



IAF and the International Personnel Certification Association Memorandum of Understanding

1. Introduction

- 1.1 International Personnel Certification Association is the scheme owner of the worldwide operated IPC scheme, "IPC Management System Auditors". International Personnel Certification Association (hereinafter referred to as IPC) has sought and received endorsement of their scheme listed in Schedule 1 to this Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) (hereinafter referred to as "the Schemes") as IAF MLA sub-scopes in accordance with IAF PL3 and this MoU.
- 1.2 The Schemes require Certification Bodies (CBs) operating in the Schemes to be accredited by an Accreditation Body (AB) that is a signatory to the IAF Multilateral Recognition Arrangement (MLA) with a main scope of certification of persons and a sub-scope of the relevant scheme(s) included in Schedule 1 to this MoU (IAF MLA signatories).
- 1.3 "IPC Management System Auditors" sets voluntary standards for the certification of Management Systems (MS) auditors. The two certification grades that IPC recognizes are IPC MS Auditor, and IPC MS Lead Auditor. The certification of an IPC-graded auditor only indicates the individual's competence to perform MS audits. The IPC scheme does not identify the area of technical competence that an individual may have. The responsibility for identifying that an auditor has the necessary knowledge and understanding of the technical environment to perform an audit of a specific organization will still rest with those responsible for managing the audit process.
- 1.4 IPC contracts at the time of this Agreement with over 17 of CBs Worldwide under the "IPC Management System Auditors", the supervision of which is carried out by the ABs that are IAF MLA signatories.
- 1.5 The "IPC Management System Auditors" certification process is performed by more than 80,000 auditors. Requirements for the professional competence of personnel (auditors) are defined in Section 4 (Competence Required for each Grade of IPC Management Systems Auditors) of the "IPC Management System Auditors" General Regulations.
- 1.6 IPC delegates the responsibility of supervision of the CBs it contracts with to the corresponding IAF Accreditation Bodies, noting that harmonization of criteria applied by the different ABs is increasingly important to ensure consistency of that supervision.
- 1.7 "IPC Management System Auditors" provides the standard and framework for independent, recognized 3rd party certification of Management System Auditors based on ISO/IEC 17024.

- 1.8 The **International Accreditation Forum (IAF)** is the world association of conformity assessment accreditation bodies in the fields of management systems, products, services, process, persons, validation and verification and other similar programs of conformity assessment.
- 1.9 IAF is responsible for the harmonization and continuous improvement of the accreditation practices of its members with the ultimate goal to ensure sound technical competence of accredited CBs and V&VBs (Validation and Verification Bodies) and to support its IAF MLA.
- 1.10 The IAF MLA is established and maintained based on the requirements of ISO/IEC 17011 through regular peer evaluations and is the tool by which IAF contributes to the elimination of technical barriers to trade and to promoting the free circulation of certificates issued by accredited CBs and V&VBs.

2. Administration and Cooperation

- 2.1 Both IAF and IPC, by means of this formal MoU, have decided to develop and maintain a close cooperation between the two organizations to ensure harmonization in the accreditation practices performed by IAF members for the Schemes and to cooperate in the continuous improvement of the Schemes with the final goal of assuring the highest level of competence in the Schemes' accredited CBs.
- 2.2 IAF and IPC shall comply with the respective requirements of IAF PL3 *Policies and Procedures on the IAF MLA Structure and for Expansion of the Scope of the IAF MLA*, operating and administrating in an open, non-discriminatory and transparent manner, avoiding conflicts of interest or limitation on the acceptance of CBs or ABs other than relevant technical considerations.
- 2.3 The Schemes will be open to all CBs that are accredited by IAF MLA signatories.
- 2.4 IPC will only work with IAF MLA signatories. IPC will stop working with an AB that is no longer a signatory to the IAF MLA.

3. Information Exchange

In order to achieve such goals, both organizations have agreed upon the following:

- 3.1 IPC shall inform the IAF of the following:
 - a) Changes to any of the schemes listed in Schedule 1, that may impact compliance with IAF PL3.
 - b) Any revision/extension of the Schemes' standards/documents.
 - c) Outcomes from any AB workshop held by IPC on the Schemes.
 - d) Feedback IPC may have regarding the IAF MLA signatory ABs.
- 3.2 IAF shall inform IPC of the following:
 - a) When an IAF MLA signatory with a sub-scope of one or more of the Schemes has been suspended or had their IAF MLA signatory status withdrawn.
 - b) Any general or technical questions regarding the interpretation of the Schemes' standards/documents.

- c) Changes in policy, procedure or documentation that may have an impact on the IAF MLA and Scheme sub-scope.

4. Mandatory Interpretation of the Scheme Documents

- 4.1 “IPC Management System Auditors” documents and modules shall be prepared using the “IPC Management System Auditors” Procedure for the setting and revision of “IPC Management System Auditors” Standards.

This shall include a public review phase comprising two rounds of comment submissions by interested parties, each lasting 60 days. The second round of comment may generally be conducted following completion of two trial audits in the field with feedback being provided to organizations that made the comment. A summary of comments shall be available on the “IPC Management System Auditors” Website.

- 4.2 The IAF will be considered as a stakeholder and invited during any public consultation period of the standard revision process.
- 4.3 The review period for the “IPC Management System Auditors” normative documents shall be five (5) years. “IPC Management System Auditors” normative documents shall be available free of charge on the IPC website (www.ipcaweb.org).
- 4.4 The IPC will provide new draft version document(s) with a gap analysis and proposed transition plan for implementation of the new version documents to IAF in order to make sure, that the scheme continues to comply with the requirements of IAF PL3.
- 4.5 The need for the development of specific IAF application documents for inclusion of publicly owned standards/normative documents in the IAF MLA shall be proposed by the IAF Technical Committee and the need for additional preparation of peer evaluation by the IAF MLA Committee as specified in IAF PL3.

5. Implementation

- 5.1 IAF and IPC shall each bear their own costs.
- 5.2 The Schemes will be included as a sub-scope under the main scope of certification of persons, ISO/IEC 17024. Those ABs currently providing accreditations to one or more of the Schemes will be able to apply for an IAF MLA scope extension for the relevant scheme(s) through provision of a signed self-declaration once this MoU is signed.
- 5.3 The revision of the implementation of this MoU is in the scope of the MLA Peer evaluation to the IAF certification of persons MLA signatories working in one or more of the Schemes.

6. Confidentiality

- 6.1 IAF shall hold all Confidential Information in strictest confidence and shall only use it for the purpose for which it was provided and shall not disclose or make available any Confidential Information to any third party without the prior written consent of IPC.

7. Term

- 7.1 This MoU shall commence from the original Date of Signing and, unless terminated earlier according to clause 8, continues indefinitely.

8. Cancellation

- 8.1 This MoU between IPC and IAF can be cancelled by either party in writing with a period of notice of three months.

SCHEDULE 1

IPC schemes endorsed for inclusion as sub-scopes to the IAF MLA:



1. IPC MANAGEMENT SYSTEM AUDITORS certification scheme

Level 4 - IPC Management System Auditors certification scheme Issue 6

Level 5 - IPC Management System Auditors certification scheme Issue 6,
Section 4

End of List

Execution of the MoU

International Accreditation Forum, Inc.	IPC
 Emanuele Riva IAF Chair Signature of authorised person	 Dr Tommy Lo IPC Chairman Signature of authorised person

Date of MoU: June 27, 2023