General Rules for the certification of Management Systems

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Technical rules

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CHAPTER 1
GENERAL

1.1

These Rules describe the procedures applied by RINA for the certification of Management Systems and how organisations can apply for, obtain, retain and use this certification, as well as its possible suspension and revocation.

For any issues not covered in this document, reference should be made to "GENERAL CONTRACT CONDITIONS GOVERNING SYSTEM, PRODUCT AND STAFF CERTIFICATION" which can be downloaded at www.rina.org.

1.2

RINA issues certification in accordance with UNI CEI EN ISO/IEC 17021:2011 to organisations whose Management System has been recognised as conforming to the all the requirements of the reference standard or regulatory document.

For every standard relative to a Management System, RINA publishes specific rules integrating the requirements of these rules.

1.3

Certification is open to all Organisations and does not depend on whether they belong to an association or group.

RINA applies its current certification fees and guarantees fairness and uniformity of application.

RINA is entitled to refuse requests for certification by organisations that have been subject to, or whose production or activities have been subject to, restriction, suspension or proscription by a public authority.

When RINA decline an application, the reasons shall be communicated to the client.

1.4

The certificate issued by RINA pertains exclusively to a single organisation, where organisation means a group, company, enterprise, body or institution, or parts and combinations thereof, whether associated or not, public or private, with its own functional and administrative structure.

For organisations with more than one operating unit, each operating unit can be defined as an organisation.

1.5

The procedures envisaged in these rules are also applied when Management System certification is requested under the provisions of the RINA Rules for the Classification of Ships or other rules applicable to the organisation; in such cases, any additional requirements for the System contained therein are to be complied with.

1.6

The participation of observers in audit is agreed in advance between RINA and the organization.

Aiming to verify that the evaluation methods adopted by RINA are compliant with the reference standards, the Body guarantor of issued certificates (Accreditation Body) may request:

- the participation of its observers to the audits carried out by RINA,

- the execution of audits at the certified Organization, directly making use of its own personnel.

The participation of observers to the audits and/or any audit directly carried out making use of Accreditation Body's personnel must be previously agreed upon between RINA and the Organization.

If the Organization does not grant its approval, the validity of the certificate is suspended until the audit is approved, for up to 3 months.

After the three months' period has elapsed, in the absence of any audit approval, the certificate will be revoked.

The auditing modalities adopted by Accreditation Bodies are written in specific rules and/or communications/circulars available on their websites.

The Organization shall make the documentation taken as reference by RINA during the previous audits available to the Accreditation Body.

1.7

The terminology used in these Rules complies with UNI CEI EN ISO/IEC 17000:2005.

CHAPTER 2
REFERENCE STANDARD / CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

2.1

Organisations wishing to obtain RINA certification for their Management System must first and henceforth satisfy the requirements of the reference standard or regulatory document and those indicated in the following paragraphs of this chapter, together with any additional elements indicated by the accreditation bodies (e.g.: ACCREDIA / Sincert "RT" documents).

During its accreditation activities, in fact, RINA must abide by certain reference documents issued by the accreditation bodies. These documents can be obtained from RINA or directly from the accreditation bodies (consulting their Internet sites, for example).

2.2

In particular, in order to obtain Management System certification, the organisation must:

2.2.1   Have established a Management System and kept it active in total compliance with the requirements of the reference standard or regulatory document. The management system is considered as being fully operative when:

- the internal audit system has been fully implemented and its effectiveness can be demonstrated;
- at least one management review of the system has been carried out and documented;
- the objectives and processes required to obtain results;
- these processes have been developed;
- monitoring activities and measurements have been performed and registered;
- actions for continuous improvement have been implemented.

2.2.2 Have prepared documented information:

- required by the reference standard;
- deemed necessary by the Organization to ensure the effectiveness of the management.

All the information received from the customer organisation is treated as confidential.

2.3

Conformity of the Management System with the reference standard is verified by means of an audit programme comprising.

- an initial audit in two stages,
- a surveillance audit in the first year
- a surveillance audit in the second year
- a certification renewal audit in the third year.

The following are considered when establishing the audit programme: the size of the organisation, the scope and the complexity of the Management System, the products and processes, the level of effectiveness of the Management system and previous audit results, and any certificates already issued to the customer or other audits already performed.

CHAPTER 3
INITIAL CERTIFICATION

3.1

Organisations wishing to obtain RINA certification for their Management System must provide RINA with their main organisation/production data and site location by filling in all parts of the "Informative Questionnaire" form, available at www.rina.org, and sending it to RINA which will use it to prepare a quotation.

In particular, the informative questionnaire requires information to be provided on:

- the requested scope of certification;

- the standard or standards to which the Organisation wishes to be certified, and any admissible exclusions;

- the general characteristics of the Organisation;

- the number of permanent and temporary sites subject to certification, including the name and addresses of the physical location/s and the relative activities performed;

- company processes and relative dedicated resources;

- any relationships with other larger companies;

- all the processes outsourced by the organisation that may affect conformity with requirements;

- any certificates already obtained;

- use of any consulting services connected with the management system.

This information has to be provided by an authorized representative of the applicant organization.

On the basis of this information, RINA prepares a suitable offer.

3.2

Prior to performing the audit, RINA makes sure:

a) there is sufficient information concerning the applicant organisation and its management system to perform the audit;

b) certification requirements are clearly established and documented and are sent to the applicant organisation;

c) every difference of interpretation between RINA and the applicant organisation has been eliminated;

d) RINA has the skills and capacity to perform certification activities;

3.3

If organisations accept the offer, they must make their application official by sending RINA the specific form attached to the offer, indicating the reference standard and, if relevant, any other reference standard document according to which certification is requested.

On receipt of the application for certification and the relative annexes and having ensured they are complete, RINA will send the organisation written acceptance of its application.

The organisation's request, which makes specific mention of these rules, and its acceptance by RINA, contractually formalise the relationship between RINA and the organisation, and the applicability of these rules and the specific rules applicable to the scheme for which certification is required.

The agreement signed between RINA and the organisation includes:

- the initial audit comprising two stages and, if the outcome is successful, the issue of the certificate;

- subsequent surveillance and recertification audits;

- any additional services specified in the offer, including the pre-audit, if requested by the organisation.

3.4

Together with or following the certification request, the Organisation must make the following documents available to RINA:

- the documented information required by the reference standard and / or deemed necessary by the Organization to ensure the effectiveness of the management system;

- copy of the Chamber of Commerce registration certificate or an equivalent document, certifying the existence of the organisation and describing the activity it performs;

- organisation chart;

- site plan/s;

- latest Management Review;

- internal audit planning;

- list of the main applicable laws and/or rules (to the product/service supplied or required for the correct application of the Management System);

- list of current sites, describing the activities performed there, where applicable.

RINA may ask, at its discretion, to examine other documents, apart from those previously mentioned, that are considered to be important for assessing the Management System.

RINA examines the above documents for conformity with the reference standard and these Rules.

3.5

The initial audit comprises two stages:

- Stage 1 audit, which can be performed:

  - partly in the office and partly at the organisation's site
  or
  - entirely at the organisation's site

- Stage 2 audit – on site.

During the initial audit, the organisation must demonstrate that the Management System has been fully operational and that it effectively applies the system.

3.6

After the satisfactory completion of the initial audit and after validation by RINA, a Certificate of Conformity with the reference standard, valid for three years, is issued for the Management System in question.

The certificate contains the name and address of the company, the address of the operative site/s included in the certification, the scope of certification, the IAF code relative to the organisation's product, the date of initial issue, the current date of issue and the date of expiry.

The validity of the certificate is subject to the result of the subsequent annual surveillance audits and the three-yearly recertification of the Management System.

The frequency and extension of the subsequent audits for maintaining certification are established by RINA on a case-by-case basis by drawing up a three-year audit plan which it sends to the organisation.

For details on the management and validity of the certificates of conformity issued by RINA, see chapter 7.

CHAPTER 4
MAINTAINING VALIDITY OF THE CERTIFICATE

4.1

The organisation must ensure its Management System continues to comply with the Reference Standard or regulatory document.

4.2

The organisation must record any claims and the relative corrective action implemented and must make these records available to RINA together with the corrective action taken to address the non conformities made during the periodic audits.

4.3

RINA performs periodic audits on the Management System in order to evaluate whether it remains compliant with the requirements of the reference standard, according to the methods described in Chapter 6.

4.4

RINA also reserves the right to perform additional audits with respect to those established in the three-year programme, without notice, at the organisation:

- if it receives claims or reports, considered to be particularly significant, relative to the non-compliance of the Management System with the requirements of the reference standard and of these Rules;

- in relation to changes taking place in the organisation;

- to organisations whose certification has been suspended.

If the organisation refuses without a justified reason, RINA may decide to suspend/withdraw certification.

If RINA considers the claims and reports to be justified, the cost of the supplementary audit will be charged to the organisation.

4.5

The validity of the certificate is confirmed following the successful outcome of the surveillance audit.

4.6

In the case of major non-conformities (type A findings) or minor non-conformities (type B findings) whose number in the opinion of the audit team is such as to impair the correct functioning of the system, the organisation will be subject to a supplementary audit within the time limits established by RINA in relation to the importance of the non-conformities and, in any case, not more than three months after the end of the audit in order to check the effectiveness of corrections and of the proposed corrective action.

If the major non-conformities are not eliminated within the established times or if the minor non-conformities do not assure the supplied products/services satisfy customer requirements and applicable law, RINA may suspend certification until these major non-conformities have been eliminated and, in any case, as specified in chapter 11.

All costs relative to any supplementary audits deriving from shortcomings in the Management System will be charged to the organisation.

CHAPTER 5
RECERTIFICATION

5.1

For the recertification audit of the Management System, performed every three years, the organisation must contact RINA about three months before the date indicated on the three-year audit plan in its possession, and send an updated and complete copy of the Informative Questionnaire (available at www.rina.org) in order to allow RINA to plan the activity and agree on the date of the recertification audit.

5.2

The recertification audit sets out to confirm maintenance of the conformity and effectiveness of the overall Management System and is mainly based on an audit to perform on-site, generally, using the same criteria as the stage 2 audit.

5.3

The recertification procedure must be successfully terminated before the expiry date indicated on the certificate. This date cannot be extended by RINA.

Consequently, the recertification audit must be successfully terminated in sufficient time to allow RINA to approve the recertification proposal and reissue the certificate within the above date (at least one month before the expiry date indicated on the certificate).

If the organisation fails to abide by the above deadlines and does not obtain the reissued certificate within the date of expiry, the certificate must be considered as expired starting from the day after the date of expiry indicated on the certificate.

Organisations intending to obtain certification following the expiry of the certificate must present a new application and, generally, repeat the entire initial certification procedure.

5.4

In the case of major non-conformities or minor non-conformities whose number in the opinion of the auditing team is such as to impair the correct functioning of the management system, the organisation must effectively implement the relative corrections and corrective actions before the date of expiry of the certificate of conformity.

This means that RINA must perform the supplementary audit to verify the elimination of these non-conformities (major or minor) in sufficient time for the subsequent issue of the certificate.

The established times within which the supplementary audit must be performed are indicated in the recertification audit report.

The auditing team may decide to perform the supplementary audit on site or on the documents, depending on the type of corrective action involved.

All costs relative to any supplementary audits deriving from shortcomings in the Management System will be charged to the organisation.

5.5

Following the satisfactory completion of the recertification audit, the review of the management system results during the certification period and of any claims received from certification users, RINA reissues the certificate of conformity.

Confirmation of recertification approval by RINA with consequent issue of the certificate is sent to the organisation in writing.

For details on the management and validity of the certificates of conformity issued by RINA, see chapter 7.

CHAPTER 6
PERFORMANCE OF AUDITS

6.1 GENERAL

6.1.1

The dates of the surveillance audits are agreed with the organisation.

An "Audit Plan" is drawn up for each audit according to ISO 17021: 2011 which is sent to the customer organisation in good time.

RINA also uses the Audit Plan to inform the Organisation of the names of the auditors and technical experts appointed to perform the audit, chosen on the basis of the skills required to perform the audit; the Organisation may object to the appointment of these auditors provided it gives a justified reason.

The audit has the following objectives:

a) Determination of the conformity of the client's management systems , or part of it, with audit criteria;

b) Evaluation of the ability of the management system to ensure the client organization meets applicable statutory, regulatory and contractual requirements;

NOTE: A management system certification audit is not a legal compliance audit.

c) Evaluation of the effectiveness of the management system to ensure the client organization is continually meeting the specific objectives;

d) As applicable, identification of areas for potential improvement of the management system.

The Audit Plan indicates the tasks assigned to each auditor. In particular, for each organisation:

a) the structure, policy, processes, records and relative documents relative to the Management system must be examined and checked;

b) it must be established whether these satisfy the requirements applicable to the scope of certification;

c) it must be established whether the processes and documented information are drawn up, implemented and kept efficient, in order to nurture trust in the Organisation's management system;

d) every inconsistency between the customer's policy, objectives and goals and the result obtained must be reported to the customer in order to allow it to take appropriate action.

6.1.2

Each auditor shall be accompanied by a guide appointed by the organization to facilitate the audit performance and that can have the following responsibilities:

a) establishing contacts and timing for interviews;

b) arranging visits to specific parts of the site or organization;

c) ensuring that rules concerning site safety and security procedures are known and respected by the audit team members;

d) witnessing the audit on behalf of the client;

e) providing clarification or information as requested by an auditor

6.1.3

A written report is prepared for each audit indicating any major non-conformities (type A findings), minor non-conformities (type B findings) and improvement recommendations (type C findings). [1]

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[1] *Major non-conformities are:*
- *failure to fulfill of one or more requirements of the management system standard;*
- *non-compliance with one or more requirements of these Rules,*
- *a situation that could lead to the delivery of non-conforming products or products which do not comply with applicable legislation;*
- *situations that could cause serious shortcomings in the management system or reduce its capacity to ensure the control of processes or products/services.*

minor non-conformities are:
- *a situation that could reduce the customer's capacity of delivering a conforming product,*
- *situations that could cause minor shortcomings in the management system or not reduce its capacity to ensure the control of processes or products/services.*

A copy of the report is sent to the customer organisation; the original audit report is owned by RINA.

The organisation may indicate any reservations or comments concerning the findings by the RINA surveyors in the relative space in the audit report.

6.1.4

After analysing the reasons for any major or minor non-conformities indicated in the above report, the Organisation must, within the data indicated on the report, inform RINA of its proposals for handling the non-conformities, as well as the corrective action required and the dates envisaged for its implementation.

The organisation fill in the relative forms in use the "Member Area" of the RINA website (www.rina.org) to submit handling and corrective action proposals.[2]

RINA will review the correct proposals submitted by the customer organisation and communicate acceptance via the RINA website.

6.1.5

In the event of major non-conformities (type A findings) the certification process is suspended; in the event of minor non-conformities the number of which, in the audit team's judgement, may compromise the efficiency of the management system, the certification process is also suspended.

In these cases, a supplementary audit must be performed within three months in order to check the effectiveness of corrections and of the proposed corrective action; if this audit is successful the certification process will be resumed.

The auditing team may decide to perform the supplementary audit on site or on the documents, depending on the type of corrective action involved.

All costs relative to any supplementary audits deriving from shortcomings in the Management System will be charged to the organisation.

Recommendations are:
- *suggestions for improving the management system that do not directly concern the requirements of the reference standard.*

[2] *If it is impossible to access the Internet, the organisation may fill in a paper form and send it to the pertinent RINA Office.*

6.2 INITIAL CERTIFICATION AUDITS

The initial certification audit is divided into two stages.

6.2.1 – Stage 1

The stage 1 audit sets out to:

- audit the customer's Management System documents;
- assess the location and special conditions of the customer's site and exchange information with the customer's staff in order to establish the level of preparation for the stage 2 audit;
- review the customer's state and understanding of the standard, especially as regards the identification of key performances or significant aspects, processes, objectives and operation of the Management System;
- obtain the necessary information concerning the scope of the Management System, the processes and the location/s of the customer, including the relative legal and regulatory aspects and conformity with same;
- review the allocation of resources for the stage 2 audit and agree on the details of the stage 2 audit with the customer;
- develop stage 2 audit planning, acquiring sufficient knowledge of the Management System and of the activities performed on the customer's site, as regards possible significant aspects;
- assess whether the internal audits and management review have been planned and performed and whether the level of implementation of the Management System proves that the customer is ready for the stage 2 audit.

The outcome of stage 1 of the audit is communicated to the Organisation by sending a copy of the audit stage 1 report which, among other things, indicates any findings, including those that could be classified as non-conformities (major or minor) during stage 2 of the audit and therefore considered critical for obtaining certification.

The actions taken by the organisation to eliminate these findings are generally checked during the stage 2 audit referred to in point 6.2.2.

Any findings classified as critical by the technicians who identified them during stage 1 of the audit, most be eliminated before proceeding with stage 2 at the organisation's site; if stage 1 and stage 2 are performed consecutively, stage 2 must be rescheduled and postponed.

At least part of stage 1 will be performed at the organisation's site/s.

6.2.2 – Stage 2

Stage 2 of the audit must be performed within 6 months from termination of stage 1, otherwise stage 1 must be repeated. In special cases, RINA may decide to extend this limit to 12 months.

Stage 2 of the audit is performed at the organisation's site in order to check the correct and effective implementation of the Management System.

Before conducting the stage 2 audit, RINA sends an audit plan to the site/s of the organisation giving a detailed description of the activities and the requirements for conducting the audit.

If the organisation performs its activities on more than one operative site, the audit will be performed according to criteria established by RINA and communicated to the Organisation.

The stage 2 audit is performed by qualified RINA auditors, on the basis of the stage 1 audit and of the documented information prepared by the organisation for the proper and effective implementation of the management System.

The stage 2 audit comprises the following main points:

- an initial meeting with the Top Management, and when appropriate, with those who are responsible for the functions or processes to be audited, in order to explain and confirm the audit objectives and audit methods indicated in the audit plan;

- verification that the corrective action relative to the findings identified during stage 1 of the audit have been effectively implemented;

- an inspection of the production site/s of the organisation to verify conformity of the Management System with the reference documents and its complete implementation;

- a closing meeting to present the audit conclusion.

In the event of major non-conformities (type A findings) the certification process is suspended; in the event of minor non-conformities the number of which, in the audit team's judgement, may compromise the efficiency of the management system, the certification process is also suspended.

In these cases, a supplementary audit must be performed within three months in order to check the effectiveness of handling and of the proposed corrective action; if this audit is successful the certification process will be resumed.

The auditing team may decide to perform the supplementary audit on site or on the documents, depending on the type of corrective action involved.

All costs relative to any supplementary audits deriving from shortcomings in the Management System will be charged to the organisation.

If this deadline is exceeded, the Organization's Management System shall be submitted within a period of six months from the end of stage 2 audit, to an audit using the criteria (modalities and time) required for recertification

After the six-month period has elapsed and the situation still remains negative, RINA reserves the right to definitively close the certification file and charge the time spent and expenses incurred up to that moment. In such a case, if the organisation wishes to proceed with RINA certification, it must submit a new application and repeat the certification procedure.

In special cases, the above time limits may be modified at the request of the organisation, if considered justified by RINA.

6.3 SURVEILLANCE AUDITS

6.3.1

RINA performs periodic audits on the Management System in order to evaluate whether it remains compliant with the requirements of the reference standard, at least once every 12 months. The date within which the audits must be performed is indicated in the three-year audit plan in the organisation's possession.

This programme may be modified by RINA according to the results of the previous surveillance audits.

Deviations surveillance audits beyond these limits, for justified reasons, can not be longer than three months, must be agreed in advance with RINA and be recovered at the first subsequent audit.

In any case, the first surveillance audit following initial certification must be performed within 12 months from the final date of the audit stage 2.

6.3.2

Surveillance audits are performed at the organisation's site/s, according to a three-year programme which enables each item contained in the reference standard according to which the Management System was certified to be audited at least once during the three years of validity of the Certificate, bearing in mind the documents as per point 3.4.

The following aspects will be considered during the surveillance audits:

a) internal audits and management reviews;

b) review of the action taken as a result of the non-conformities identified during the previous audit;

c) claims handling;

d) effectiveness of the management system as regards achieving of objectives;

e) progress of activities implemented to promote continual improvement;

f) continual operative control;

g) a review of any changes.

Details of the activities and instructions for performing surveillance audits at the site/s are described in the surveillance audit plan which RINA sends to the organisation before performing the audit.

6.4 RECERTIFICATION AUDIT

6.4.1

The recertification audit is performed at the organisation's site/s in order to confirm the continual conformity and effectiveness of the overall management system, as well as the continual relevance and applicability of the scope of certification. It mainly comprises an audit of a site normally performed using the same criteria as stage 2 of the audit.

In particular, the recertification audit comprises an on-site audit which considers, among other things, the following aspects:

- the performance of the management system in the certification period

- a review of the previous surveillance audit reports.

If significant changes have been made to the Management System or to the context in which the Management System operates, a stage 1 audit may be required.

The recertification audit must ascertain the following:

- the effectiveness of the overall Management System in the light of internal and external changes and its continual pertinence and applicability for scope of the certification;
- the commitment demonstrated in maintaining the effectiveness and improvement of the Management System in order to improve overall performance;
- if the effectiveness of the Management System contributes towards the pursuit of the organisation's policy and objectives.

CHAPTER 7
MANAGEMENT OF CERTIFICATES OF CONFORMITY

7.1

The certificate of conformity issued by RINA, which is the proprietary of the same, is valid for three years starting from the date of approval by RINA of the initial certification or recertification proposal.

7.2

From the moment of issue of the certificate by RINA, this and the relative three-year audit plan will made available to the organisation in the "Member Area" of the RINA website (www.rina.org). The organisation may therefore enter and download the above documents directly from this area of the RINA website.

If it is impossible to access the Internet, the organisation may request a hardcopy from the pertinent RINA Office.

7.3

The validity of the certificate, throughout the three years of validity, is subject to the results of the subsequent surveillance audits.

The certificate of conformity is reissued following the successful outcome of each recertification audit, as indicated in chapter 5 hereto.

The validity of the certificate may be suspended, withdrawn or relinquished in accordance with the contents of Chapters 11 and 12.

RINA directly publishes and updates the following on its website www.rina.org:

a)   the list of certified organisations;
b)   status of validity of the certificates issued, indicating valid, suspended or invalid for each certificate;

7.4

Where is foreseen, together with the certificate of conformity issued by RINA, the IQNet Certificate is also issued, according to the rules of IQNet.

The IQNet Certificate is valid only if accompanied by RINA certificate, which states the scope of the management system.

In the event that the RINA certificate is changed (see Chap. 8), suspended or revoked, (see Chap. 11) also IQNet certificate is suspended, canceled or revoked.

CHAPTER 8
MODIFICATION OF CERTIFICATION AND COMMUNICATION OF CHANGES

8.1

An organisation in possession of certification may request a modification or extension by presenting a new certification application, accompanied by the duly updated documentation indicated in point 3.4 RINA reserves the right to examine requests on a case-by-case basis and to decide the evaluation methods for the purpose of issuing a new certificate according to the "GENERAL CONTRACT CONDITIONS GOVERNING SYSTEM, PRODUCT AND STAFF CERTIFICATION" and the reference standard or regulatory document for the management system.

8.2

The organisation must promptly inform RINA of any changes in factors that may affect the capacity of the Management System to continue to satisfy the requirements of the standard used for certification.

This requirement concerns, for example, modifications to:

- the legal, commercial, organisational or ownership status;
- organisation and management (e.g.: key managers or technical staff, decision making process, change in number of employees.);
- contact addresses and sites;
- field of application of the activities covered by the certified management system;
- significant changes in the management system and processes.

RINA reserves the right to perform additional audits on the organisation if the modifications communicated are considered particularly significant as regards maintaining the conformity of the Management System with the requirements of the reference standard and of these rules or to review the economic conditions for the possible modification of the contract.

8.3

RINA promptly informs the organisation of every change in the reference standards or RINA certification rules.

CHAPTER 9
SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR MULTI-SITE ORGANISATIONS

9.1

If an organisation operates on more than one permanent site and a single certificate is required, audit activities can be performed by sampling the sites subject to audit, provided:

- The processes of all the sites are substantially of the same type and are performed using similar methods and procedures. If different processes are performed in different places, these must be connected (e.g.: manufacture of electronic components in one place, assembly of these components performed by the same Organisation in various other places);

- The management system is managed and administrated centrally and reviewed by central management.

The organisation must also demonstrate that the central office has established a management system compliant with the reference standard and that the entire organisation satisfies its requirements.

In particular, at least the following activities must be managed by the central function of the organisation:

- evaluation of training requirements;
- control and modification of documents;
- management review of the Management System;
- complaints management
- evaluation of the effectiveness of corrective and preventive action;
- planning and execution of internal audits and assessment of results;
- presence of different legal requirements.

Prior to the initial audit by RINA, the Organisation must have performed an internal audit on each site and verified the conformity of its management system with the reference standard.

9.2

If the organisation observes the previous requirements, RINA always checks the feasibility of sampling on all the sites and may decide whether to limit this sampling in the presence of:

- requirements connected with variable local factors;
- sectors or activities within the scope of certification;
- dimensions of the sites suitable for a multi-site audit;

- changes in the local implementation of the management system, such as the need to frequently use, in the sphere of the management system, plans concerning different activities or different contractual or regulatory systems;

- use of temporary sites.

For organisations providing services, if the sites in which the activities subject to certification are not all ready to be presented for certification at the same time, the organisation must promptly inform RINA which sites it wishes to be included in the certification and those that must be excluded.

9.3

On the basis of the information provided by the organisation, RINA establishes the applicable sampling plan.

This activity is generally performed during the audit process and may also be performed after the audit is completed at headquarters. In any case, RINA informs the central office which sites must be included in the sample.

9.4

RINA issues a single certificate with the name and address of the headquarters of the organisation. A list of all the sites to which the certificate refers is indicated in an annex or on the certificate.

The organisation may be issued with an extract of the certificate for each site covered by certification, provided it indicates the same purpose or a sub-element, and includes a clear reference to the main certificate.

9.5

For any non-conformities (major or minor) found on one site during audits, the organisation must assess whether these are due to shortcomings common to more than one site and, if so, it must adopt corrective action both at headquarters and at the other sites.

If, instead, the non-conformities (major or minor) and/or observations are not of the same type, the Organisation must provide suitable evidence and reasons for limiting its corrective follow-up actions.

If non-conformities are found even on just one site, the certification process is suspended for the entire network of listed sites, until these non-conformities have been corrected and, in any case, in accordance with the contents of point 11.1.

The Organisation may not exclude this/these site/s from the scope during the certification process to avoid the obstacle created by the existence of a non-conformity.

9.6

The organisation must inform RINA of the closure of any site covered by certification. If this information is not communicated, RINA may decide whether to proceed according to the contents of point 11.1.

Additional sites can be inserted in an existing certificate following surveillance or recertification audits or following specific extension audits.

CHAPTER 10
TRANSFER OF ACCREDITED CERTIFICATES

10.1

If an organisation with a valid certificate issued by another Management Certification Body that is party to the IAF/MLA mutual recognition agreement, wishes to transfer its certification to RINA, it must send RINA the "Informative Questionnaire" as per point 3.1, and copy of the of management system certificate.

RINA, after verifying that:

- the certificate is valid;

- the certificate is not suspended;

- accreditation of the Certification Body that issued the certificate is not suspended;

- the client's certified activities fall within the accredited scope of RINA;

- the organization has motivated the request of transfer

issue an offer for the transfer of certification.

If it accepts the economic offer, the organisation must send RINA the "Certification request" together with the following documents:

- Copy of the certification audit report or the last recertification audit report and of the subsequent surveillance audit reports;

- evidence of the corrective action taken related to the non-conformities issued during the previous audit, or the evidence of the review, acceptance and verification of the effectiveness by the previous Certification Body;

- the type and date of the next audit planned by the previous Certification Body;

- list of any complaints received and the relevant actions taken;

- the reasons for the certification transfer request;

- any observations or reports by national or local authorities;

The contract between RINA and the applicant is managed as indicated in paragraph 3.1, depending on the scope of the auditing activities.

After the satisfactory completion of the above activities, a Certificate of Conformity of the management system is issued which generally maintains the deadline established by the body which issued the previous certificate.

Generally speaking, surveillance and recertification audits are also performed according to the plan established by the organisation that issued the previous certificate.

In the case where the conditions for the transfer are not met, the transfer process can not be applied; if the organization intends to continue with the certification process will be evaluated using the criteria set out in Chapter 3, "INITIAL CERTIFICATION".

CHAPTER 11
SUSPENSION, REINSTATEMENT AND WITHDRAWAL OF CERTIFICATION

11.1

The validity of the certificate of conformity may be suspended as indicated in "GENERAL CONTRACT CONDITIONS GOVERNING SYSTEM, PRODUCT AND STAFF CERTIFICATION" and in the following specific cases:

- if the Organisation refuses to allow the scheduled audits to be performed at the required frequencies;

- if non-conformities are found in the management system which have not been corrected within the time limits established by RINA

- if the organisation does not observe the deadlines established for the communication of corrective actions, following non-conformities/observations indicated on the audit report;

- if the organisation has made far-reaching changes to its Site/s or moves to another site without informing RINA of such changes;

- if the Organisation has made modifications to its management system that have not been accepted by RINA;

- if the organisation has undergone important re-structuring and has not reported this to RINA;

- if it refuses or obstructs the participation in audits of the observers of an accreditation body;

- for evidence that the Management System does not guarantee the respect of the laws and regulations applicable to the supplied products/services, activity and/or site/s;

- if any justified and serious claims received by RINA are confirmed.

The organisation may also make a justified request to suspend certification, normally for not more than six months and in no case after the date of expiry of the certificate.

This suspension will be notified in writing, stating the conditions for re-instating certification and the date by which the new conditions are to be complied with.

Suspension of the validity of the certificate is made public by RINA directly on the website www.rina.org as indicated in point 7.3.

11.2

Reinstatement of certification is subject to verification that the shortcomings which led to the suspension itself have been eliminated. This is achieved by means of an analytical audit checking the compliance of the Management System with all the requirements of the reference standard.

It is notified to the organisation in writing and made public by RINA on its website www.rina.org as established in point 7.3.

11.3

Failure to fulfil the conditions as per point 11.2 above by the established date will lead to revocation of the Certificate of Conformity

Revocation of the certificate of conformity may be decided as indicated in "GENERAL CONTRACT CONDITIONS GOVERNING SYSTEM, PRODUCT AND STAFF CERTIFICATION" and in the following specific cases:

- when there are reasons such as those indicated in point 11.1 for suspension, which are held to be particularly serious;

- if the organisation stops the activities or services covered by the certified Management System for over six months as a rule;

- if the organisation does not accept the new economic conditions established by RINA due to a modification in the contract;

- for multi-site organisations, if the headquarters or one of the sites does not comply with the criteria required to maintain certification;

- for every other major reason, at RINA's discretion, such as the proven incapacity of the system to pursue its objectives of complying with legislative, contractual or product safety requirements.

Withdrawal of the Certificate of Conformity is notified in writing to the Organisation and made public by RINA as indicated in point 7.3.

Any organisation which, following revocation of its Certificate, wishes to be re-certified, must submit a new application and follow the entire procedure all over again.

CHAPTER 12
RENUNCIATION OF CERTIFICATION

A certified organisation may send formal communication of renunciation of certification to RINA, before the expiry of the certificate, including the case in which the organisation does not wish to or cannot conform to new provisions established by RINA.

Upon receipt of this communication, RINA starts the procedure for invalidating the certificate.

Generally speaking, within one month from the date of the communication, RINA updates the validity status of the certificate.

CHAPTER 13
CONTRACTUAL CONDITIONS

For contract conditions, the contents of the current edition of RINA document "GENERAL CONTRACT CONDITIONS GOVERNING SYSTEM, PRODUCT AND STAFF CERTIFICATION" apply.

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Technical rules