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If you should require any further information then please do not hesitate to contact us. We will be please to help you.

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The certification of a service standard based on ISO 29993 consists of the offer and contract phase, the audit preparation, performance of the Stage 2 audit, issue of certificate and surveillance/recertification.

The auditors are selected by the Head of the Certification Body of TÜV NORD CERT GmbH in accordance with their approvals for the particular branch and their qualification.

1. CERTIFICATION PROCEDURE

The certification audit is generally performed at the client's site.

1.1. Audit Preparation

Following signing of the contract, the auditor prepares for the audit based on the questionnaire filled in by the customer and on the calculation sheet, and discusses and agrees the further procedure with the organization to be audited. During preparation for the surveillance or recertification audit, the organizations to be audited have the duty to report fundamental changes in their organisational structure or changes in procedure to the certification body.

1.2. Certification Audit

The customer receives an audit plan at the beginning of the audit. The plan is agreed with the customer in advance. The audit begins with a kick-off meeting, in which the participants are introduced to each other. The procedure to be followed in the audit is explained. Within the framework of the audit at the organization's premises, the auditors review and assess the effectiveness of the service standard which has been installed. This is based on the standard DIN ISO 29993.

The task of the auditors is to compare the practical application of the service standard with the documented processes and to assess them in relation to fulfilment of the requirements of the standard. This is achieved by means of questioning of the employees, examining the relevant documents, records, orders and guidelines and also by visiting relevant areas of the organization as well as the observation of a course / further and advanced training.

A final meeting takes place at the end of the on-site audit. At least those employees take part in the audit who have management functions within the organization and whose areas were included in the audit.

The lead auditor reports on the individual elements and explains the positive and negative results. If nonconformities are established, the lead auditor can only recommend issue of the certificate to the organization after acceptance or verification of the corrective actions by the audit team, see Section "Management of nonconformities". Attention must be drawn to this fact in the final meeting.

The audit is documented in the audit report and is completed by means of further records (e.g. audit questionnaire and hand-written records).

1.3. Award of Certificate

The certificate is issued when the certification procedure has been reviewed and released by the head of the certification body or his deputy or nominated representative. The person who reviews and releases the procedure may not (i.e. is not permitted to) have participated in the audit. The certificate can only be

issued when the nonconformities have been corrected, i.e. when the corrective actions have been accepted or verified by the audit team.

Normally the certificates are valid for 3 years.

2. SURVEILLANCE AUDIT

Surveillance audits must be conducted once per year during the period of validity of the certificate with the exception of the years when a recertification audit is performed.

The first surveillance audit following the initial certification shall be carried out by the date relevant for scheduling, at the latest 12 months after the date of the certification decision.

All the following surveillance audits are planned on the basis of the planning-relevant date and must be conducted at least once per calendar year.

Surveillance audits including the verification of measures for the correction of nonconformities, audit reporting and the certification decision must be completed no later than 3 or 4 months (in case of nonconformities) from the last day of the audit.

The client receives a report following the surveillance audit.

3. RECERTIFICATION AUDIT

The audit for recertification has to be conducted before the expiry date of the certificate. A tolerance period of max. 6 months is then available for evaluation of the corrective actions and for any necessary re-audits and also for the decision on recertification within the framework of the release procedure. In the recertification audit, a review of the documentation of the service standard of the organization is undertaken, as well as an on-site audit. Here, the results of the previous surveillance programme(s) over the term of the certification have to be taken into consideration. All the requirements of the standard are audited.

The audit methods used in the recertification audit correspond to those used in a Certification audit.

4. EXTENSION OF SCOPE AUDIT

If the scope of the existing certificate is to be extended, such as the addition or omission of courses/continuing education and training, this can be done through an extension audit.

An extension audit can be conducted within the framework of a surveillance audit, a recertification audit or at a time which is set independently. The period of validity of a certificate does not change as a result. Exceptions must be justified in writing.

4.1. Short Notice Audits

It may be necessary to perform audits at short notice to investigate complaints, in response to changes or as follow up on suspended clients. In such cases,

- the certification body shall describe the conditions under which these short notice audits are to be conducted,
- it is not possible to object to members of the audit team.

5. TRANSFER OF CERTIFICATION FROM OTHER CERTIFICATION BODIES

A transfer of certificates is not planned.

However, the concrete procedure is determined by the subject leader in each individual case and is based on following points of this document.

A "Pre-Transfer-Review" must be conducted by a competent person from the certification body which is taking over the certificate. This review generally consists of an examination of important documents and a visit to the client.

After positive completion of the pre-transfer review, TÜV NORD CERT, as the accepting certification body, can carry out the transfer of certification.

The normal certification decision making process shall be followed, including the requirement that the personnel making the certification decision are different from those carrying out the pre-transfer review. TÜV NORD CERT, as the accepting certification body, shall take the decision on certification before any surveillance or recertification audits are initiated.

The certification cycle of the transferred certificate is based on the previous one. TÜV NORD CERT shall establish the audit programme for the remainder of the certification cycle.

Where the accepting certification body is required to treat the client as a new client as a result of the pre-transfer review, the certification cycle shall begin with the certification decision.

Certificates which have been suspended, or where there is risk of suspension, may not be taken over.

6. MANAGEMENT OF NON-CONFORMITIES

An analysis of the causes must be performed for each nonconformity and corresponding corrective actions must be implemented. The organization has the duty, depending on the seriousness of the nonconformity, to inform the audit team within 6 weeks after the last day of the audit either with regard to the corrective actions which have been laid down and the dates for their implementation or that the corrective actions have been implemented. If this period is not observed, the audit is considered not to be successful, i.e. not to be passed. No certificate can be issued, or an existing certificate is withdrawn