1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to determine the methods and responsibilities to be applied to perform the system certification audits.

2. DEFINITIONS

Major Inconvenience: Inconvenience effecting the ability of management system for achieving the target.

Minor Inconvenience: Inconvenience not effecting the ability of management system for achieving the target.

Observation: Positive or negative opinions related to the management system subject to the certification so that the audit team helps in the next audit or improves the system of customer body.

Multi-Site Body: The site is the place where is registered legally with headquarter of customer body and is covered by management system implemented by headquarter and corrective activities can be carried out upon the demand of headquarter, and the multi-site customer bodies are the customer bodies having such sites.

3. APPLICATION

3.1. Audit Types

3.1.1. First Certification Audits

QMS and EMS first certification audits are performed in two (2) stages as Stage 1 and Stage 2

Stage 1

The purpose of Stage 1 is basically to determine whether the body is ready for Stage 2 or not. The purpose of Stage 1 is to realize the followings:

a) To review the information documented in management system of customer body,
b) To evaluate the location of customer body and site-specific conditions and to discuss with the personnel of customer body to determine the readiness for Stage 2,
c) To understand the standard conditions related to reviewing the status of customer body and function of especially basic performance or significant aspects, processes, targets and management systems,
d) To obtain required information about the scope of management system including the followings:

- Customer sites,
- Processes and equipment used,
- Control levels (Especially for the customers having sites more than one),
- Applicable situational and regulatory conditions,

e) To review the source assignment for Stage 2 and to conclude contract with customer body about the details of Stage 2,
f) To focus on plans of Stage 2 by understanding the management system of customer and site operations in an adequate way in the regard of standard of management system or other documents including provisions,
g) To evaluate whether the review of internal audits and management is planned and

realized or not, and to evaluate whether the customer body is ready for Stage 2 or not by means of application level of management system.

In case of the fact that Stage 1 is realized without visiting the customer site, there is no necessity to prepare an Audit Plan. In these audits, documents and information obtained from body is examined by Head Auditor in charge. If required, the Lead Auditor can demand detailed information related to the inapprehensible aspects by contacting with the body to be audited.

Whether Stage 1 is performed in the body site or it is performed without visiting the body site, Stage 1 Audit Report is prepared and provided to the customer for the Stage 1 audit findings including the areas to be classified as inconvenience in Stage 2.

The corrective activities to be done in relation with the inconvenience found during Stage 1 must be completed before Stage 2. The Stage 2 cannot be performed before verifying that the corrective activities are done.

In case of the fact that Stage 1 is realized in the workplace of customer, Stage 1 is realized in the direction of Audit Plan and according to the article 3.2 of this procedure.

Stage 2

The purpose of Stage 2 is to evaluate the application including the efficiency of management system of customer body. The stage 2 is performed in all sites of customer body according to the sampling plan. Stage 2 includes the followings at least:

a) Information and evidence about the conformity with the applicable management system standard or other regulatory documents,
b) Tracing, measuring, recording and reviewing basic performance targets (Being coherent with the expectations as per applicable management system standard or other regulatory documents),
c) Management system ability of customer body and performance related to the fulfilment of applicable statue, regulatory and structural conditions,
d) Operational control of processes of customer body,
e) Internal audit and management review,
f) Management responsibility for customer body policies.

Stage 2 is an audit to examine all the activities in the scope in which the body applies for certification and all the articles of reference standards or regulatory documents for the purpose of determining the conformity with the relative standards, regulatory documents and system documents.

After Stage 2, an Audit Report is prepared including the audit findings and – if available – the inconveniences related to the aspects to be investigated above, and provided to the customer.

The corrective activities to be performed in relation with the inconveniences found in Stage 2 must be determined by body within 2 (two) weeks at the latest, and notified to ASCERT.

Minor inconveniences must be completed within one (1) month, and major inconveniences must be completed within three (3) months at the latest.

Closing minor inconveniences can be realized with document or record examinations generally without requiring any tracing audit.

In closing major and critical inconveniences, site audit can be performed as well as document or record examinations.

If incomplete nonconformities are not notified to ASCERT, the procedure is performed according to the Suspension and Withdrawal Procedure.

3.1.2. Surveillance Activities

Surveillance activities include field audit to ensure that the certified management system of the customer body meets the specified requirements of the reference standard. Other surveillance activities include the following:

a) The questions that ASCERT directs to the certified customer body in certifying matters,
b) Expressions related to certification in the activities of the certified customer body (eg promotional materials, internet page),
c) Certified information requests from certified customer body (in paper or electronic media),
d) Other tools for monitoring the performance of the certified customer.

Surveillance Audit

In surveillance audits, the entire system does not have to be audited. It is carried out in addition to other surveillance activities to ensure that the certified management systems fulfill the requirements until re-certification audit. Surveillance audit includes at least the following:

1) Internal audits and management's review,
2) Review of the activities carried out for the nonconformities identified during the previous audit,
3) The handling of complaints,
4) Implementation of the objectives of the certified customer body and the effectiveness of the management system in terms of the objectives of the relevant management system/s
5) The development of planned activities aimed at continuous improvement,
6) Maintaining operational control,
7) Review of the changes,
8) Other references to brand/Logo and/or certification.

Standard articles to be examined in each surveillance audit are specified in the Audit Program.

In the surveillance audit, an audit report containing the audit findings and, if any, the nonconformities detected, is generated and communicated to the customer.

Corrective actions to be taken in relation to minor nonconformities in surveillance audits should be notified to ASCERT within 2 (two) weeks at the latest.

Minor nonconformities should be completed within a maximum of (1) one month, and major nonconformities within a maximum of three (3) months.

3.1.3. Re-certification Audit

The re-certification audit is carried out to evaluate the fulfillment of the requirements of the relevant standard or other provisional document. The purpose of the re-certification audit is to confirm that the appropriateness and effectiveness of the management system is sustained as a whole and that the relevance and applicability for the certification scope is maintained.

The re-certification audits are carried out in such a way as to audit the related management system standards or all the elements of the document.

The re-certification audit should also ensure that the performance of the management system is reviewed throughout the certification period and that the review of previous surveillance audit reports is included.

The re-certification audit is carried out to include a field audit that addresses the following requirements:

a) The internal and external changes and their impact on the scope of certification and the effectiveness of the management system as a whole in the light of applicability,
b) The demonstrated commitment to maintaining the effectiveness and improvement of the management system to improve overall performance,
c) Whether or not the operation of the certified management system contributes to the realization of the customer body's policy and objectives.

In the re-certification audit, an audit report is prepared which contains the audit findings related to the issues foreseen to be examined above and the nonconformities determined, and this report is communicated to the customer.

ASCERT specifies the time limit for correction and corrective actions to be applied when there are instances of nonconformities during the re-certification audit or when there is a lack of evidence of conformity, taking into account the document validity period.

In re-certification audits, findings obtained as a result of audit and follow-up of corrective actions to eliminate nonconformities are carried out as in the first certification control.

3.1.4. Short-term Audits

In the body of the certified body, short-term audits can be carried out for changes that may occur in the following cases:

a) The statutory, commercial or institutional status or ownership,
b) Body and management (such as key manager, decision making and technical staff),
c) Contact address and fields,

d) Scope of transactions under the certified management system,
e) Major changes in the management system and processes.

Scope Extension Audit
The scope extension audit is carried out in such a way as to audit the relevant body for all items that may be affected by a surveillance audit or scope change, in line with the new scope demanded by the body, according to the agreed state.

Address Change Control
The address change control is carried out in such a way as to audit the reference standard or any item that may be affected by the address change of the provisional document.

Follow-up Audit
Follow-up supervision is carried out in order to determine that in case of nonconformities detected in the audits, the detected nonconformities have been eliminated and the corrective actions thereto have been effective.

Audits on Complaint
Audits on the complaint are carried out in order to determine the nonconformities subject to the complaint and to determine that the detected nonconformities have been eliminated and the corrective actions related thereto have been effective.

3.1.5. Audit of Multiple Field Body
In multiple field bodies, the scope of certification should be the same for each field, and the body should use the same management systems for these fields.

Similar products should be produced or similar services should be provided in all the fields where the activities of the body to be audited are carried out.

The relevant management system should be established and guided at the body center. Internal audits should be performed on all fields. The system of each field within the certification must have been subject to the internal audit before the audit of ASCERT.

The following conditions must be met in the audit of multiple field bodies:
- System certification and system changes,
- Management's review,
- Complaints,
- Evaluation of corrective/preventive activities,
- Planning and evaluation of internal audits.

No certification is made or the current certification is canceled if there are continuing nonconformities in the relevant management system and/or implementation, at least in one of the central office or the fields, in follow-up audits carried out for detected nonconformities, in multiple field bodies.

3.2. Implementation of Audits

3.2.1. General

An opening meeting is held at the beginning of the audit and a closing meeting is held at the end of the audit.

The audit team must:

a) Examine the structure, policies, procedures, records and related documents of the customer body's management system,
b) Determine that they meet all the requirements of the intended scope of certification,
c) Determine that processes and procedures are established, are effectively implemented and maintained to provide a basis for relying on the customer body's management system,
d) Report to the customer the inconsistencies between their activities and the customer's policy, objectives and objectives and outcomes.

3.2.2. Creation of the Audit Plan

In the first certification audits, the Audit Plan for Stage 1 is prepared by the Lead Auditor prior to Stage 1 and the Audit Plan for Stage 2 during the preparation of the Stage 1 report.

The Audit Plan for surveillance audits, re-certification audits, and other custom audits are generated by the Lead Auditor, who has been assigned prior to the audit.

The Audit Plan is designed to ensure that each Auditor independently performs a minimum of 8 hours of audit per day. Candidate Auditors and Technical Experts are not included in the period of audit/day.

Taking into accounts of scope of certification, standards to be referenced to certification, total audit duration, body functions, processes and the product/service/process or standard items associated with the field of expertise of the Auditor and the Technical Expert constituting the audit team in creating the Audit Plan, it should be arranged in such a way that each staff member can be audited on the basis of their qualifications.

While an Audit Plan is being developed, the time spent between meals and the transportation times spent between the body's fields, are not included in the audit period.

If audits involve visits to production / service area, site, branch etc. the approximate transportation times for these visits should be determined by consultation with the relevant body and these periods should be excluded from the inspection period while the Audit Plan is being developed.

When preparing an Audit Plan for follow-up audits, at a minimum, non-compliances that need to be followed up should be considered.

3.2.3. Opening Meeting

If appropriate, an official opening meeting is carried out with the persons responsible for the processes and functions to be audited and the senior management of the customer body. The

purpose of the opening meeting is to provide a brief explanation of how the audit activities will be carried out and the explanation is given by the Lead Auditor.

The opening meeting is held by the Lead Auditor in line with the agenda contained in the Opening / Closing Meeting Form. At the end of the opening meeting, the relevant parts of the Opening / Closing Meeting Form are completed and signed by the members of the audit team and the participants.

At the opening meeting the following points are taken into consideration:

a) Representation of participants including their duties,
b) Confirmation of the scope of certification,
c) Other arrangements related to the customer body such as confirmation of the audit plan (including type, scope objectives and criteria of audit), any change and the date and time of closing meeting and interviews between the audit team and the senior management of the customer body,
d) Confirmation of the official communication channels between the audit team and the customer body,
e) Confirmation of the availability of resources and facilities required by the audit team,
f) Confirmation of confidentiality matters,
g) Confirmation of occupational safety, emergency and safety procedures about the audit team,
h) Confirmation of the status, duty and identity of each guide and supervisor,
i) Reporting methodology, including any classification of audit findings,
j) Providing information on the conditions for terminating the audit prematurely,
k) Carrying out the audit and control including the approval and audit plan, audit activities and audit methods of the audit team and Lead Auditor, who represent ASCERT,
l) Approval of the status of the previous appropriate review or audit findings,
m) Procedures and methods for conducting sample-based audits,
n) Approval of the language to be used during the audit,
o) Confirmation for informing of the customer body about the progress of the audit and about any situation during the audit,
p) Giving the customer body the opportunity to ask questions.

If the supervisors (members, consultants of the customer body, personnel of the accreditation body, regulators, etc.) are present in the audits, the reason for this is assessed by the ASCERT audit team and customer body.

3.2.4. Communication during the Audit

During the audit, the audit team periodically assesses the progress of the audit and exchanges information. The Lead auditor re-arranges the required business situation among the audit team members by communicating periodically for the progress of the audit and any concern of the customer body.

In the event of an audit evidence of inaccessible audit purposes or an indicator of an urgent and significant risk (e.g. security), the Lead Auditor informs the customer body and ASCERT

to determine appropriate action. Such actions may include the audit purposes or modification or termination the scope of the audit, altering or re-confirming the audit plan. The Lead Auditor reports to ASCERT result of the action.

The Lead Auditor audits any changes to the scope of the audit that occur in the progress of the audit activities conducted at the site with the customer body and reports this to ASCERT.

3.2.5. Obtaining and Verifying Information

Audit shall be carried out by examining the interviews, documents and records with sampling methods to confirm whether the management systems are being applied in accordance with the standards or the scope and document stating a provision and the documentation created, by observing the works and conditions in the relevant fields.

The audit is carried out by the audit team in accordance with the Audit Plan.

It is examined using the relevant audit report that the management system is established, documented and effectively implemented in accordance with the requirements of the relevant standards during the audit.

During the audit, information on purposes, scope and criteria of the audit (including information on interfaces between functions, activities and processes) is obtained by appropriate sampling and verified to be audit evidence.

The method of collecting information includes, but not limited to them, the following:

a) Interviews,
b) Observations of processes and activities,
c) Supervision of documentation and records.

The audit team ensures that the supervisors do not intervene in the audit or influence audit results.

Each audit team member shall carry out the audit with a guide.

Guides assist the audit team to facilitate the audit. The audit team ensures that the guides do not intervene in the audit or influence audit results. The responsibilities of the guides are given below:

a) Arranging the time for interviews and making contact,
b) Arranging visits to specific parts of the site or body,
c) Ensuring known rules regarding site safety and security procedures that are considered by members of the audit team,
d) Being audit witness on behalf of customer,
e) Providing explanation or information if required by an Auditor.

Positive and negative findings and observations related to the examinations and observations made during the audit by the members of the audit team are recorded in the relevant audit report.

During the audit, the use of the logo of the body is also observed.

If the difficulty of making the audit is understood, the Lead Auditor shall notify the reasons to the customer body's customer representative, make an official report by suspending the audit and terminate the audit. Then the written report is submitted to the Certification Manager.

3.2.6. Determination and Recording of Audit Findings

Audit findings summarizing convenience and detailing inconvenience are reported and recorded to make a conscious certification decision or to provide sustainable certification.

Improvement opportunities can be defined and recorded in appropriate situations. Audit findings determined as inconvenience are recorded as opportunities for improvement.

Inconvenience finding, which is determined in accordance with a particular case, is recorded and includes a clear inconvenience statement which defines in detail the objective evidence on which the inconvenience is based. Inconveniences are negotiated with the customer body to ensure that the inconveniences are understood and the evidence is accurate and correct. But the Auditor will refrain from proposing the reason and the solution of the inconvenience.

The Lead auditor attempts to resolve opinions that differ between the customer body and the audit team about the audit evidence or findings and records unresolved issues.

3.2.7. Preparation of Audit Results

Before the closing meeting the audit team carries out the following duties under the responsibility of the Lead Auditor:

a) To inspect audit findings and other proper information collected during audit against audit purposes and criteria and to determine inconveniences,
b) To provide mutual agreement on audit results by considering the natural uncertainty of the audit process,
c) To agree upon all necessary monitoring activities,
d) The convenience of the audit program is approved or any changes required for future audits (e.g. scope of certification, audit duration or date, audit frequency, audit team competency) are defined.

Lead Auditor invites the customer representative to disclose the inconveniences found and requests the signing of Inconvenience Notification Forms to confirm that the determined inconveniences have been accepted. Signed Inconvenience Notification Forms shall be submitted to the Customer's representative to be sent to ASCERT within 2 (two) weeks by specifying the activities that the customer body intends to perform about the determined inconveniences and completion durations.

A copy of the Inconvenience Notification Forms is received by the Lead Auditor for later delivery to the Certification Manager

In addition, information is provided by the Lead Auditor about positive or negative observations of the management system in order to help in the next audit or to improve the customer body's system.

If the customer body avoids signing the Inconvenience Notification Forms, the Lead Auditor shall prepare a report and submit the Inconvenience Notification Forms to the Certification Manager with his / her signature.

3.2.8. Closing Meeting

An official closing meeting is held where the participants are recorded and, if appropriate, the persons responsible for the audited processes or functions and the top management of the customer body are present. The purpose of the closing meeting held by the Lead Auditor is the presentation of the results of the audit, including advices on certification. Each inconvenience is presented clearly and time is given them to respond.

The closing meeting is held by the Lead Auditor in accordance with the agenda contained in the Opening / Closing Meeting Form.

In the meeting, the Lead Auditor shall present the positive and/or negative results of the audit carried out, if any, and the inconveniences clearly. He/she gives information about audit applications.

The closing meeting also includes the following aspects:

a) Expressing to the customer body that the evidence obtained on the ground of sampling information and thus expressing the uncertainty,
b) Reporting method and duration, including any classification of audit findings,
c) The process of dealing with inconveniences of ASCERT, including any result of the customer body's certification status,
d) The time given to the customer body to correct any inconvenience detected during the audit and to prepare a plan for corrective action,
e) Post-audit activities of ASCERT,
f) Information on complaint examination and objection processes.

The customer body is given the opportunity to ask questions. Different opinions about audit findings or results are discussed between the audit team and the customer body and, if possible, a decision is made. Unresolved different opinions are recorded and reported to ASCERT.

At the Closing Meeting, the Lead Auditor expresses that;

- If inconvenience is not determined - a positive opinion about certification or re-certification is presented to the Decision Maker,
- Follow-up audit will be performed if it is required and a positive opinion about certification or re-certification is presented to the decision maker only after the implementation of corrective actions for the determined inconveniences.

If it is not recommended that follow-up audit is required for inconveniences, it can also be controlled by examining documents and records whether these inconveniences have been corrected or not. Customer body cannot be recommended for certification unless it has not taken the corrective actions for inconveniences.

In surveillance audits, it is stated that a recommendation will be given to suspend the certification, if the following conditions arise:

- Finding of major inconveniences as a result of performed audits,
- Uncorrected minor inconveniences detected during audits within the specified durations,
- Detection of non-fulfillment of legal terms,
- Failure to comply with the certification rules.

In follow-up audits of suspended customer body, if the identified inconveniences are eliminated, the continuity of the certification validity is expressed, if the identified inconveniences are not eliminated, it is expressed that the withdrawal of the certification will be recommended.

At the end of the closing meeting, the relevant parts of the Opening / Closing Meeting Form are filled and signed by the members of the audit team and the participants.

At the end of the meeting, the Lead Auditor shall submit the relevant forms about the assessment of audit team to the Customer's representative and be requested to fill for assessment.

3.2.9. Audit Report

ASCERT submits a written report to customer body for each audit. Audit team may define the improvement opportunities, but cannot recommend specific resolutions. Audit report belongs to ASCERT.

The Lead Auditor prepares the Audit Report by analyzing all the information and audit evidence obtained during Stage 1 and Stage 2 audits to review the audit findings and decide on the audit results.

The audit report number is "Customer No".

The Lead Auditor is responsible for ensuring the preparation of the audit report and for its content. The audit report ensures that the audit, which may enable the certification decision, is accurate, basic and clear, and includes or refers to the following:

a) Definition of ASCERT,
b) Name and address of customer body and customer representative,
c) Audit type (For example, initial certification, surveillance or re-certification audit or special audits),
d) Audit criteria,
e) Audit purposes,

f) Scope of the audit, in particular the organization structure or the identification of the functional units or processes of the audited customer body and duration of the audit,
g) Any deviations from the audit plan and the reasons for it,
h) Significant conditions affecting audit program,
i) Introduction of the Lead Auditor, members of the audit team and accompanying persons,
j) Locations and dates of audit activities (site or off-site, permanent and temporary places),
k) Audit findings that are consistent with the conditions of the audit type and refers to evidences and results,
l) If any, significant changes affecting the management system of the customer body occurred since the last audit,
m) If defined, unresolved matters,
n) If the audit is convenient, its features such as combined, common or integrated,
o) Expression that the audit is carried out on the grounds of sampling of available information,
p) Recommendation of audit team,
q) Control of the use of certification documents and brands accordingly by the audited customer body,
r) Verification of the effectiveness of applicable corrective actions on previously identified inconveniences.

The report includes the following:

a) A statement of the convenience and effectiveness of the management system, together with a summary of the evidence about the following:
   - Ability of the management system to meet applicable requirements and expected outputs,
   - Internal audit and management review process,
b) A result about the convenience of the scope of certification,
c) Confirmation of that audit purposes are met.

3.2.10. Analysis of reasons for inconveniences

ASCERT requires the customer body to perform a reason analysis and define corrections and corrective actions carried out or to be carried out and to eliminate the detected inconveniences within a specified period of time.

3.2.11. Effectiveness of Corrections and Corrective Actions

ASCERT reviews the corrections, the reasons and applicable corrective actions determined by the customer body.

ASCERT confirms the effectiveness of each correction and corrective action carried out.

Obtained evidence is recorded to support the resolution of inconveniences.

Customer body is informed about the review and correction results.

The customer body is informed whether an additional full audit, an additional limited audit, or documented evidence (to be confirmed in the next audits) is required to confirm effective correction and corrective actions or not.

If deviations from the terms of relevant standards or legal documents and from the system documents of the body are detected, inconveniences shall be defined as minor or major, in the Inconvenience Notification Form and signed by the Lead Auditor.

3.2.12. Information on Initial Certification Decision

The information for the initial certification decision provided by the audit team to the Certification Manager and the Decision maker in this way shall be prepared to include, at a minimum, the following:

a) Audit reports,
b) Comments on inconveniences and, where applicable, corrections and corrective actions performed by the customer,
c) Confirmation of information provided to ASCERT for the review of application,
d) Advice on whether to issue a certificate or not together with terms and observations.

The Audit Report annexes to be prepared are given below:

- Stage 1 Audit Report
- If audit is on site- Stage 1 Audit Plan
- If audit is on site - Stage 1 Opening/Closing Meeting Form
- If any- Nonconformity Notification Forms
- Stage 2 Audit Plan
- Stage 2 Opening/Closing Meeting Form
- If any- Records with respect to corrections/corrective actions

Audit Report and annexes are prepared by the Lead auditor completely and submitted to the manager of certification.

4. RELATED DOCUMENTS AND REFERENCES

BQF.37 Audit plan
BQF.40 Opening/Closing Meeting form
BQF.41 Nonconformity notification form
BQF.44 Stage 1 Audit Report
BQF.45 Audit Report

5. REVISION INFORMATION

Rev. Date	Rev. No	Item No	Rev. Descriptions
10.06.2013	01	3.1.1.1.1.7	Accreditation Audit / Document Review Max. Possible Between 1st and 2nd Stage Audits Duration Added
26.08.2013	02	3.5	'Provision of Forms to be Used in Audit is made online at www.bqs.com.tr, Auditor Login section phrase was added.
15.10.2016	03	-	TS EN ISO / IEC 17021-1: 2015 requirements added
01.02.2017	04	-	Checklists have been removed.
01.03.2021	05	-	