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IFCC SDM 31/Q CERTIFICATION SCHEME

REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTIFICATION OF QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS (ISO 9001:2015)

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Amendment Record

To ensure that each copy of the Scheme Requirements Document contains a complete record of Amendments, this Amendment record is updated as issued with each set of revised/new pages of the Document.							
Amendment		Discard			Insert		
No. & Summary of Change	Date	Section	Page	Issue No	Section	Page	Issue No
Incorporating 17021-1 requirements	21.10.16	3.2.3	9	1	3.2.3	9	2
Incorporating 17021-1 requirements	21.10.16	3.2.8 3.2.9 3.2.10	10	1	3.2.8 3.2.9 3.2.10	10	2
Incorporating 17021-1 requirements	21.10.16	5.4	12	1	5.4	12	2
Incorporating 17021-1 requirements	21.10.16	10.12	16	1	10.12	16	2
Incorporating 17021-1 requirements	21.10.16	10.14 10.15	17	1	10.14 10.15	17	2
Incorporating 17021-1 requirements	21.10.16	1.11	23	1	1.11	23	2
Incorporating ISO9001: 2015 requirements, various additions and amendments as high-lighted	11.09.17	1.2, 1.6 1.6.2 1.6.3 1.6.5 2.8 3.1.1 3.1.2 3.2.1 3.2.2 3.2.3 3.2.10 6.1.1 8.2 8.4 10.3 10.19 10.20 10.20 10.26	5.5. 6 6 6 8 9 9 9 10 10 11 14 16 16 17 19 19 20 20	3			
Reference to latest UKAS logo document updated, 'ref URN 98/887' removed	29.10.19	1.9	25	3	1.9	25	3.1

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The IFCC (IFC Certification), 'Requirements for Quality Management Systems Scheme' (SDM 31/Q) will provide a scheme for those organisations / companies / contractors / manufacturers (hereafter called "organisation(s)") who operate in the construction / fire protection market operating quality management systems who are seeking 3rd party certification for these.

1.2 This document covers the requirements set out by IFCC to be addressed by applicants who wish their management systems to be subject of independent 3rd party certification by IFCC in accordance with the requirements set out in;

- BS EN ISO 9001:2015

Further this document is intended to outline the assessment process towards certification and the requirements for maintaining such certification through IFCC on an on-going basis.

1.3 The scheme is open to all bona fide organisations who operate in the construction / fire protection market operating quality management systems to apply for certification.

1.4 Organisations previously holding IFC Certification which was subsequently terminated by IFC Certification may have their application rejected.

1.5 Any organisation owned or operated by individuals who held director / partner status within a company previously holding IFC Certification which was subsequently terminated by IFC Certification may have their application rejected.

1.6 Features of the Scheme / Certification Process

The scheme provides independent third party certification of management systems (as identified in section 1.2) including the contract review of application, assessment of the management system (in two stages), the stage 1 assessment will include, a review of any available documentation, (this may be carried out remotely on information supplied by the applicant prior to the site visit), any necessary follow-up actions, the agreement of certification scope and issue of certification.

The scheme also provides for on-going surveillance of the management system as it relates to the business conducted by the organisation operating in the construction / fire protection market (at not less than 12 month intervals) and for extension / reduction of scope and for re-certification at 3 year intervals.

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Certification Process

- 1.6.1 Application - All applicants shall complete the appropriate application form (available at www.ifccertification.com) and shall provide complete answers to all sections in order to enable IFCC to undertake contract review to establish an appropriate assessment programme for the applicant organisation operating in the construction / fire protection market. This will enable IFCC to provide a quotation to the applicant for assessment in line with ISO9001:2015 of their management system and its implementation. Subject to the applicant's formal acceptance of the quotation supplied by IFCC and payment of applicable fees, IFCC shall proceed with the certification process.
- 1.6.2 Quality Management System Review - All clients who have committed to progressing with the certification process shall provide a copy of their quality policy statement document, an overview of their quality management system, and copies of any available documentation, to enable IFCC to undertake a desk-top compliance review of the submitted data with the BS EN ISO 9001:2015 requirements. Where it is not possible to supply this information prior to the site visit due to method of retention of the Management system employed by the client company, this will be assessed during the stage 1 site visit. Prior to the site visit to undertake the stage 1 and stage 2 assessments an audit plan will be supplied to the client company.
- 1.6.3 Initial Audit - Stage 1 audit conducted of the organisation's management system at their office premises / factory to establish, "Context of the organisation", "Top management commitment", "The Quality Policy", "Roles, responsibilities and authorities", "Quality System Planning to include actions to address risks and opportunities, Quality objectives, and planning to achieve these, initial internal audits and Management review". The stage 1 audit shall also assess the applicability of the system with the business needs of the organisation and to agree the scope of the certification. The audit plan and ongoing surveillance plan shall be determined during this stage.
- 1.6.4 Second Stage Audit – Stage 2 audit conducted to check compliance of the company's activities with stated procedures / work instructions / electronic control systems. This may include visits to remote sites to verify compliance with stated management system controls where requested scope of certification includes site installation / servicing / survey activities.
- 1.6.5 Certification Issue - Upon satisfactory demonstration of compliance with sections 1.6.1 to 1.6.4 inclusive, the organisation shall be awarded certification and be registered on the IFC Certification website as operating a certificated management system in accordance with the requirements of BS EN ISO 9001:2015.

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- 1.6.6 On-going Surveillance Activity – After not more than 12 months from the date of certification a surveillance visit shall be conducted to cover the elements identified in the agreed surveillance plan. Following this initial surveillance visit further surveillance visits shall be conducted at frequencies of not more than 12 months. The surveillance visit conducted prior to the third anniversary of the certification shall incorporate the planning of the re-certification visit.
- 1.6.7 Re-Certification – At not more than 3 years from issue of certification by IFCC, the organisation management system shall be subject to re-assessment.
- 1.6.8 Reissue of Certification – Provided the re-assessment visit is successful, a new certificate shall be issued to cover the next 3 year period (subject to on-going satisfactory surveillance).
- 1.7 Organisations applying for certification under the requirements of the IFCC SDM 31/Q Quality Management System Certification Scheme shall not make inaccurate claims about or misuse the certification issued in such a way as to infer that the certification can be accepted as a certification of any products manufactured by them. **The certification is for the management system it is not a product certification scheme.**
- 1.8 Organisations applying for certification under the requirements of the IFCC SDM 31/Q Quality Management System Certification Scheme shall not make inaccurate claims about or misuse the certification issued in such a way as to infer that the certification can be accepted as a certification of any product installation carried out by them. **The certification is for the management system it is not an installer certification scheme.**
- 1.9 All applicants shall by making application to IFCC for certification under the requirements of this scheme agree to provide unrestricted access to activities / processes / information / data for use by IFCC (undercover of IFCC’s commitment of confidentiality) in conducting the assessment and on-going surveillance of the Organisation’s management system.

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2. DEFINITIONS

- 2.1 Auditor** – person who conducts the audit (for management system certification auditing this person will have undertaken appropriate training and passed an IRCA recognised exam) in addition to any product / industry technical competence they may possess.
- 2.2 Auditee** – person appointed by the applicant / client to assist the auditor / audit team in the audit process by demonstrating work activities also by acting as a guide to the auditor for all or part of the audit process.
- 2.3 Audit Team** – dependent upon the size / complexity / variety of activities of the applicant’s organisation, the audit may need to be undertaken by a team of IFCC staff which may comprise one or more auditors. The auditor(s) may be supported by a “technical expert(s)” where necessary due to the scope / nature of the applicant’s business activities which may be outside of the auditor’s technical competence, (the need for such expert support will be discussed with and identified to the applicant prior to any audit taking place).
- 2.4 Applicant / Client** – a company / contractor / organisation (identified throughout this document as “organisation(s)”) whose management system is being audited for the purpose of granting / maintaining / change to scope of certification under the requirements set out in this document.
- 2.5 Certification** - approval, registration or licensing of services.
- 2.6 Contractor** – the company, partnership, sole trader, etc. applying for certification within the IFC Certification scheme, who is responsible for the installation, commissioning and (where applicable) maintenance of fire protection products / constructions / systems.
- 2.7 Training** – undertaking and satisfactory completion (with evidence of achievement of course requirements) of a course recognized by IFC Certification.
- 2.8 Audit Plan** – a formal plan drawn up by IFCC in conjunction with the client (for the Stage 1 and 2 audit(s)) to identify as a minimum; “auditees” to take part in the audit process / locations / areas of the client’s business to be audited / timing for the audit activities.
- 2.9 Surveillance Programme** – a formal programme of audit visits to the client’s business at not more than 12 months intervals from the date of certification issue to the date of re-certification (3 year period) which will include on-going surveillance audit visits and a re-certification audit. This programme will identify locations / areas of the business to be subject of audit at each planned visit.

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3 REQUIREMENTS

3.1 Application for Certification

3.1.1 Those requirements identified in BS EN ISO 9001:2015 for Quality Management System Assessment and Certification shall be accommodated by the applicant's management system.

All applicants for quality management system assessment shall operate a "formal" quality management system in accordance with the BS EN ISO 9001:2015 standard and shall maintain records as deemed necessary.

3.1.2 The term "formal" can be accepted to cover both hard copy and electronic (computer system) based management systems.

3.1.3 Prior to any assessment being undertaken by IFCC the management system must be implemented by the applicant so as to create evidence of the system's operation to enable assessment to progress. In line with this requirement, as a minimum the applicant must have evidence of having conducted a full internal audit of the management system and have documentary evidence (typically minutes) of at least one management review meeting.

3.1.4 All applicants must complete the IFCC on-line application for management system certification and shall clearly identify that the quality management system is to be subject of certification, the type (scope) of work the organisation is involved in, the number of employees, main office / factory location and any subsidiary locations which are requested to be within the scope of certification. This information is required by IFCC in order to plan the assessment process and for future use in devising the surveillance programme.

3.1.5 All applicants shall provide a copy of the management system policy document describing the organisation's management system and its compliance with the requirements of BS EN ISO 9001:2015 which makes reference to any associated procedures, work instructions, databases, etc.. forming part of the management system. An organisation chart depicting the organisation's structure showing (where applicable) any branch offices / subsidiary manufacturing facilities and their reporting lines back to "head-office" (primary location) shall also be required by IFCC at the time of making application.

3.2 Quality system management review and Initial Audits (Stages 1 & 2)

3.2.1 The submitted management system documentation (as required by section 1.6.2) shall be reviewed by IFCC to verify its compliance with the requirements of either BS EN ISO 9001:2015 as applicable. A record of this review shall be produced by IFCC as part of the records of the assessment process. Any deficiencies or anomalies found during this process shall be recorded for discussion / verification during the Stage 1 Audit.

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3.2.2 The quality management system review shall typically be conducted as a “desk top” activity at the IFCC Office remote from the client’s premises, however this may take place during Stage 1 if the applicant operates an entirely electronic “intranet” based management system which is not easily copied for external review.

3.2.3 The Stage 1 Audit shall be conducted by IFCC at the client organisation’s head office / factory / main work place, following the document review. This audit shall incorporate;

- an evaluation of the client’s office / factory / workplace conditions
- discussions with client’s staff / personnel to establish preparedness for the stage 2 audit
- undertake an audit of the context of the organisation and its activities
- review the client’s status and understanding of the requirements of BS EN ISO 9001:2015 and how it relates to their business
- an interview with top management representative(s), to determine top management commitment to the quality management system and its use in delivery of the company’s business plan (however it is communicated)
- review of the client’s assessed risks and opportunities for the company
- the client’s identification of key performance, processes, business objectives and management system operation to achieve such objectives (based on their identified business risks and opportunities)
- the collecting of information related to statutory and regulatory aspects of compliance as related to the client’s business
- confirm resources needed for the stage 2 audit and the time needed to assess the client’s compliance with their management system or systems including any shift work if applicable.
- review any existing reports and nonconformities raised by previous certification body if applicable
- to understand the operation of the management system as applied to the client’s business activities
- evaluate internal audits and management reviews undertaken by the client of their management system
- confirm the Stage 2 Audit Plan which will include reference to “key staff” (auditees) who will be available during the stage 2 audit to demonstrate the implementation of the management system in different areas of the client’s operations.
- confirm the locations where the stage 2 audit shall be undertaken (these shall appear on the Stage 2 Audit Plan
- agreement of the scope of certification to appear on the client’s certificate upon successful completion of the assessment process.

3.2.4 The findings of the Stage 1 Audit shall be recorded by IFCC as part of the record of the assessment process. Where significant non-conformances are raised during stage 1, IFCC

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shall agree a time with the applicant for them to put in place corrective action prior to the Stage 2 audit taking place.

3.2.5 Following successful completion of the Stage 1 Audit, IFCC will progress with the Stage 2 audit.

3.2.6 The Stage 2 Audit process shall be undertaken at the applicant's premises in accordance with the Stage 2 Audit Plan and shall incorporate;

- assessment of the level of implementation of the management system in accordance with its stated intent / objectives / procedures / work instructions / etc..
- assessment of the effectiveness of the management system in delivering the applicant's business objectives through operation of the management system in the applicant's normal business processes (production / installation / procurement / etc..)
- performance monitoring, measurement of achievement of specified objectives
- operational control of the applicant's processes
- review of the management responsibility and commitment to the management system objectives
- assessment of links between the management system and compliance with statutory and legal compliance as appropriate to the applicant's business
- agreement on an on-going surveillance plan for the 3 year certification period.

3.2.7 The findings of the Stage 2 Audit shall be recorded by IFCC as part of the record of the assessment process. Where significant non-conformances are raised during stage 2, IFCC shall agree a time scale with the applicant for them to put in place corrective action. Subject to satisfactory verification of clearance of these non-conformances by the IFCC auditor, recommendation for certification may be made for an agreed scope.

3.2.8 If IFCC are unable to verify the implementation of corrections or corrective actions for any major nonconformity raised with 6 months of the last day of the Stage 2 audit, IFCC will have to conduct another Stage 2 audit prior to recommending certification.

3.2.9 If the company are transferring existing certification to IFCC from another certification body then IFCC will obtain additional information from the client regarding the previous certification, including previous audit reports and any documented corrective actions taken against any nonconformities raised by the previous certification body.

3.2.10 The IFCC Certification Director shall review all records relating to the certification assessment (document review, Stage 1, Stage 2 and transfer audit reports and any reports of non-conformances and corrective actions taken) and shall take into account the auditor's recommendation in making a decision on granting certification. Where the IFCC Certification Director has been directly involved in the audit process the review will be carried out by an IFCC Scheme Manager who has not been involved with the process.

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3.2.1.1 A draft certificate shall be drawn up by IFCC and submitted to the applicant for review before issue of the management system certification certificate to ensure that all details are correct.

4 ONGOING SURVEILLANCE VISITS

4.1 Annual Surveillance Audits

4.1.1 Following successful certification, the contractor, company, organisation's office and works activities will be audited at least annually in accordance with the requirements of an agreed surveillance programme which IFCC shall agree with the applicant during the Stage 2 Audit of the assessment process.

4.1.2 Where a certificated contractor's activities involve installation of fire protection covered by another IFCC certification scheme, the surveillance visits in support of IFCC SDM 31 Management System Certification Scheme certification may be arranged to coincide with site visits in support of the installer certification. This will facilitate the ability of the management system's operation away from the office to be monitored.

4.2 Changes in Certification Scope (Extensions / Reductions)

4.2.1 Any request for a certificated organisation holding IFCC SDM 31/Q Quality Management System Certification Scheme certification to extend the scope of their existing certification shall be made by application through the IFCC web-site with the new requested scope clearly defined.

4.2.2 IFCC shall discuss the requested scope extension and agree an audit plan to assess the new scope area of their business with the certificated organisation before undertaking an audit of this new area which will include verification of how the new scope is accommodated by the client's management system and implementation of management system control in the new area.

4.2.3 Where the certificated organisation wishes to reduce scope of certification (such as the down-sizing of a business to remove a business activity or a certificated location being removed from the certification), the request must be made to IFCC in writing and shall be subject to discussion between IFCC and the certificated contractor, company, organisation.

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4.3 Audit Findings / Non-conformances

4.3.1 Further audit visits (site inspections as applicable) may be required if any significant non-conformances are found. Additional audit visits will be necessary to verify that such non-conformance(s) are resolved. Significant non-conformances may take the form of evidence of widespread / frequent non adherence with company management system procedures, manufactured products deviating from specification, installation deviations to the relevant manufacturer's installation instructions and / or standard, poor workmanship on site, or deficiencies in the management systems.

5 NON-CONFORMANCES

- 5.1 Minor non-conformances raised during an office or factory audit, design review or site inspection may be closed out by providing IFCC with evidence of correction by e-mail or post or it may at IFCC's discretion be held over to the next surveillance visit. Major non-conformances identified during an office or factory audit, design review or site inspection may require an additional visit to office / factory and / or site, the need for such an additional visit will be discussed and agreed with the contractor, company, organisation with whom IFCC shall liaise to make suitable arrangements to undertake the visit.
- 5.2 Site based non-conformances raised as a result of non-adherence with company management system procedures to non-compliant installation activities or poor workmanship shall generally result in a follow-up site visit being undertaken to ensure that the required corrections have been put in place. Arrangements shall be agreed between IFCC and the organisation (Contractor) to ensure that the revisit can take place before any non-compliant work becomes inaccessible. Dependent upon the details of non-conformance, IFCC may invoke a requirement to visit further jobs undertaken by the organisation to ensure that the same issue resulting in the non-conformances is not found on other jobs undertaken by the organisation. Revisits to site (and where necessary the organisation's office) to check that corrections have been carried out and that the corrective action is effective shall be charged at the prevailing rate.
- 5.3 Where non-conformances have been raised, the applicant or certificated organisation shall provide access to the IFCC inspector to enable a check of the corrective action to ensure it has been carried out and can be seen to be effective.
- 5.4 When transferring a client from a previous certification body any existing nonconformities will be reviewed and any outstanding corrective actions followed up to ensure they are closed satisfactorily.

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6 CONDITIONS OF ACCEPTANCE

6.1 Initial Acceptance

6.1.1 Provided that the requirements are met, the organisation will receive certification and be listed in the Register of companies certificated to the IFCC SDM 31/Q Quality Management System Certification Scheme. The listing awarded by IFC Certification shall be accompanied by a reference to the types of management system for which certification has been awarded. The certification is only valid if the contractor, company, organisation continues to satisfy the requirements of the scheme outlined in this document.

6.2 Change of Company Details

6.2.1 The organisation shall notify IFC Certification of any changes which would affect certification of this scheme, including a change of company name, company registration or location.

7 BENEFITS OF THE IFC CERTIFICATION SCHEME

7.1 Due to the growth in the number of installation & maintenance contractors, manufacturing companies, organisations providing products and / or service provision to the fire protection market and the wider construction industry, the need to assess and control the traceability of products manufactured and be able to verify their compliance with specifications and approved / tested designs, and to prove the competency of those providing contracting services to the industry is increasingly important. Since the fire protection industry is primarily involved in products / systems designed and installed for life safety purposes, the status of company's management systems is paramount to be able to verify compliance with specified requirements.

7.2 This scheme will benefit clients/end users and their insurers by assisting in the selection of a competent and experienced contractor, company, organisation.

7.3 A list of organisations (companies) certificated in accordance with the IFCC SDM 31/Q Quality Management System Certification Scheme can be found on our website, in both geographical and alphabetical format.

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8 APPLICATIONS PROCESS

8.1 Applications for Quality Management System Certification should be made on line by completing the appropriate form at: www.ifccertification.com.

8.2 Alternatively a hard copy form may be obtained from us at:

IFC Certification Ltd.
20 Park Street
Princes Risborough
Buckinghamshire
HP27 9AH
UK

Email: ian.woodhouse@ifcgroup.com or emma.baker@ifcgroup.com

8.3 Upon receipt of the completed application form, IFC Certification will review the details and if acceptable, prepare a quotation. On acceptance of the fees an invoice will be issued. After payment of the fee, IFC Certification will make arrangements to progress the assessment process as detailed in Section 1.6.

8.4 For any further information on this scheme or others offered by IFC Certification Ltd., please contact us at:

IFC Certification Ltd.
20 Park Street,
Princes Risborough,
Buckinghamshire,
HP27 9AH
UK

Tel: +44 1844 275500

Fax: +44 1844 274002

E-mail: ian.woodhouse@ifcgroup.com or emma.baker@ifcgroup.com

Ask for Ian Woodhouse or Emma Baker

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9 SCHEME FEES

9.1 The fees payable by an organisation for certification under the requirements of the IFCC SDM 31/Q Quality Management System Certification Scheme are available upon request from IFC Certification Ltd. at the address given in 8.4.

10 SCHEME REGULATIONS

- 10.1 The technical requirements of the scheme are given in clause 3 of this document.
- 10.2 Applicants and certificated organisations shall nominate a “management representative” and, if appropriate, at least one deputy, authorised by the company’s top management to act in the main representative’s absence, who shall be responsible for all matters relating to their IFCC scheme certification. The representative (or deputy) shall be responsible for all IFCC scheme communications between IFCC and the company.
- 10.3 Applicants and certificated organisations shall be responsible for allowing IFCC accompanied free / safe access to their offices and sites on which they are working during normal working hours (taking into account any additional shift working operated by the company) for the purposes of conducting initial, on-going random (as may be necessary) and at least annual surveillance audits and for providing information as required by the scheme and facilities as may reasonably be required by IFCC in order to verify compliance with scheme requirements as detailed in this document and any future revisions of it.
- 10.4 The nominated “management representative” of the organisation shall be responsible for informing IFCC of any changes to the assessed “documented management system” and / or changes of structure within the company, organisation.
- 10.5 A certificated organisation shall conduct their business in “good faith” and in accordance with the requirements, spirit and intent of the IFCC SDM 31/Q Quality Management System Certification Scheme, applicable manufacturer’s instructions (and standards) to comply as described in this document and any future revisions of it.
- 10.6 Certificated organisations shall maintain records of subcontractors used and where applicable shall have undertaken appropriate training which has been verified by IFCC (for sub-contracted staff) and a sub-contract agreement or purchase order / supply contract is in place between the certificated company and the particular individual(s) / material supplier.
- 10.7 Certificated organisations shall be permitted to use the IFCC Certification mark in accordance with the requirements given in Appendix 1 of this document and make reference to being certificated under the requirements of the scheme. Any proposed promotional material where the mark is depicted shall be submitted to IFCC for approval

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before the mark is used. If IFCC considers the wording or illustration to be misleading in any way, the certificated company shall amend the material to the satisfaction of IFCC.

The certificated company's right to use the mark is not transferable.

- 10.8 In principle a certificated organisation shall not undertake any work (which is within the certificated management system scope of the company's operation) outside these scheme requirements, either at its own discretion or in accordance with the wish of a third party. If however the certificated organisation is instructed to deviate from scheme requirements, they shall make it absolutely clear to all parties concerned (including end-users) in express written terms that the work being undertaken & reported is outside of the scope of the scheme and its requirements. This should be a clear disclaimer for the items of work affected. Copies of this disclaimer shall be forwarded to the client and IFCC.
- 10.9 A certificated organisation may terminate its certification upon written notification to IFCC. A minimum of three months' notice of termination shall be given, however IFCC reserves the right to terminate an organisation's certification without notice for situations of gross dereliction or non-payment of fees. Upon termination either by the certificated organisation or by IFCC in accordance with these requirements, the organisation shall forthwith discontinue the use of both the IFCC certification mark and all claims of certification under the IFCC SDM 31/Q Quality Management System Certification Scheme. No further fees will be due from the date of termination except for unpaid fees accruing from before the date of termination. No fees already paid will be refunded. During the period of notice of termination the organisation shall continue to comply fully with the scheme requirements. The organisation (company) entry on the IFCC Website will be suspended / terminated at the discretion of IFCC.
- 10.10 IFCC may, at its discretion, revoke, amend, refuse to grant, renew or extend certification if a certificated organisation fails to comply with the provisions of these requirements or becomes subject to the bankruptcy laws or enters into liquidation or is convicted of any offence tending to discredit its bona fides. Such a decision and the grounds for it will be communicated to the certificated organisation in writing. The organisation's entry on the IFCC Website will be suspended / terminated at the discretion of IFCC.
- 10.11 IFCC SDM 31/Q Quality Management System Certification Scheme certification shall be re-assessed through the surveillance process on an annual on-going basis with organisation certificates being valid for 3 years from date of issue.
- 10.12 Towards the end of this 3 year period of certification IFCC will conduct a recertification audit and if successful a new certificate valid for a further 3 years will be issued, if this audit is conducted prior to the certificates expiry date then the certificate can be valid for more than 3 years.
- 10.13 If the certificate expires prior to the audit taking place then provided the audit is carried out within 6 months then a certificate will be re-issued but any gap in the certification will

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be identified. If a period of over 6 months has elapsed then IFCC will conduct a Stage 2 audit prior to recertification. The certificate issued will reflect the date recertification occurred but the expiry date will following the original certification cycle.

- 10.14 If IFCC are unable to carry out the recertification audit or are unable to verify the implementation of corrections and corrective actions for any major nonconformity prior to the expiry date of the certification, then recertification will not be recommended and the certification withdrawn and the client informed of this decision.
- 10.15 The IFCC SDM 31/Q Quality Management System Certification Scheme fee structure is given in a separate fee schedule which is available on request from IFCC. Failure to pay the required fees as stated in this document within the specified time shall render a certificated organisation liable to their certification being revoked by IFCC without notice. The organisation (company) entry on the IFCC Website will be suspended / terminated at the discretion of IFCC.
- 10.16 IFCC will investigate any complaint against a certificated organisation (company) received from a third party concerning the certificated organisation's performance in respect of the scheme requirements. IFCC will, at its discretion, notify the certificated organisation of such complaints in order that corrective actions can be agreed and implemented. The organisation (company) entry on the IFCC Website will be suspended / terminated at the discretion of IFCC.
All complaints regarding scheme operation and organisation's performance shall be treated strictly private and confidential between IFCC and the certificated company unless otherwise directed by legal disclosure, other legal circumstance.

Complaints Procedure

- 10.17 Certificated organisations complaining about conduct of IFCC Staff / decisions taken by IFCC related to the organisation's activities as covered by this document and complaints related to the operation of the IFCC SDM 31/Q Quality Management System Certification Scheme are as follows;
- 10.18 All complaints should be made in writing and addressed to: The IFCC Director of Certification. All complaints received by IFCC are investigated and actions taken where appropriate.
- 10.19 Upon receipt of a written complaint it will be logged on the date of receipt and will be reviewed by the IFCC Director Certification or the IFCC Scheme Manager at the earliest opportunity.
- 10.20 *The IFCC Director of Certification shall conduct an investigation into the complaint which may involve discussion with the IFCC Scheme Manager, or a third party to establish basis

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and background to complaint. If the complaint is not of a confidential nature (one which can be openly discussed in the presence of others who may have similar concerns), the complaint may be discussed at a scheme / Industry Liaison Meeting. In such a case the complainant will be advised of the complaint's inclusion on the agenda of the next liaison meeting and the proposed date of the meeting.

**Note: Where the complaint is related to action taken or a decision made by the IFCC Director of Certification, the IFCC Scheme Manager shall conduct the investigation.*

- 10.21 The IFCC Director of Certification shall upon completion of all investigation related to the complaint be responsible for deciding whether or not the complaint is valid / justified.
- 10.22 Where the decision is taken that the complaint is valid the IFCC Director of Certification shall initiate corrective action to address the complaint and shall notify the complainant in writing of the action taken / to be implemented to address the complaint. The IFCC Director of Certification shall be responsible for reviewing the action taken to ensure it is working to prevent a recurrence of the instance which resulted in the complaint being made.
- 10.23 Where the decision is taken that the complaint is not justified, the IFCC Director of Certification shall notify the complainant in writing of his decision. The complainant shall be offered the facility to appeal against the decision in which case the Appeals Procedure shall be invoked should the complainant decide to appeal the decision.

Appeals Procedure

- 10.24 Applicants and certificated organisations have the right of appeal against any decision made by IFCC against these requirements and in respect of their application for Certification or suspension / termination of certification. In order to invoke this procedure the appellant shall accept the following procedure.
- 10.25 Notice of any appeal shall be made in writing and addressed to IFCC Director of Certification, IFCC within 14 days of official notification of the decision. The appellant shall clearly set out the grounds for the appeal and shall enclose a cheque for £1,750 made payable to "IFC Certification Ltd." to cover the costs of the appeal (refundable only where the Appeals Panel finds in favour of the Appellant).
- 10.26 The appeal shall be reviewed by the IFCC Director of Certification or their designee (where the complaint leading to the appeal involved the Director) who may consult the Chairman of the IFCC Steering Committee or the IFCC Schemes Manager, who may contact the appellant to discuss the grounds for the appeal and may request further details if he believes there is insufficient information on which to make an informed judgement.

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- 10.27 The IFCC Director of Certification or their designee (where the complaint leading to the appeal involved the Director) shall attempt to resolve the appeal within 1 month of receipt of the written appeal. If the situation can be resolved to the satisfaction of both the appellant and IFCC within 1 month of receipt and it does not progress beyond this point, the fee is refunded. This may be as a result of certification being reinstated or by the appellant accepting the IFCC Director of Certification or their designee's decision made to terminate their certification based on the grounds surrounding the incident.
- 10.28 In the case of resolution by the IFCC Director of Certification or their designee he will write to the appellant confirming the agreed resolution of the appeal and will return the appellant's cheque for £1,750. **If the appeal can be resolved as detailed above no appeals panel shall be constituted.**
- 10.29 If the IFCC Director of Certification or his designee (where the complaint leading to the appeal involved the Director) review fails to resolve the appeal, the Director shall contact the IFCC Steering Committee and request the constitution of an Appeals Panel. IFCC shall endeavour to facilitate hearing of an appeal by an Appeals Panel within 3 months of receipt of the written grounds for appeal.
- 10.30 An Appeals Panel specifically constituted for the purpose of hearing an appeal which cannot be resolved by the IFCC Director of Certification or their designee will comprise 3 members of the IFCC Steering Committee, as selected by the Chairman of the IFCC Steering Committee. They will be selected such that no member has any direct or indirect commercial interest in the appeal. The Chairman of the IFCC Steering Committee will not be a member of the Appeals Panel but the Chairman will nominate one of the 3 members as the Appeals Panel Chairman.
- 10.31 When the subject of the appeal involves technical matters, the IFCC Steering Committee Chairman may arrange for one or more persons having suitable technical expertise to be available for consultation by the Appeals Panel. In such cases the Steering Committee will ensure that the persons nominated have no previous involvement with the certification issue in question.
- 10.32 The appellant will be notified of the proposed date of the appeal hearing, the composition of the Appeals Panel and any technical advisors to be made available to the panel not less than 14 days before the date of the meeting. The appellant may challenge the composition of the panel and/or the technical advisors within 2 days of being informed of the composition and shall provide written reasons for any challenge.
- 10.33 The Appeals Panel Chairman will consider the reasons for any challenge and at their sole discretion will decide whether the composition of the Panel or technical advisors will be changed. In choosing any replacements, the Appeals Panel Chairman will take into account the reasons for the challenge to ensure that as far as possible the same objections will not apply to the replacements. No further challenges will be considered.

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- 10.34 The appellant has the right to be supported at the hearing of the Appeals Panel by a representative of their choice. Any such representative shall be notified to the Chairman of the Appeals Panel 14 days prior to the hearing. The Chairman has the right, on behalf of the Appeals Panel, to challenge any such nomination.
- 10.35 The decision of the Appeals Panel will be decided by a simple majority and the decision will be final.
- 10.36 The IFCC Director of Certification will be responsible for arranging the timing and location of the appeal hearing by the Appeals Panel which will be advised to the appellant at least 7 days in advance.
- 10.37 The original decision will remain in force pending the meeting of the Appeal Panel at which both the appellant, the IFCC Director of Certification and any other relevant member of IFCC will be entitled to be heard in confidence. The IFCC Director of Certification, IFCC Schemes Manager or any other person nominated by the Appeals Panel will be responsible for implementing the decision of the Panel. The Chairman of the Appeals Panel will ensure that the appropriate action is correctly implemented.
- 10.38 All correspondence related to the Appeals Procedure must be sent "Recorded Delivery".

Confidentiality

- 10.39 IFCC will not disclose to any third party any information about an organisation or their activities gained as a result of carrying out certification of the organisation which may be considered confidential, without the organisation's consent. This restriction will not apply to information required by bona fide accreditation bodies such as UKAS in pursuance of accreditation of the scheme, provided that such information is given to such bodies on a confidential basis. Restrictions will not apply to information which is agreed by both IFCC and the company to be in the public domain and which would in such circumstance be available on request to any interested party.

Other Issues

- 10.40 A certificated organisation shall indemnify IFCC against any financial losses that IFCC may incur as a result of the certificated organisation's failure to comply with these scheme requirements. IFCC will maintain insurance cover against liability claims made against it and which may arise from operation of the scheme. The level of cover will be determined by IFCC to be reasonable in respect of its potential liabilities bearing in mind those prevailing within the certification industry in general and proportional to the fee charged for "membership" of the scheme.

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- 10.41 The interpretation of these requirements and the terms of the insurance cover will be governed and construed in accordance with English Law and in the event of any dispute parties shall submit to the jurisdiction of the English Courts.
- 10.42 Certificated organisations shall comply with the scheme requirements currently in force. These requirements may be revised from time to time at the discretion of IFCC. Such revisions will be notified in writing to certificated organisations with dates for implementation of the revisions.
- 10.43 Copyright of this document is held by IFCC. No part of this document may be reproduced in any form without the prior permission of IFCC in writing. Permission for applicants and certificated contractors, companies, organisations to copy this document for internal use is automatically given upon receipt of application for certification. Such copies are uncontrolled and it is the responsibility of the applicant or certificated contractor to ensure that this status is correctly identified on each copy.

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APPENDIX 1

CONDITIONS FOR THE USE OF THE IFC CERTIFICATION MARK

Certificated Company XXXX

- 1.1 The IFCC Scheme certification mark ('the mark') is a registered certification mark and may be used by certificated companies (contractors).
- 1.2 The mark shall only be used in its entirety and without amendment.
- 1.3 The mark shall only be used in relation to those services that are within the scope of certification granted by IFCC. The mark shall not be used in such a way that it implies certification of services or activities for which certification has not been awarded. The mark shall not be used in conjunction with any non-related activities, only those within the scope of certification.
- 1.4 The mark, when used in association with the National Accreditation Mark (the UKAS mark), may be used by certificated companies on their trade literature, on their letterheads and on any of their display or promotional material. A certificated company shall submit their proposals for use and depiction of the mark to IFCC for approval before.
- 1.5 The IFCC mark may also be used on vehicles, buildings and flags but NOT in association with the UKAS mark.
- 1.6 The mark, when used without the National Accreditation Mark (the UKAS mark), shall always be used in conjunction with the company's certification number placed centrally under the mark in the format given above.
- 1.7 No company may use or depict the National Accreditation Mark (the UKAS mark) on any trade literature, on their letterheads and on any of their display or promotional material unless it is combined with the IFCC mark.
- 1.8 The mark shall be used at any size considered appropriate for the application and shall only be used to show the contractor, company, organisation's involvement in IFCC SDM 31/Q Quality Management System Certification Scheme and in relation to the type of management system certificated. The relative proportions shall always be retained.
- 1.9 If the mark is used in association with the National Accreditation Mark (the UKAS mark) on stationery not larger than A4, the maximum height shall be 30mm and the minimum 20mm. However in some circumstances, which are usually dictated by reason of space, the marks may be reduced in size provided they remain clearly legible.

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Full details of the use of the National Accreditation Mark (the UKAS mark) can be found in the document titled "The national accreditation logo and symbols: conditions for use by UKAS and UKAS accredited organisations", available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-accreditation-logo-and-symbols-conditions-for-use>

- 1.10 The mark shall be printed in the colours as the high resolution image provided by IFCC. Alternatively the mark may be produced in black.
- 1.11 The certificated company may add a statement (but no mark) to the product packaging (not product) and accompanying literature that it has a certificated management system. The statement must not imply that the product is certificated by this means and must include the companies name or brand and a reference to IFCC as the certification body.
- 1.12 The contractor, company, organisation shall, at the request of IFCC, cease to use the mark if IFCC deem the application inappropriate.
- 1.13 A company shall, upon suspension of certification, immediately discontinue the issue of documents that display the mark or contain any reference to the IFCC SDI 31/Q Quality Management System Certification Scheme certification.
- 1.14 A company shall, upon termination of certification, immediately cease distribution of all items on which the mark is displayed and shall remove it from any other form of display or promotional application.
- 1.15 Scheme certificates issued within the scope of UKAS accreditation will carry a combined IFCC Scheme (Company) and National Accreditation Mark (the UKAS mark).
- 1.16 It is a condition of use that the mark shall not be used in any printed advertisements or printed publicity matter directed primarily to the market in the United Kingdom and in the Isle of Man or in retail point of sale display cards distributed by the Registered Proprietor for use within the United Kingdom and in the Isle of Man without indicating that it is a certification mark.
- 1.17 Failure to comply with these requirements for the mark may result in withdrawal of certification and legal action under appropriate legislation.

CONDITIONS FOR THE USE OF THE SCHEME LOGO

- 1.18 The use of the logo, as shown above, may be used for any promotional purposes by certificated companies but only in relation to those services that are within the scope of certification. The logo shall not be used in such a way that it implies certification of services or activities for which certification has not been awarded.

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- 1.19 Details of the colour and colour gradation of the logo may be obtained on request.
- 1.20 A company shall submit its proposals for the use of the logo to IFCC for approval.
- 1.21 Failure to comply with these requirements for the logo may result in withdrawal of certification and legal action under appropriate legislation.

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