issued to the Central Office of a Group or Multi-site certification. BVC shall result in suspension of the Participating Site, if Five (5) or more major non-conformities are issued to the particular Participating Site of a Group or Multi-site certification.

Certificate reinstatement

To reinstate a certificate, an audit is planned to assess the corrective action implemented and verify that the client:

- hold a valid 'License Agreement for the FSC Certification Scheme', which is not suspended by FSC;
- Be compliance with all applicable FSC normative requirements;
- Correct identified non-conformities within the maximum period;
- Fully implement all actions required to correct non-conformities;
- Continue to pay all certification costs and fees;
- Undergo surveillance as determined by certification contract with BVC (if the certificate has been suspended for more than twelve (12) months)

If it is demonstrated that the client has acted to clear the non-conformities, with effective implementation, it is possible for the Lead Auditor to recommend the certification reinstatement. The audit report holding the reinstatement recommendation shall be transmitted to Hub office to be evaluated, following the certification decision process.

BVC Hub office shall not lift suspension of an FSC certificate that has pending major non-conformities.

BVC may reinstate certification after suspension if all major nonconformities have been corrected; and in cases where certification has been suspended for more than twelve (12) months, a surveillance audit has been conducted.

If certification is reinstated after suspension or if the certification scope is reduced as a condition of reinstatement, BVC shall make all necessary modifications to formal certification documents, public information and authorizations for use of FSC trademarks.

7.2 Withdrawal

The FSC certificate may be withdrawn with following conditions:

Criteria	Process initiated	Process initiated by		Date of effective suspension
		CoC	FM	
Intentionally or through negligence discredit or damage the reputation of FSC AC or one of its subsidiaries or of associated organizations (License Agreement for the FSC Certification Scheme § 13.4.2)	When information received	Hub	Hub	+ 10 calendar days
Intentionally or through negligence discredit or damage the reputation of Bureau Veritas Certification (GP01)	When information received	Hub	Hub	+ 10 calendar days
Suspension not lifted after the maximum period of suspension (FSC-STD-20-001 §4.7.5)	30 days before the deadline	SSC	Hub	Suspension end date (*)
Refusal to pay FSC AAF Fees (FSC-STD-20-001 §1.4.5)	When information received	Local office	Local office	+ 10 calendar days
Violation of one or more elements of the Policy for the Association of Organizations with FSC (License Agreement for the FSC Certification Scheme § 13.4.3)	When information received	Hub	Hub	+ 10 calendar days
More than 2 false claims with negligence within a 5-year period (ADVICE-40-004-18)	When information received	SSC	Hub	+ 10 calendar days
Investigation conducted by FSC and/or ASI reveals that there is clear and convincing evidence that your company deliberately made a false claim (ADVICE-40-004-18)	When information received	Hub	Hub	+ 10 calendar days

(* the day of effective suspension, the situation on Workflow tool has to be checked again; in case of changes, the process will be cancelled)

A withdrawal notification will be prepared by the entity indicated on the table, using the template FSC Notification Letter Withdrawal. This notification is sent to HUB for review. The Hub can decide to withdraw the certificate, or to extend the period of suspension. Once the withdrawal is approved (copy SSC), the notification is sent by the local office (copy SSC) to the Client and the evidence that the Client has received the notification letter is recorded in CMX, which can be client's written acknowledgement of receipt, a letter sent back with the agreed conditions or the delivery receipt from the email service. SSC will update the status of the certificate in the FSC database of registered certificates together with the effective date and reason of withdrawal within three (3) business days of the withdrawal.

If SSC has not received any feedback from the LO about the information sent to the CH, the letter will be sent by SSC to the CH the day the withdrawal starts, after a final agreement of the Hub.

7.3 Transfer

In case of transfer, the certificate will be transferred the day of the agreed date of transfer. SSC prepare 2 weeks before the end of the period of validation the notification, using the template FSC Notification Letter Transfer.

The local office will send the signed notification letter to the client copy SSC, and keep record of the acknowledgment of receipt.

If SSC has not received any feedback from the LO about the information sent to the CH, the letter will be sent by SSC to the CH the day the transfer starts.

7.4 Lift of the blockage (according the FSC document ADVICE-40-004-18)

The lifting of the blockage can be initiated if the client has implemented corrective and preventive actions, and applied the requirements for nonconforming products (as specified in clause 1.6 of FSC-STD-40-004) and other applicable conditions established by FSC to remedy the shortcomings.

The corrective and preventive actions shall be verified by a special audit. If the result of the audit is positive, a specific request will be sent to FSC in order to lift the blockage by the Hub.

8 ASC and MSC schemes

This defines additional instructions for suspension and withdrawal of MSC certificates.

For CoC schemes, the Review template to be used is MSC&ASC CoC suspension withdraw review.

The email / notification templates to be used are the following:

- MSC&ASC reminder for audit due date
- MSC&ASC reminder for invoice due
- MSC&ASC Suspension Notification for audit not done
- MSC&ASC Suspension Notification for late payment
- MSC&ASC Suspension Notification for CoC breakdown

8.1 Reasons of Suspension

A company has to be suspended for any of the below reasons:

- Contractual and administrative reason (late payment of invoices, delay in the audit schedule due to unforeseen circumstances)
- MSCI or ASC has withdrawn a certificate holder's licence or other agreement to use the trademark, and following that, the certificate holder does not comply with MSCI instruction within stated timeframes (clause 7.4.9.i) or ASC instruction
- The client failed to inform BV within 2 days of not meeting the MSC Third-Party Labour Audit Requirements. (clause 7.4.9.j).
- Where BV finds cause for suspension against 7.4.9.j, the period of suspension is set for a minimum of 3 months or until the client follows the specific requirements on forced and child labour in the CoC Standard, whichever period is longer. (clause 7.4.14).

For CoC schemes:

- If the client still didn't answer to BV Certification after a MSC or ASC's requests to submit records of certified material (major NCR raised for that purpose, and not closed with 15 days)
- There is a fault that affects the integrity of the certified supply chain (clause from 7.4.9.a to 7.4.9.g)
- There has been a demonstrable breakdown in the Chain of Custody caused by the client's actions or inactions.
- The client has sold products as certified (or under-assessment) which are shown not to be certified (or under-assessment), except for the following cases:
 - The Hub shall not suspend a CFO CoC certificate if the conditions of CoCCR 9.2.2.1 are met.
 - The Hub shall not suspend a Group CoC certificate if the requirements in CoCCR 9.4.4.1 or 9.4.6.1 are met
- The client cannot demonstrate that products labelled or sold as certified are in fact certified.
- The client has not satisfactorily addressed any major non-conformity within the specified timeframe.
- For group CoC clients, the client has had a group critical non-conformity raised.
- For CFO CoC clients, the client has exceeded the reject number of major non-conformities as described in CoCCR 9.3.1.
- The Hub shall suspend a stratum of a CoC certificates as per CoCCR 9.4.6.1a for Group certificates (clause 7.4.11)
- The Hub shall suspend an individual site of a CoC Default Standard multi-site certificate if he can determine the reason for suspension to be site-specific without an impact on the other certified sites (clause 7.4.12).
- For CFO CoC clients, the client has a major non-conformity raised against the same clause in the CFO CoC Standard at a follow-up site visit as described in CoCCR 9.3.2.3.
- The client does not agree to allow the ICC to hold an audit within the required timeframe specified in the CoCCR 11.3.1.4 for surveillance and CoCCR 11.4.1.1 for recertification.
- The MSC or MSC International has suspended or withdrawn a certificate holder's licence or other agreement to use the trademarks and the certificate holder does not comply with MSC or MSC International instruction within stated timeframes

For MSC Fishery:

- If the client is no longer conforms to the MSC Fisheries Standard, or
- Has not made adequate progress towards addressing conditions, or
- Does not provide information to allow verification that conditions are being addressed, or
- Does not provide information requested by the Hub within 90 days of being requested to do so, or
- Requests to enter a period of self-suspension.

If the client still didn't answer to BV Certification after a MSC or ASC's requests to submit records of certified material (major NCR raised for that purpose, and not closed with 15 days).

8.2 Management of Suspension

8.2.1 CoC Schemes

8.2.1.1 General description of the process

The template "MSC&ASC CoC suspension withdraw review" is used by the Hub.

In the case the broken is intentionally or systematically:

- The minimum period of suspension is 6 months
- There is not a maximum period of suspension (when the defect is not a systematic cause).
- Bureau Veritas will include as part of the verification activities, the monitoring of the activities of the company

Where BV finds cause for suspension against 7.4.9.j, the ICC shall set the period of suspension for a minimum of 3 months or until the client follows the specific requirements on forced and child labour in the CoC Standard, whichever period is longer (clause 7.4.14).

Before to accept the Effectiveness of Corrective Action Plan, Bureau Veritas performs an on-site verification audit and at a later date, performs a second on-site unannounced audit.

If a client identifies and reports an issue of mislabelling or non-conforming product (as in 7.4.9.b and 7.4.9.c), the certificate shall not be suspended subject to the client having followed the non-conforming product procedure in the CoC Standard. The Hub shall verify the effectiveness of these corrective actions within 30 days of first notification about the issue.

If any relevant clauses on non-conforming product in the CoC Standard have not been followed, or the corrective actions are not determined to be effective (no corrective Action Plan, or effectiveness of CAP within 30 days), the Hub shall suspend the certificate and follow 7.4.11 onwards.

The certification is cancelled for a time of 2 Years if:

- The certified status is updated on Ecert as Withdrawal.
- Bureau Veritas can't have any contractual agreement with the client (this involves the company may not reapply for Chain of Custody certification for 2 years from the date of certificate withdrawal, according to MSC CoC 7.4.11c General Requirement)

8.2.1.2 Management of suspension

Technical reviewer and certification manager review and sign the review form, in order to decide the suspension. Then, the Hub communicate to the Local Office the Decision of Suspension using the MSC&ASC Suspension Notification email, and instruct to the company on the Corrective Action Plan Management (7.4.12c), as well as update the Database.

The Hub:

- Informs the MSC of any potential impacts of the suspension on relevant Chains of Custody of which it is aware.
- Informs the certificate holder of the suspension and instruct them:
 - Not to sell any products as certified from the date of suspension.
 - To advise all sites of the suspension (if relevant).
 - To advise existing and potential customers in writing of the suspension within 4 days
 - To keep records of advice to customers.
 - Not to make any claims of certification from the day of suspension
- Determine whether the certificate holder has had their certificate suspended under 7.4.9.b for a second time within the period of validity of the certificate. In this case the Hub shall:
 - Immediately withdraw the certificate
 - Instruct the client that they may not hold a Chain of Custody certificate for 2 years from the date of certificate withdrawal.
 - Record the cause of the certificate withdrawal in the scheme database, specifically noting that the client may not reapply for 2 years from the date of withdrawal.

The Hub also:

- Records the suspension on the scheme database within 4 days of the suspension, and upload any evidences of communication to the client in E-Cert.
- Suspends the certificate until such time that the cause of the suspension has been fully addressed, or for a 6-month minimum period if relevant as in 7.4.10.1.a.
- Instructs the certificate holder to provide a documented corrective action plan for addressing the cause of suspension, which is acceptable to the ICC as being able to address the cause(s) for suspension, within 30 days from the date of suspension.
- Updates MSC database within 4 days of the suspension decision.

Hub instructs as well to local office on the steps to keep during this period of suspension, as the adequate management of the customer is key to guarantee the adequate suspension management

8.2.1.3 Corrective action plan

The Hub:

- Requests a corrective action plan within 30 days (calendar) including a binding timeframe.
 - If the certificate holder submits an acceptable corrective action plan within 30 days, instruct the certificate holder to implement the corrective action plan.
 - If the certificate holder does not submit an acceptable corrective action plan within 30 days, withdraw the certificate.
- Verifies the effectiveness of the corrective action once informed by the certificate holder of its completion.

A corrective action plan must be established by the customer to correct the deviations of the NC opened during the audit.

The auditor then reviews the CAP, and confirms if this CAP is able to address the causes of the suspension. In such a case, the local office (under ICC approval), shall instruct the company to implement the CAP.

8.2.1.4 Verification of CAP effectiveness

Once the CAP has been accepted, Bureau Veritas verifies the effectiveness of the CAP.

In case there is an intentional and/or systematic cause, to keep below actions:

- The company will be asked to provide a submission to evaluate the effectiveness (On Auditor decision)
- The auditor will have to perform an on-site verification audit; the audit plan must be prepared by Hub, together with HO and the local BV office concerned.
- At later, the auditor will perform a second on-site unannounced audit

8.2.1.5 Lifting of suspension

After those activities of verification, the Hub will organize a meeting with HO and the local BV office in order to decide if the suspension has to be lifted or not. The conditions to lift the suspension are the following:

- Evidences that describes how the cause of suspension has been satisfactorily addressed.
- Statement confirming the reinstatement of the certificate.

When the Hub has verified that the CoC certificate holder has addressed the reason for suspension, the Hub:

- Reinstates the certificate.
- Produces a report documenting the following and upload on the scheme database:
 - Keep the evidence that describes how the cause of suspension has been satisfactorily addressed.

- A statement confirming the reinstatement of the certificate
- If the verification of the effectiveness of the corrective actions to address the reason for suspension in the required timeframe cannot be concluded, the ICC withdraws the certificate.

The certificate status is updated on Ecert as “Valid”.

8.2.1.6 Certificate withdrawn

The Hub records its decision on the scheme database within 4 days as “Withdraw” and upload any evidences of communication to the client in E-Cert.

The Hub communicates to the Local Office that the “Withdraw status” has been raised and informs the company about this withdrawn status.

8.2.2 MSC Fishery

8.2.2.1 General description of the process

If a fishery certificate is suspended, the Hub sets the effective date for the fishery certificate suspension 30 days after its decision to suspend, and:

- Informs the certificate holder and the MSC of the suspension.
- Announces the suspension by completing and uploading the MSC Notice of Suspension Template to the scheme database, to be published on the MSC website, and records the decision on the scheme database.
- Confirms the client’s ability to segregate fish based on date of capture.
- Instructs the certificate holder:
 - Not to sell any fish caught on or after the date of suspension as MSC certified. Fish caught prior to the date of suspension may continue to be sold after the date of suspension as MSC certified if the Hub confirms the client’s ability to segregate fish based on date of capture.
 - To advise client group members of the suspension (if relevant).
 - To advise existing customers in writing of the suspension within 4 days of the notice of suspension.
 - To keep records of advice to customers.
 - Not to make any claims of MSC certification on or after the date of suspension.
- Instructs the certificate holder to provide a documented corrective action plan for addressing the cause of suspension, which is acceptable to the Hub as being able to address the cause(s) for suspension, within 90 days from the date the Notice of Suspension is published on the MSC website.
- The corrective action plan shall include a binding timeframe.
- If the certificate holder submits an acceptable corrective action plan within 90 days:
 - Instructs the certificate holder to implement the corrective action plan.
 - Upload to the scheme database to be published on the MSC website: a statement confirming their acceptance of the corrective action plan, and the client’s corrective action plan.
- If the certificate holder does not submit an acceptable corrective action plan within 90 days, the Hub shall withdraw the certificate.

On the date of suspension, the Hub:

- Suspends the certificate until the cause of the suspension has been fully addressed.
- Verifies the effectiveness of the corrective action, once informed by the certificate holder of its completion.

8.2.2.2 Management of the suspension

When the ICC has verified that the fishery certificate holder has addressed the reason for suspension, the Hub:

- Reinstate the certificate.
- Produce a report documenting the following:
 - Evidence that describes how the cause of suspension has been satisfactorily addressed.
 - A statement confirming the reinstatement of the certificate.

If a suspended fishery certificate is reinstated, the ICC records the decision on the scheme database and uploads a report in conformance with 7.4.5.b to the scheme database to be published on the MSC website.

8.2.2.3 Withdrawal of certification

The ICC withdraws the certificate if verification of the effectiveness of the corrective actions to address the reason(s) for suspension in the required timeframe cannot be conducted.

If a certificate is withdrawn, the ICC records its decision on the scheme database on the date of withdrawal, and:

- Uploads an announcement of withdrawal to the scheme database to be published on the MSC website.
- Instructs the client to advise existing customers in writing of the certificate withdrawal within 4 days of the withdrawal.
- Instructs the certificate holder not to sell any fish caught on or after the date of withdrawal as MSC certified.
- Fish caught prior to the date of withdrawal may continue to be sold after the date of withdrawal as MSC certified if the ICC confirms the client’s ability to segregate fish based on date of capture in conformance with 7.4.3.c.
- Instructs the certificate holder not to make any claims of MSC certification on or after the date of withdrawal.

8.3 ASC Farm schemes

The Hub:

- Informs the ASC of any suspensions or withdrawals of certificates within five (5) days of the decision using FORM 5
- Updates the status of the certificates and related information on the ASC website.

The date of the suspension or withdrawal shall be the date the decision was taken by the Hub, whereas the date of cancellation shall be the date that the certificate holder informs the Hub and/or the ASC of its decision on cancellation.

If a certificate is suspended or withdrawn or cancelled, the Hub immediately instructs the certificate holder:

- Not to sell any product harvested from the date of suspension or withdrawal or cancelled as ASC certified or with the ASC logo
- To advise existing or potential customers in writing of the suspension/withdrawal/ cancellation within four (4) calendar days of the suspension or withdrawal or cancellation date

Specific procedure for multi-sites certificates:

The decision to suspend or withdraw a site for the scope of multi-site certification follows the same process (form 5 used, ASC Website updated)

9 FSSC

This defines additional instructions for suspension and withdrawal of FSSC certificates.

9.1 Withdrawal or suspension, Bureau Veritas Certification shall:

- Change immediately the status of the certified organization in the FSSC 22000 Portal after the decision was made
- Change the status of the certificate in Siebel.
- Inform the organization in writing of the withdrawal or suspension decision within three (3) days after the decision was made and confirm the decision;
- Instruct the organization to take appropriate steps in order to inform its interested parties through various forms of communication such as advertising and product labelling where applicable.
- If a critical NCR is issued then the certificate must be suspended for a max period of 6 months. IF NCR is not closed then the certificate is withdrawn.
- In the event that the FSSC 22000 certified organization that refuse entry of the audit team during the unannounced audit. The suspension will be lifted and the certificate will be reinstated upon successful passing of an unannounced audit. The sanction shall be confirmed within 3 working days. If access to auditor is denied, the client will be liable for all costs.
- Timeframe after the date of the refusal.

The status of the FSSC certificate must be “suspended” or “withdrawn”.

9.2 Scope reduction, Bureau Veritas Certification shall:

- Change immediately the status of the certified organization in the FSSC 22000 database after the decision was made
- Change the status of the certificate in Siebel.
- Inform the organization in writing of the scope change within three (3) days after the last day of the audit or any other intervention and confirm the decision.
- Instruct the organization to take appropriate steps in order to inform its interested parties through various forms of communication such as advertising and product labelling where applicable.

In case of suspension lifting, Bureau Veritas Certification shall:

- Change immediately the status of the certified organization in the FSSC 22000 database after the decision was made
- Change the status of the certificate in Siebel.
- Inform the organization in writing of the suspension decision lifting within three (3) days after the decision was made and confirm the decision.

The certificate will be withdrawn if the unannounced audit is not conducted within a six-month timeframe.

The status “Cancelled” in FSSC database is dedicated to those events:

- The certificate is valid but is transferred to another CB. The transfer can be the result of the fact that the CB has stopped the FSSC 22000 activities or that the certified organization has (by own choice. Voluntary) decided to transfer the certificate to another CB. The old certificate remains in the database and has the status “cancelled”. The new certificate issued by the new CB has the status “valid”.
- The organization has voluntarily decided to terminate the FSSC certificate. The certificate is invalid but this is not the result of a sanction.
- A new certificate is issued because of changes on the certificate.

10 BV Data Protection Certification Scheme

This defines additional instructions for suspension and withdrawal of BV Data Protection Certification Scheme certificates.

10.1 Suspension

A certificate has to be suspended for any of the below reasons:

- Contractual and administrative reason (late payment of invoices, delay in the audit schedule due to unforeseen circumstances, refusal to perform unannounced audit, or special audit for product traceability and/or complaints verification)
- A request from a Supervisory Authority or a Data Protection Authority reporting non mitigated data breaches
- The initiation of a jurisdictional claim (litigation in front of the court, legal prosecution) by data subjects, Competent Authority, Consumers or Professional associations ...
- The client has not satisfactorily addressed any major non-conformity within the specified timeframe.

The certificate shall be suspended within 5 days. The client as well as the competent Authority shall be informed.

The ICC requests a corrective action plan (CAP) within 30 days (calendar) including a binding timeframe.

The auditor then reviews the CAP, and confirms if this CAP is able to address the causes of the suspension. In such a case, the local office (under ICC approval), shall instruct the company to implement the CAP.

Once the CAP has been accepted, Bureau Veritas verifies the effectiveness of the CAP through an on-site verification audit. After those activities of verification, ICC will organize a meeting with HO and the local BV office in order to decide if the suspension has to be lifted or not. The conditions to lift the suspension are the following:

- Evidences that describes how the cause of suspension has been satisfactorily addressed.
- Statement confirming the reinstatement of the certificate.

When the ICC has verified that the client has addressed the reason for suspension, the ICC reinstates the certificate.

In case this special audit does not take place or reveals non-effectiveness of the corrective action plan the certificate shall be withdrawn.

10.2 Certificate withdrawal

In case of a client being stated as guilty (litigation in front of the court, legal prosecution) by a jurisdiction or fined by a competent authority its certificate shall be withdrawn within 5 days. The client as well as the Competent Authority shall be informed.

11 TL 9000

11.1 Additional Reasons to place a TL 9000 certification into suspension

- Late data submissions – this is done automatically per the late data submissions rules implemented in the Measurements Repository System.
- If it is identified that a certification has one or more product categories misclassified as per the rules defined by the PDR improvement team, the certification will be placed in suspension and all data submissions in the mis-classified product category will be put in 'Not Certified to TL 9000' status. This means the data will not be included in the PDRs.
- If a certification's private profile is edited to remove all locations and/or all product categories, then the certification will be immediately placed in suspension.
- Non-payment of annual membership dues.

11.2 Decertification of TL 9000 certifications on suspension.

If 90 days after a certification is placed on suspension corrective action has not been taken to remove the suspension, then that certification will become decertified. This means the certification profile will not be visible to the public. The certification essentially goes back to pre-certification status.

11.3 Removing a TL 9000 certification from suspension.

Bureau Veritas can revoke a suspension and update RMS with the exception of nonpayment of annual membership dues. TIA QuEST Forum removes suspensions for non-payment of annual membership dues.

12 SA8000

12.1 Suspension request

SSC to initiate the suspension request by filling up the Client Suspension Control form and forward it to ICC for approval via Workflow Tool. There can be many reasons for suspension including Critical NC raised, Major NC not closed in 90 days, Minor NC not closed in 180 days. Surveillance audit not scheduled within the permissible window limit or a serious breach of ethical standards and compliance to SA 8000 certification requirements .

12.2 Steps for Suspension (Initiated by SSC)

In case of suspension of a SA8000 certificate, SSC shall fill the client suspension control form (last version template is available in CER-MS) 10 days prior to the deadline of NC closure / Surveillance audit to be performed and send to ICC for approval and inform the ICC and Bureau Veritas Certification LO, Technical Manager and Team Leader* via email.

Within these 10 days if SSC receives the NC closures / Surveillance audit performed date confirmation, the suspension task in Workflow Tool will be considered as invalid and the task will be terminated

If no response is received from local country SSC suspends the client certificate and updates the SAAS list on the 11th day. SSC to ensure that approval is received from ICC via Workflow Tool before updating the data base. SSC will send the approved client suspension control form to Bureau Veritas Certification LO and ICC in copy. The LO need to send the suspension letter to the client and either keep SSC in blind copy or forward that email to SSC as an evidence of Client Acknowledgement.

12.3 Steps for Suspension (Initiated by LO/Auditor/Client)

BVC local office shall prepare the client suspension control form (last version template is available in CER-MS) and send the request to SSC. Who will create suspension request task in Workflow Tool and send it to ICC for approval. Once approved, SSC

will send the suspension control form to BVC LO and ICC in copy. The LO shall send the suspension letter to the client and either keep SSC in blind copy or forward that email to SSC as evidence of Client Acknowledgement.

12.4 Steps for Suspension Revocation (Initiated by LO/Auditor/Client)

To revoke the suspension BVC LO shall fill client suspension control form and send the request to SSC who will upload the client suspension control form in Workflow Tool and send it to ICC for approval. Once approved SSC will send the approved client suspension control form to BVC LO and ICC in copy. The LO shall the suspension letter to the client and either keep SSC in blind copy or forward that email to SSC as evidence of Client Acknowledgement. SSC shall complete the suspension control form in case the local office fails to provide the information for revocation or withdrawal of the certificate

12.5 Steps for Withdrawal of Certificate

SSC shall send an alarm to LO, Technical Manager and Team Leader* via email 10 days before the end of the suspension period to take necessary actions to revoke suspension.

If no actions taken by the country till the end of suspension period, SSC will move the task at "Final Decision" stage in Workflow Tool for ICC to decide further action.

SSC will send the approved client suspension control form to Bureau Veritas Certification LO and ICC in copy. The LO shall send the withdrawal letter to the client and either keep SSC in blind copy or forward that email to SSC as evidence of Client Acknowledgement.

All above steps are repeated in case the LO prepares the suspension control form and send the request of direct withdrawal to SSC.

If registered post is not used, an e-mail evidence of mail sent or return receipt of the mail received by the client can be kept as record. The period of suspension (which is usually not more than 3 months - this shall be defined by the ICC in the suspension letter) shall be monitored by the LTM of the local country. Actions taken during the period of suspension (records of telephone calls, meetings etc) shall be recorded on the Suspension Control form to provide a record of activity.

This process must be followed by all countries except Italy who as a Critical Location is free to follow this process independent of ICC India.