

IAS GUIDANCE ON CLASSIFICATION OF FINDINGS

Purpose:

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance for IAS assessors on documenting Corrective Action Requests (CARs), Concerns, or Comments identified during assessments of Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs).

Definitions:

Corrective Action Request (CAR): Failure to address, or failure to implement a mandatory requirement of the relevant standard, international requirement or IAS accreditation criteria.

Concern: Minor non-conformity with the requirements of the relevant standard, international requirement or IAS accreditation criteria.

Comment: Any finding not classified as a CAR or Concern that is an observed event or a potential risk that could become a CAR or Concern. Comments may also identify an opportunity for improvement or a compliment on best practices.

Guidance:

ISO/IEC 17011:2004 specifies in clause 7.9.1 "The accreditation body shall, prior to making a decision, be satisfied that the information is adequate to decide that the requirements for accreditation have been fulfilled."

IAS accreditation decision makers shall confirm, prior to making a decision, that:

- a) The information provided by the assessment team is sufficient with respect to the accreditation requirements and the proposed scope of accreditation;
- b) The effectiveness of corrective actions has been reviewed, accepted and verified for all CARs, and Concerns that represent:
 - 1) failure to fulfill one or more requirements of the relevant standard, international requirement or IAS accreditation criteria;
 - 2) any situation that raises significant doubt about the ability of the CAB's management system to achieve its intended outputs;
 - 3) a minor lapse in the compliance with the relevant standard, international requirement or IAS accreditation criteria.
- c) The CAB's planned corrective action has been reviewed and accepted for any other Concerns.

ANNEX

EXAMPLE OF CLASSIFICATION AND CONSEQUENCES OF CORRECTIVE ACTION REQUESTS, CONCERNS AND COMMENTS

Classification	If detected during an initial assessment	If detected during all other assessments
Comments	<p>Comments are observed events or a potential risk that is highlighted as an opportunity for improvement.</p> <p>A written response from the CAB to the comments raised during an assessment is strongly encouraged, but is not mandatory. It is recommended that Comments be included in the CAB's internal audit and management review process to ensure they are addressed.</p>	<p>No consequences, as comments are observed events or a potential risk that is highlighted as an opportunity for improvement.</p> <p>A written response to the comments raised during an assessment is encouraged by accredited CABs but is not mandatory. It is recommended that Comments be included in the CAB's internal audit and management review process to ensure they are addressed.</p>
Concerns	<p>Minor lapse in compliance with the relevant standard, international requirement or IAS accreditation criteria.</p> <p>Objective evidence of corrective action, intended action or plan of correction, which includes a timeline for implementation, must be submitted for review and acceptance by IAS within 30 days of the issuance of an assessment report.</p> <p>Accreditation will not be granted until all concerns are satisfactorily addressed with supporting evidence.</p>	<p>Minor lapse in compliance with the relevant standard, international requirement or IAS accreditation criteria.</p> <p>Objective evidence of corrective action, intended action or plan of correction, which includes a timeline for implementation, must be submitted for review and acceptance by IAS within 30 days of the issuance of an assessment report.</p> <p>Corrective action may be verified through review of documentation during the next planned assessment or during an out-of-schedule on-site assessment depending on the nature of the Concern.</p>
Corrective Action Requests (CARs)	<p>Noncompliance with the relevant standard, international requirement or IAS accreditation criteria.</p> <p>Accreditation will not be granted until all CARs are satisfactorily addressed with supporting evidence.</p> <p>Objective evidence of corrective action must be submitted within 30 days of the issuance of the assessment report.</p> <p>An additional verification assessment may be required. Where submissions regarding CARs are not satisfactory, accreditation will not be granted until the applicant CAB satisfactorily resolves all CARs.</p> <p>CARs may result from deviation in the compliance of the applicant CAB from the relevant standard, international requirement or IAS accreditation criteria.</p>	<p>Noncompliance with the relevant standard, international requirement or IAS accreditation criteria.</p> <p>Accreditation will not be renewed until all CARs are satisfactorily addressed with supporting evidence.</p> <p>Objective evidence of corrective action must be submitted within 30 days of the issuance of the assessment report.</p> <p>An additional verification assessment may be required. Where submissions addressing CARs are not satisfactory, accreditation will not be renewed until the CAB satisfactorily resolves all CARs.</p> <p>CARs may result from repeated Concerns raised in previous assessments regarding the relevant standard, international requirement or IAS accreditation criteria.</p>