

TPS 62

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Management of Extraordinary Events or Circumstances Affecting UKAS Accredited Certification Bodies and their Certified Organisations

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Changes since last edition

Contact details amended (*section 5*). Other minor editorial changes. No change to technical content.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this document is to define the UKAS policy regarding actions to be taken by Accredited Certification Bodies in the event of any emergency situation that prevents access to certified clients, such that planned activities, such as surveillance or recertification visits, cannot take place at that time. This includes events preventing access to specific clients; general access to a geographical area (including critical locations); or directly affecting the Certification Body (CB)'s ability to operate.
- 1.2 This Technical Policy takes account of IAF Informative Document *IAF ID 3: 2011 Management of Extraordinary Events or Circumstances Affecting ABs, CABs and Certified Organizations*.

2. Definitions

2.1 Extraordinary event or circumstance:

A circumstance beyond the control of the organisation; commonly referred to as "Force Majeure" or "act of God". Examples are war, strike, riot, political instability geopolitical tension, terrorism, crime, pandemic, flooding, earthquake, malicious computer hacking, other natural or man-made disasters.

(Taken from IAF ID3: 2011)

3. Requirements Placed on the Certification Body

3.1 Initial Actions

For each affected case, the Certification Body (CB) will need to evaluate the risks presented to the organisation and to the certification concerned.

In the first instance it will be necessary to evaluate the extent of any impact of the situation on the ability of the certified organisation to continue to operate in accordance with the certification requirements. The CB will need to take account of the extent of the impact on the certified organisation or product and to determine whether it is possible for certification to be maintained under the circumstances. The outcome of the review must be recorded.

CBs issuing UKAS certificates in the affected area must inform their UKAS Assessment Manager of the overall size of the problem for their UKAS accredited activities within 1 month of the event. In particular the CB should inform their Assessment Manager of any cases that, taking into account projected timescales for the event preventing access to the area, may result in a high risk to the integrity of the certificate concerned. The information provided should include;

- Scope and extent of the affected services and business areas and sites.
- Number of affected clients.
- When the CB will be able to function normally within the current scope of accreditation.
- Any methodologies that will be used to maintain confidence in the certified clients systems during the period that access cannot be gained.

3.2 Surveillance Activities

Surveillance activities must be completed as quickly as possible once the current emergency status has been lifted and as soon as travel to restricted areas is possible and businesses are operational. Wherever possible the surveillance must take place within the current certification year. Subsequent surveillance activities should continue in line with the original programme.

Extended periods between surveillance visits may result in a need for additional surveillance visits for the remainder of the certification cycle.

In the meantime CBs should consider other means of monitoring that may be available such as telephone interviews, internet based assessments and desktop reviews of submitted documentation.

3.3 Re-certification

UKAS will allow a maximum 6 months overrun for recertification audits. CBs should record where this has been applied, along with all pertinent supporting information.

If the recertification assessment cannot be undertaken within 6 months the certificate should be suspended and a new initial assessment will be required.

3.4 Records

The CB will maintain full records of actions taken, together with the rationale behind decisions on actions taken. These records shall be made available for UKAS to review upon demand.

4. UKAS Actions

- 4.1 The UKAS Assessment Manager will complete and record a detailed review of the information provided by the CB.
- 4.2 As part of the above review, it may be necessary to liaise with UKAS Technical Focus Persons and Scheme Owners where specific sector schemes are involved.
- 4.3 If the CBs' responses and plans meet the intent and specific requirements of this policy and demonstrate control of the situation by the CB, this will be confirmed with the CB. If the responses are not acceptable, or require clarification, this will be discussed with the CB and the necessary clarification will be obtained.
- 4.4 The Assessment Manager will maintain communications with the CB to track any developments and ensure that the plans presented by the CB are completed.

5. Contact

- 5.1 For further information about this Technical Policy Statement, contact UKAS:

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Accredited Certification Bodies should also contact your Assessment Manager.