

## **Special Arrangement of Certifications during the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Epidemic**

Due to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) epidemic, the audit and certification process is affected.

With reference to “IAF ID3:2011 IAF Informative Document for Management of Extraordinary Events or Circumstances Affecting ABs, CABs and Certified Organizations”, HKQAA has established contingency measures for auditing and certification activities as follows:

- 1. New application will be accepted as normal**
- 2. Certificate will be issued as normal and distributed to certified clients via courier**
- 3. General arrangement on audit activities**
  - a. Audit in Hubei Province is not arranged until further notice and based on the announcement of the local government and the control progress of the outbreak
  - b. HK auditors will not travel to China for audits until quarantine policy is removed by HKSAR government
  - c. Audits in China (except Hubei Province) shall be arranged to auditors living in the same province only until further notice
- 4. Arrangement on 1st Surveillance Visit (SV) following Certification Audit (CA)**
  - a. Provided that a certified organization can enter into the 1<sup>st</sup> surveillance visit (SV1) following the certification audit (CA) by a partial audit, HKQAA allows an extension to complete the SV1 for 6 months. (i.e. 18 months from certificate issue date)
  - b. The partial audit may be conducted on-site or off-site and shall be conducted within 12 months from the certificate issue date
  - c. Failure to conduct partial SV1 within 12 months from the certificate issue date will lead to certification suspension
  - d. The whole SV1 shall be completed before the extended completion date of SV1 to maintain the validity of the certification

- e. Failure to complete the whole SV1 before the extended completion date of SV1 will lead to certification suspension

**5. Arrangement on Renewal audit (REA)**

- a. Provided that a certified organization can enter into the recertification process by a partial renewal audit, HKQAA allows an extension of the current certification validity for six months
- b. The partial renewal audit may be conducted on-site or off-site, and shall be conducted before the original certificate expiry date.
- c. The whole renewal audit shall be completed before the extended expiry date.
- d. After the completion of the whole renewal audit, a renewed certificate with the validity of three years from the original expiry date (i.e. two and a half years from the extended expiry date) will be issued.
- e. If the renewal audit cannot be completed before the extended expiry date, a new application for certification is required.

**6. For certificate bearing CNAS mark only or certified clients in PRC without any accreditation marks**

- a. Suspension of certificate shall happen three (3) months after the epidemic ceases
- b. Certification expiry date will extend three (3) months after the epidemic ceases

Should you have any further inquiry, please feel free to contact us.