

Prot. DC2020OC125

Milano, 17/03/2020

To all accredited and applicant CABs
To associations of CABs
To all ACCREDIA assessors and experts

Object: ACCREDIA – Technical circular DC N°06/2020 – new dispositions with regard to the Coronavirus emergency

This circular replaces the technical circular DC n. 02/2020 and integrates the technical circular DC n. 04/2020. The modifications or additions to the text with respect to the technical circular DC n. 02/2020 are in red.

With regard to the measures approved by the government regarding the Coronavirus emergency, with the Law Decree DPCM of March 8, 2020 and the Law Decree of March 9, 2020 concerning the containment of the contagion, we draw your attention to the restrictions imposed on the movement of persons throughout Italy.

We consider it necessary to provide indications regarding the performance of assessment activities from the current date until the end of the emergency.

1) Assessments performed by ACCREDIA

The ACCREDIA assessments shall be conducted by remote assessment by means of ICT systems. This type of assessment involves inter-active communication between the ACCREDIA assessment team and representatives of the CABs such as online meetings, teleconferences, telephone or other electronic means. Operative aspects will be defined between ACCREDIA and the CABs during the planning of the assessment.

In exceptional cases which cannot be postponed and documented, on-site assessments may be performed, under agreement, and with the availability of all parties and in accordance with the legal requirements regarding distances between people and other required behaviour.

Assessment activities will be conducted by means of the application where possible of the guideline IAF ID 12: "*Principles on Remote Assessment*".

2) Audits performed by the CAB

Given the exceptional situation, we provide some useful operative information.

- 1) For all accreditation schemes managed by the Department of Certification and Inspection, reference must be made to the document IAF ID03 "[Management of Extraordinary Events or Circumstances Affecting ABs](#)", [CABs and Certified Organizations](#) for the management of the current crisis, taking into account eventual communications from scheme owners, and for the regulated/mandatory areas also any provisions issued by the competent authorities, contained in ministerial notes or provisions.
- 2) P For the performance of remote assessments, refer to the document IAF MD04 [Use of Information and Communication Technology \(ICT\) for Auditing/Assessment Purposes](#)
- 3) For conformity assessment activities in accordance with ISO/IEC 17021-1, ISO/IEC 17065, ISO/IEC 14065 and ISO/IEC 17020, during the current period it is considered acceptable

that remote assessments are performed, also for the entire duration of the assessment (in accordance with IAF MD 5, § 4.5 and with ISO/IEC 17021-1 and IAF MD-04), in cases where all the requirements and processes of the assessment are assessed by remote method, with the following specifications.

- 4) IAF has published a list of applicable dispositions for this emergency. The questions and answers can be consulted at <https://iaffaq.com/>. Please consult this website very carefully because there could be legally binding requirements for certification activities.
- 5) As a general rule, in accordance with the document IAF ID03, certification activities (e.g. surveillance and renewal) can be postponed in the voluntary area (e.g. all management systems, voluntary for product) for 6 months without loss of validity of certificates issued, unless other dispositions exist for specific schemes. Expired or expiring certificates during this emergency period may therefore be extended for a maximum period of 6 months.

F-Gas	<p>The above is applicable to assessments of new certifications and renewals for Fgas business enterprises, with the details given below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The CAB shall maintain and keep available for ACCREDIA a list of certifications and renewals carried out by remote assessment with the relative motivation evidence (e.g. the requests for renewal presented at least 60 days before expiry of the certificate). - In the records of remote assessments the CAB shall ensure that it has adequate evidence concerning the fulfillment of service requirements (especially regarding equipment and instruments and the related metrological confirmation). - The CAB commits to perform, during the first surveillance audit, the audit of a local unit of the company in accordance with the "Audit program" and "Renewal" of the accreditation scheme of the CABs for the issuance of the certification of companies performing activities in accordance with Reg. EC 304/2008 and with EU Reg. 2015/2067, approved by means of Directorial Decree on 29.01.2019
ETS	<p>For assessment activities regarding the communication of emissions for 2019 (EU ETS) reference is made to Resolution n. 18/2020 of the national committee for the management of the Directive 2003/87/CE and for support for the management of the activities of the Kyoto Protocol.</p>
EMAS	<p>For EMAS verification activities it is necessary to send a request for authorization to the EMAS Committee. Reference is made to the circular published on the ISPRA website.</p> <p>For on-site audits see the paragraph "certification schemes with direct verification of the on-site production processes".</p>
Food PRD (voluntary and regulated) and FSMS	<p>See the communications issued by the scheme owners and, for regulated areas, the provisions issued by the competent authorities.</p> <p>For all voluntary schemes which do not have indications from the scheme owners (e.g. ISO 22000, ISO 22005, private technical regulations etc.), see the provisions contained in the point "Certification schemes with a direct audit of the on-site production process".</p>

<p>Certification schemes with direct verification of the on-site production processes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In cases of initial assessments where it is necessary to perform a direct assessment of on-site production processes (e.g. site inspection for the scheme ISO 45001, assessment of the operative environmental activities against ISO 14001, site inspection at the client's location of the EPC contract for the ESCo scheme), it is possible to perform a part of the assessment by remote method or to postpone the remaining on-site part for 6 months with respect to the remote assessment. By means of the remote assessment it will be possible to immediately take a decision with regard to the certificate (e.g. granting of certification), even though the assessment was only partially conducted. - Surveillance and renewal: except as specified for IAF sector 28 (see next point), given the past knowledge and evaluation of the company, it is always possible to perform audits entirely by remote method with a focus on management processes and document sampling of activities, postponing to the next audit, the on-site verification of production processes. -
<p>IAF sector 28, ISO 9001 scheme with application also of ACCREDIA Regulation RT-05 rev. 02</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) In cases of initial audits it is possible to do part of it by remote assessment and to postpone the remaining on-site part by 6 months with respect to the activities conducted by remote assessment. By means of the remote assessment it will be possible to immediately take a decision with regard to the certificate (e.g. granting of certification), even though the assessment was only partially conducted. b) In cases of new certifications in IAF sector 28, ISO 9001 scheme, the CAB shall demonstrate the fact of urgency to fulfill market requests at the current temporary situation, maintaining suitable records during the review of the application. c) With regard to surveillances and renewals, if it is not possible to postpone the assessment (this is the preferred choice) it is possible to perform a remote assessment verifying the production processes by using significant document evidence (at least 2 evidences for simple scopes and 4 for complex ones) which can ensure the effective functioning of the QMS. <p>In all the above cases it is necessary to perform sampling, by remote modality, of the documental evidence of closed and/or existing orders.</p>
<p>Regulated areas managed in the recognized area (CE Markings, Law DPR 462, Law DPR 162)</p>	<p>Unless subsequently indicated by the competent Administration Authorities, the following applies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - in all cases where it is necessary to perform an on-site assessment to evaluate the product which is the object of the request for certification, an initial evaluation shall be made that the feasibility of the assessment typology can be performed equally effectively using alternative ICT. If it is not feasible it is not possible to issue new certifications. - For surveillance and renewal of certification assessments or for periodical inspections (e.g. of lifts, electricity systems, conformity assessment modules regarding Directives such as C2), if a CAB wishes to perform remote assessment activities, it shall, in advance and in a documented form, evaluate the feasibility of performing the activity, ensuring the same effectiveness as an on-site assessment, and if the result of the feasibility evaluation is negative, it is not possible to perform the assessment. In addition, if a CAB wishes to waive a specific accreditation requirement, it shall inform ACCREDIA in advance (e.g. not perform the sampling of the PPE directly). <p>The communication is not simply informative but as stated in IAF MD 3:2011, point 4, as follows "...Ensuring that any deviation from accreditation requirements and CAB procedures is justified and documented, and written agreement reached with AB (if deviation from an accreditation requirement is</p>

	<p><i>requested) on plans to address temporary deviations from requirements". Any temporary waiving of the requirements of accreditation shall be in agreement with ACCREDIA.</i></p> <p><i>If a CAB decides to perform a remote audit with full application of IAF MD-4 it shall try to ensure maximum effectiveness of its activities. Referring to the example contained in the circular, the sampling of PPE for testing could be undertaken by the manufacturer under the guidance of the CAB's staff by video remote connection.</i></p>
Aerospace	See the requirements set out by IAQG.
Voluntary area – product, not previously regulated	<p>It is possible to manage sampling activities and take part in tests performed by remote assessment.</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sampling carried out by the company upon indication of the auditor or through a laboratory tasked to perform sampling activities by remote connection. - On-site tests: tests carried out by the company's operator by remote connection with the involvement of the inspector as if he was on-site. <p>In all cases it is preferable to postpone the sampling to the first due surveillance.</p>

6) For conformity assessment activities under the provisions of ISO/IEC 17024

Certification activities (e.g. surveillance or renewal) in voluntary schemes may be postponed for 6 months without loss of validity of certificates issued.

F-GAS	<p>It is possible to perform remote certification verifications with the following specifications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The CAB shall maintain and keep available for ACCREDIA a list of certifications and renewals carried out by remote assessment with the relative motivation evidence (e.g. the requests for renewal presented for the application for certification); - the CAB shall keep records of the practical test which can be undertaken by video in which the person/candidate does the exam as required by the examiner of an installation or plant to which s/he has access, ensuring compliance with Law DPCM of 08.03.2020 and Law DPCM of 09.03.2020.
Property valuer (UNI 11558)	<p>It is possible to conduct remote assessments only in this emergency period. The text that follows here is therefore not applicable: <i>"In the exam commission there shall be at least one person with specific technical competences in the property evaluation sector. This commission shall always be present at the exam centre for the entire session of examinations."</i></p>

<p>Professionals: welders, solders and similar, non-destructive test technicians (civil and industrial sectors)</p>	<p>The CAB may perform exam sessions by remote modality only if it is duly equipped. In all cases the CAB shall, in advance and in documented form, evaluate the feasibility of the activity and ensure the effectiveness of an on-site exam. In addition, the CAB shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - communicate by way of contract to the client (also using specific addenda) the modalities of performance of a remote exam; - it is NOT permitted to do an exam by remote modality using VT (visual testing). Where applicable the CAB shall communicate by way of contract to the client that the result of the exam is strictly tied to passing the VT which is carried out by the laboratory which performs the test; - the CAB shall record and keep the remote exam sessions and make them available to ACCREDIA during an assessment. <p>Recording is a process whereby the treatment of personal data of persons whose image or voice has been recorded in the video. It therefore serves as identification of the person under examination. Suitable information shall be provided to the person in question regarding the processing by the CAB, stating that the data may also be transmitted to ACCREDIA. This information shall be in accordance with the GDPR. The videos will be stored through the cycle of accreditation with adequate security measures.</p>
<p>Security professionals under the provisions of UNI 10459 (mandatory scheme)</p>	<p>It is not possible to perform activities by remote method unless otherwise required by the Ministry of Internal Affairs.</p>

7) Per le attività di valutazione della conformità di cui alle norme ISO/IEC 17020

<p>These are specific inspection activities, not for the purpose of the maintenance of requirements, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It is preferable to postpone all on-site activities requiring physical and diagnostic controls (e.g. activities covered by ACCREDIA regulation RT-07, automotive sector, containers and tank containers, safety routes of acrobatic activities, non-destructive tests). In all cases not included in the above, it is possible to perform remote assessments but only if the CAB possesses suitable hardware and software which can demonstrate effectiveness and fully document results. - In the records of activities conducted by remote assessment the CAB shall guarantee that it has adequate evidence that the requirements of the service have been met. - In cases of new requests, the CAB shall demonstrate the fact of urgency to fulfill market requests at the current moment, maintaining suitable records during the review of the application. - The CAB shall maintain and make available to ACCREDIA a list of all its remote assessment activities.
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With kind regards

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