

# Suspension, Withdrawal, Restoring, Renewing, Refusing, and Cancellation of Certificates



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## 1 Purpose

This documented procedure describes suspension, withdrawal, restoring, renewing, refusing of a certificate, change of scope of a certificate and termination of contracts. Termination of contracts includes also full termination of client cooperation.

## 2 Area of application

This procedure applies to the TNSA CERT and their auditors. In particular, this procedure applies to all types of certificates (management systems) and is intended for all employees who are involved in the suspension, withdrawal, restoring, renewing, refusing, termination and change of scope of a certificate.

## 3 Definitions

**Complete terminations:** Includes all certificates in all standards a customer holds and is equivalent to a dissolved business relationship with the customer.

**Partial terminations:** Affects individual standards or certificates in the portfolio of a client. Happens especially with combined management systems or various product certifications. This means that although a certification has been terminated, other services are still being delivered and thus a business relationship with the customer continues. Also, formal terminations, which arise for example in the modification of an existing product with a new certificate generation are counting on this.

## 4 Responsibilities

Decisions, which are defined under 2 (scope) are made by the Head of Certification Body. For the pursuit of individual activities, specially trained employees are appointed. These names are listed for each jurisdiction in the document "*designated employee*".

Typical can be:

- Negative recommendations of the auditor as part of the audit result
- Missing deadlines (NC-Management, Surveillance audit etc.)
- Insolvency or non-payment of liabilities
- Change of scope
- Non-compliance with certification regulations
- Termination
- Liquidation of client

In all cases, the requirements of the general certification regulation for management systems apply. Initiations are usually noted by managers who are responsible for the particular client. Withdraw, restore, renew, refuse, change the scope or terminate this information is forwarded to the designated

employee. This employee is responsible for taking necessary actions i.e. preparation of cover letters, dissemination of necessary following sending out letters, as well as consultations (if necessary) and compliance with deadlines. Maintenance of external data bases (such as SANAS etc.) is within the responsibility of certification service department respectively

The activation of a suspended certificate is also carried out exclusively by a designated employee.

## **5 Description**

### **5.1 General approach**

The conditions for the use of the sign and the certificates are set out in the ZACR-FRM-CXX-019 General Conditions of Certification and be with the ordering part of the contract.

Typically, the certification will suspend or withdraws a certification in case of

- the certified management system – including the requirement concerning the efficiency of the management system – does not meet the certification requirements permanently or significantly, e.g. change of scope,
- the certified customer not allowing the conduct of a surveillance or re-certification audit within the given time frame,
- the certified customers not allowing the performance of the surveillance or recertification audits in the defined frequency,
- insolvency of the certificate holder or non-payment of liabilities
- voluntary request by the customer for a suspension,
- deadlines are not met (e.g.: non-conformity management, veto review of the certification file, surveillance audits).

The certification body shall restore the suspended certification if the issue that has resulted in the suspension has been resolved. Failure to resolve the issues that have resulted in the suspension in a time established by the certification body shall result in withdrawal or reduction of the scope of certification. Once a certificate has been withdrawn it may only be regained through an initial audit.

Exceptions, which also possibly exist by specific requirements may override this general rule. An individual decision of the Certification Body remains possible.

A renewing means a recertification and the new issue of the certificate.

A refusing relates to the non-issuance of the certificate. The refusing of the certificate is possible, when the company doesn't meet the requirements of the relevant standard or it is not able to be certified.

A termination may be made in time or prematurely (early). In case of early termination prior to the expiration date of the certificate, additional penalties will be due compensating for not conducting the agreed surveillance audits. This is already covered in the accepted offer and accepted by the customer. In such early cases, an invoice is to be generated. The invoice may be sent out with the letter of termination but may also be sent out individually. An individual decision of the Certification Body remains possible.

### **5.2 Details**

A suspension or withdrawal may be noted by various parties. In particular auditors, profit centres and international subsidiaries recognise those by means of pending lists, audits conducted and the associated reports. Suspensions and withdrawals requested by customers may also be communicated in any other way by the customers, this includes also terminations.

The information is passed to the responsible account manager, this may also be the auditor himself. Is a consultation with the customer required, for example in case of questions, this is also performed before transmission to the designated staff for further processing by the account manager.

For cancellations a consultation is generally required to check the backgrounds and possibly regain the customers. It is also to always check that the termination must be registered as a complaint in the complaint management.

Communication with the customer in advance of termination or withdrawal of a certificate is stored.

The suspension, withdrawal or cancellation of the certificate is forwarded to the designated employee. This must be done promptly in order to promote rapid processing. In foreign companies, the designated person usually is the Quality Manager.

If there are any questions on the part of the designated employee, these must be clarified first. The customer service representative is obliged to treat these prioritized questions. Once all questions have been clarified, a cover letter to the customer by the designated employee is sent. This must include both the reason for the suspension or withdrawal of the certificate are available, as well as a detailed justification for suspension / withdrawal. In case of cancellation the customer this is also confirmed, as well as a description of its duties. This mainly concerns the obligation not to use the certificate as of a date to be specified, as well as the return of the original certificate. Are there other obligations, for example, by requirements of the relevant standards, these must be reported. Details may be described in the standard-specific documentation.

The termination letter or letter to the suspension of the certificate is signed by the Head of certification body or Deputy Head of Certification Body.

In the case of time limits, which presuppose action by the customer or by the customer service, the designated staff is committed to proactively address these again by resubmission. Examples are documentation requirements or the return of a certificate, or transfer of follow-up actions to the account manager or.

In the next step, all persons involved in the process are informed by the designated employee and forwarded follow-up tasks.

The information that a suspension, termination, etc. must be processed in ZACR-FRM-CXX-030 DATA BASE CLIENTS is to be directed to by the designated employee after completing his previous activities. This is usually done by email.

The process will be filed by the designated employee.

## **6 Quality Assurance**

Upcoming suspensions and withdrawals are available for responsible person through “open ZA” lists in ZACR-FRM-CXX-030 DATA BASE CLIENTS. This also serves as a means of control.

Evaluations of terminations are made for the management review.