

	SUSTAINABLE STEWARDSHIP PRIVATE LIMITED	Doc. No. PCP-19
	PROCEDURE FOR GRANTING, MAINTAINING, EXTENDING, REDUCING, SUSPENDING AND WITHDRAWAL OF CERTIFICATION	Rev. No: 00; Rev Date:
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1.0 Purpose:

To document, establish, implement and maintain the system for granting or refusing certification, expanding or reducing the scope of certification, suspending or restoring certification, withdrawing certification or renewing certification against management system standards referenced in the ISO/IEC 17065, applicable scheme criteria and reference documents along-with other applicable international standards for certification bodies certifying products, processes and services.

2.0 Scope:

This procedure is applicable to all audits carried out on the client during a certification cycle and geographical certification applicability is defined in specific certification scheme procedures.

These are generic procedural guidance. For scheme specific procedure additional reference shall be drawn from the following

- a) For RMCPCS – Applicable sections of section 6, 9 & 10 **PCP-23 RMC Protocol**
- b) For VCSLSP – Applicable sections of section 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 2.9, 2.10 & 2.11 **PCP-24 VCSLSP Protocol**
- c) For BEMC – Applicable sections of section 9.0 **PCP-25 BEMC Protocol**
- d) For HEALTEXPROF – Applicable sections of section 7.0 **PCP-26 HEALTEXPROF Protocol**

3.0 Responsibility:


Certification In-charge

4.0 Procedure:

4.1 General

4.1.1 SSPL shall ensure that it is responsible and retains authority for its decisions related to certification by never outsourcing the certification decision.

4.1.2 SSPL assigns at least one person to make the certification decision based on all information related to evaluation, its review, and any other relevant information. SSPL ensures that the person or committees that make the decisions for granting or refusing certification, expanding or reducing the scope of certification, suspending or restoring certification, withdrawing certification or renewing certification have not been involved in the process of evaluation.


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4.1.3 SSPL ensures that the person(s) excluding members of committees, assigned to make a certification decision are employed, or are under legally enforceable arrangement. SSPL ensures that the persons employed by, or under contract with, entities under organizational control fulfill the requirements of ISO/IEC 17065 as persons employed by, or under contract with SSPL.

SSPL shall ensure that such person(s) as stated above have the competence to evaluate the audit processes and the related recommendations of the audit team. The competence requirements are identified in the document **FT-04 Competency Matrix**.

4.1.4 The composition of certification panel who takes decision for granting or refusing maintaining, extending or reducing, suspending or restoring certification and withdrawing of certification or renewing certification is identified in document **WI-02 Certification Panel** before making a certification decision, the certification panel shall review the audit reports to confirm that:

- (a) The information provided by the audit team is sufficient with respect to the certification requirements and the scope of the certification
- (b) In case of a Critical / Major non-conformance (refer **PCP-12 Procedure for Initial Audit**), the corrections and corrective actions submitted by the client reviewed, accepted and verified for effectiveness of the actions taken i.e. the non-conformances shall be closed as per the specific scheme requirements (Ref section 5.3 of **PCP 23- RMC Protocol**, section 2.3.2.6.2(a), 2.3.2.6.3, 2.3.2.6.4 of **PCP-24 VCSLSP Protocol** , Section 3.0 of **PCP-25 BEMC Protocol**, Section 3.0 of **PCP-26 HEALTEXPROF Protocol**)
- (c) In case of minor non-conformances (refer **PCP-12 Procedure for Initial Audit**), the planned corrections and the corrective actions are reviewed and accepted by the team leader or team member i.e. the non-conformances shall be closed as per the specific scheme requirements (Ref section 5.3 of **PCP 23- RMC Protocol** or ref section 2.3.2.6.2(b), 2.3.2.6.3, 2.3.2.6.4 of **PCP-24 VCSLSP Protocol**, Section 3.0 of **PCP-25 BEMC Protocol**, Section 3.0 of **PCP-26 HEALTEXPROF Protocol**).
- (d) SSPL records each certification decision including any additional information or clarification sought from the audit team or other sources
- (e) SSPL shall notify the client of a decision not to grant certification, and shall identify the reasons for the decision.

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4.2. Granting the Certification.

4.2.1 The final audit reports after initial assessment by Certification In-charge (***FT-29 Review of Audit Reports***) are submitted to the certification panel for the technical review and approval.

4.2.2 In addition to the points stated in section 4.1.4 the certification panel shall also confirm,

- There is evidence that the client's management system complies with the certification requirements.
- Both negative and positive observations are made with respect to the client's management system
- The client is capable of meeting the agreed requirements for the product as per the scope for certification.
- The non conformances raised are meaningful and correctly graded.
- The corrections and the corrective action identified by the client appropriate and in conformity with the risk involved.
- Internal audit and management review are effective.
- The recommendation of the audit team is favorable and is justified and accepted.

4.2.3 The composition of the certification panel is addressed in ***WI-02 Certification Panel***. The certification panel shall review the audit reports and take appropriate decision. The review comments and the decision are recorded in ***FT-30 certification Panel Decision***.

4.2.4 After the decision to grant certification, arrangement is made for the issue of certificate. Initially a draft certificate is prepared and it's correctness of entries verified by the Certification In-charge.

4.2.5 Relevant Certificate is finally signed by Certification Manager.

4.2.6 If the recommendation made by the assessment team is not accepted by the panel, the client and the audit team are accordingly informed with an explanation. SSPL shall further interact with the client to initiate appropriate action to resolve the issue.

4.2.7. Certification Document: The final certificate shall be sent to the client along with conditions for the use of logo and the certification mark as applicable i.e. for RMCPSCS - ***PD-02 Rules for use of RMC plant Certification Mark Logo*** & for VCSLSP ***PD-04 Rules for use of VCSLSP Certification Mark*** and the logos in soft copy.

4.2.8 The Certification document shall include:

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4.2.8.1 Wherever applicable, the specific requirements of the scheme shall be implemented in precedence to the requirements of this document. (e.g. 9 of **PCP-23 RMC Protocol or 2.6 of PCP-24 VCSLSP Protocol**).

4.2.8.2 The certification document shall include the signature of SSPL's Certification Manager. In case of organization certification, SSPL shall annex to the certificate the list of the certified plants in the certification document.

4.2.9 Validity period of certification document: The certificate issued against any specific products, processes and services is valid as per the scheme, subject to required compliance in ensuing audits.

4.2.10 SSPL shall issue the above certification documentation only after

- a) The decision to grant or extend the scope of certification has been made
- b) Certification requirements have been fulfilled
- c) The certification agreement has been completed and signed.

4.2.11 SSPL shall maintain information on certified products in compliance to the requirements of ISO17065 and specific to the scheme in **FT- 24 Register of Applicant & Certified clients**.


4.3 Criteria for Refusing Certification

SSPL will shall refuse client Certification under following circumstances

- a) Customer do not have a documented management system that meets applicable standard or other normative documents.
- b) One internal Audit and management review cycle has not been completed and non-conformity's, if any have not been corrected.
- c) The applicant does not meet the criteria of certification and all major non-conformities, if any found during assessment have not been closed. For minor NC's corrective action has not been taken or planned has not been received.
- d) There are adverse reports/information/complaints with the SSPL about the applicant regarding the quality and effectiveness of implementation of system as per SSPL Contract terms and schemes for registration.
- e) The applicant has not paid all the fees dues.

4.4 Maintaining the Certification

The Certification is maintained for a period as per specific to the scheme under the following conditions.

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a) The Surveillance Audits are conducted as required/planned and the client has demonstrated that it continues to satisfy the requirements of the standard as confirmed by SSPL.

b) All the non-conformance raised during previous audits are closed within the time frame agreed and correction and corrective actions for the non conformities raised during the current audit are identified and accepted by SSPL as described in procedure ***PCP-12 Procedure for Initial Audit /PCP- 13 Procedure for Special, Surprise & Short Notice Audit/ PCP- 16 Procedure for Surveillance Audit/ PCP- 15 Procedure for Recertification Audit***

c) The client shall maintain suitable records of customer complaints and keep the records of investigation and remedial actions taken with respect to such complaints for verification by SSPL auditors.

d) All outstanding dues to SSPL are paid

e) The certification panel approves the audit

f) The continuation of certification is held up on the ground that the team leaders report for any nonconformity which may lead to suspension or withdrawal of certification as per specific certification scheme requirement.

h) SSPL has a system that requires the audit team leader to report to SSPL initiates a review by competent personnel, different from those who carried out the audit, to determine whether certification can be maintained;


i) Competent personnel of SSPL monitor its surveillance activities, including monitoring the reporting by its auditors/ evaluators, to confirm that the certification activity is operating effectively

4.5. Extending the Certification

4.5.1. Any request by the client for extending the scope is dealt as per specific requirements of the scheme e.g. ***PCP-23 RMC Protocol , PCP-24 VCSLSP Protocol, PCP-25 BEMC Protocol, PCP-26 HEALTEXPROF Protocol.***

4.5.2. The decision for granting extension is taken as described in sections 4.1 and 4.2 of this procedure.

4.5.3. SSPL shall issue a fresh certificate with amended scope without any change in the certification period as identified in the previous certification document. The fresh certificate shall contain revision number and date.

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4.6. Reducing the scope of Certification

4.6.1. SSPL shall decide to reduce the client's scope of certification by excluding the parts not meeting the requirements, when the client has persistently and seriously failed to meet the certification requirements for those parts of the scope of certification or if the reduction in scope is requested by the client. Such exclusions shall be consistent with the certification standard.

4.6.2. The decision for reducing the scope is taken as described in section 4.2 of the procedure.

4.6.3. SSPL shall issue a fresh certificate with amended scope without any change in the certification period as identified in the previous certification document. The fresh certificate shall contain revision number and date.

4.7 Renewing the certification or re-certification

4.7.1 SSPL shall renew the certification as per procedure ***PCP-15 Procedure for Re-certification Audit*** as Initial certification and process of re-certification shall start 3 months before of expiry of certificate.

4.7.2. SSPL shall make decisions on renewing certification based on the following,

- (a) The results of the re-certification audit
- (b) The results of the review of the system over the period of certification
- (c) Complaints received from customers of certified clients


4.7.3 The decision for re-certification is taken as described in section 4.2 of this procedure.

4.7.4 SSPL shall issue a fresh certificate as described in sections 4.2.8 and 4.2.9 of this procedure

4.8 Suspending and Withdrawing Certification

When a non-conformity with certification requirements is substantiated, as a result of evaluation, SSPL shall consider and decide upon the appropriate action i.e.

- a) Continuation of certification under conditions specified by SSPL
- b) Reduction in scope of the certification to remove the Nonconforming variant
- c) Suspension of the certification
- d) Withdrawal of the certification

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4.8.1 When appropriate actions means evaluation, review or certification decision **PCP-17 Procedure for review of Audit Report**, and 4.1 & 4.2 clauses of this document shall be complied with.

4.8.2 If the certification is terminated (upon client's request), reduction of scope, suspension or withdrawn, SSPL shall take necessary action as required by the scheme and shall initiate the process required as detailed in the respective scheme procedure e.g. **PCP-23 RMC Protocol or PCP-24 VCSLSP Protocol/ PCP-25 BEMC Protocol/ PCP-26 HELTEXPROF Protocol.**

4.8.3 If SSPL is required to suspend the certificate the Certification In-charge shall be responsible to formulate and communicate the following to the client

- a) Actions required to end the suspension and restore certification for the product(s), process (es) or service(s) as per the requirements of the specific scheme
- b) Any other action that might be required to fulfill the requirements of the specific scheme


The Certification in-charge shall be competent in their knowledge & understanding to handle all aspects of suspended certifications as defined in the competency matrix **FT-04 Competency Matrix.**

4.8.4 SSPL complies with the requirements of compliance of **PCP-17 Procedure for review of Audit Report** and 4.1 & 4.2 to carry out the evaluation, review or certification decision in order to resolve the suspension **PCP-17 Procedure for review of Audit Report & PCP-16 Procedure for Surveillance Audit** and 4.1 & 4.2 clauses of this document shall be complied to.

4.8.5 SSPL restores 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 SSPL shall result in withdrawal or reduction of the scope of certification. The suspension shall be as per the requirements of the applicable scheme.

If certification is reinstated after suspension or scope is reduced or extended the SSPL shall make all necessary modifications to formal certification documents, public information, authorizations for use of marks, Logos, etc., in order to ensure all appropriate indications exist that the product continues to be certified and exiting scope.

4.8.6 SSPL shall withdraw the certificate at the request of the certified plant, if the operation(s) in the certified plant premises can no longer be carried due to reasons of natural calamities such as flood, fire, earthquake etc., lock out declared by the management, or closure of business operations etc.

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If certification is terminated (by request of the client), suspended or withdrawn, scope of certification is reduced the SSPL takes actions make all necessary modifications to formal certification documents, public information, authorizations for use of marks, etc., in order to ensure it provides no indication that the product continues to be certified. Reduced scope of certification or termination, as the case maybe is clearly communicated to the client and clearly specified in certification documentation and public information.

4.8.7 Upon request from any interested party SSPL shall correctly state the status of certification of a client's management system as being suspended, withdrawn or reduced.

5.0 Records

- (a) *FT-04 Competency Matrix*
- (b) *FT- 24 Register of Applicant & Certified clients*
- (c) *FT-29 Review of Audit Reports*
- (d) *FT-30 Certification Panel Decision*

6.0 Reference

- (a) *WI-02 Certification Panel*
- (b) *PD-02 Rules for use of RMC plant Certification Mark Logo*
- (c) *PD-04 Rules for use of VCSLSP Certification Mark*
- (d) *PCP-12 Procedure for Initial Audit*
- (e) *PCP-13 Procedure for Special, Surprise & Short Notice Audit*
- (f) *PCP-15 Procedure for Recertification Audit*
- (g) *PCP-16 Procedure for Surveillance Audit*
- (h) *PCP-17 Procedure for review of Audit Report*
- (i) *PCP-23 RMC Protocol*
- (j) *PCP-24 VCSLSP Protocol*
- (k) *PCP-25 BEMC Protocol*
- (l) *PCP-26 HELTEXPROF Protocol*