Principles to be achieved with an IAF Database of Accredited MS Certifications

1. The purpose of IAF CertSearch is to provide accurate data on accredited management systems (MS) certifications issued by a certification body (CB) accredited by an IAF MLA signatory accreditation body (AB) under main scope ISO/IEC 17021-1.

2. IAF CertSearch will need to include accurate data on IAF MLA signatory ABs under main scope ISO/IEC 17021-1 and the MS standards and schemes (including national, sector schemes, etc.) for which they provide accreditation, (even if not within sub-scopes of the IAF MLA under main scope ISO/IEC 17021-1), for the purpose of confirming that a CB is accredited by an IAF member that is an MLA signatory AB under main scope ISO/IEC 17021-1.

    a. Where an existing MS national or sector scheme has a database/register for online verification, IAF CertSearch will provide a digital connection, where appropriate, to allow the exchange of verification requests and to avoid duplication of data connections or upload by ABs or CBs in parallel systems.

3. IAF CertSearch will need to include accurate data on each CB accredited by each IAF MLA signatory AB under main scope ISO/IEC 17021-1, and the scope(s) of accreditation, for the purpose of confirming accredited certifications eligible to be included in IAF CertSearch.

4. Must be self-funding, through revenue generated from analytical services and verification services, with the principle of being not-for-profit. Revenues from these services should be shared with the IT Service Provider, contracted by the IAF Board, for the development, delivery, and maintenance of IAF CertSearch. The share of revenue retained by IAF shall be used solely for the management and governance of IAF CertSearch and for promoting accredited MS certification.

5. CBs responsible to provide and maintain correct certification data.

6. ABs responsible to provide and maintain correct accreditation data.

7. IAF responsible to provide and maintain correct membership data.

8. To electronically link to CB, AB and other databases (of MS certifications), where possible, for automatically uploading data into the IAF CertSearch.

9. Establish governance and operational structure that includes IAF, AB, CB and user members and that is not dependent on the IAF Secretariat.

10. The information accessible to users of the IAF CertSearch should address as many languages as possible.

11. AB Participation: Participation is to be mandatory for IAF MLA signatory ABs under main scope ISO/IEC 17021-1 to identify accredited CBs and to identify the MS standards and schemes (including national, sector schemes, etc.) for which they provide accreditation (even if not within sub-scopes of the IAF MLA under main scope ISO/IEC 17021-1).

    a. AB Justification for exclusion: If, for any exceptional case (e.g. local/national regulatory or government requirements, data privacy or security laws, absence of a mandate to do so (if a government agency), other)) an AB is not able to provide this information, the AB concerned shall submit a written justification to IAF.

12. CB Participation: Participation is to be mandatory for CBs for all standards and schemes within the scope of the IAF CertSearch Principles to support consistent application of ISO/IEC 17021-1 Clause 8.1.2 c (requested certification information). CBs shall participate through an IAF-supported interface either by uploading certification data to IAF CertSearch (e.g., via manual, file upload, FTP or IAF API) or choose to integrate their database(s) with IAF CertSearch to facilitate on-demand (certification) requests. If the CB chooses the on-demand process; the CB must also supply aggregate analytical data (e.g., via API connection provided by CB).

    a. IAF CertSearch will have a 12-month application period (from the issue of mandatory requirements) for existing CBs, or from the initial accreditation of a CB by an IAF MLA AB signatory.

    b. CB Justification for exclusion: If for any exceptional cases (e.g. local/national regulatory or government requirements, data privacy or security laws, absence of a mandate to do so (if a government agency)) a CB is not able to participate, the CB shall submit a written justification to their relevant AB(s). In addition, the CB shall provide quarterly, aggregated analytical data to IAF CertSearch including the number of certifications for each normative document, scope and geographical location, to support aggregated analytics for all CBs and ABs.

13. Data is to be limited to information necessary to confirm that an accredited certification has been issued by a CB accredited by an IAF MLA signatory accreditation body under main scope ISO/IEC 17021-1. Data is to be limited to confirming the current status of a given certification and the name, related normative document, scope of certification and geographical location.

    a. For the avoidance of doubt, confidential verification information should be marked as such by a CB and will not be publicly displayed on IAF CertSearch upon a public request for verification of a specified confidential certified client (e.g. certified client with an undisclosed location due to security). In this situation, the contact information of the relevant CB will be presented.

14. All user pays services and activities of IAF CertSearch must be consistent with the principle of not selling certification data and be priced to recover costs for service provision (in line with Principle 4). In addition, services shall be compliant with relevant privacy laws, through a contractual agreement with CBs and ABs and other relevant parties. Analytical Services shall be free of charge for participant ABs and participant CBs. Verification Services shall be free of charge for participant ABs and supporting scheme owners, regulators, and government bodies.

15. IAF CertSearch will need to have controls necessary to prevent or limit unauthorized data mining (to prevent competitive poaching) as well as other security measures to ensure data integrity and protect against unauthorized access to, and use of, the data.