

## Transition to ISO 17021:2011

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IAF and ISO have released a joint communiqué covering changes to ISO 17021:2011, “Conformity assessment - requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems”, and the basis for a two year transition period. The communiqué is reproduced as follows:

*The International Accreditation Forum (IAF), in consultation with the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), has set the date for implementation of ISO/IEC 17021:2011 as 1 February 2013. This is a two year transition from the date of publication.*

*ISO/IEC 17021 was revised and published on 1 February 2011. It incorporates new requirements for third-party certification auditing of management systems and the competence of personnel involved in the certification process. It also provides a framework for the further development of competence criteria as deemed appropriate by the relevant ISO Technical Committees.*

*ISO/IEC 17021:2011 includes the existing text of ISO/IEC 17021:2006 virtually unchanged and contains additional requirements for competence and the audit process and is applicable to the certification of all types of management systems and to the bodies providing these activities.*

*In setting this transition period of two years from the publication date of ISO/IEC 17021, IAF and ISO have taken into account the following:*

- *Transition to ISO/IEC 17021 may require translations, changes to procedures, setting up new or amended training regimes, revision of software systems and the implementation of systems to demonstrate competence.*
- *The identification by certification bodies of differences and the preparation of a transition plan to determine both the changes to their own QMS and the timeframe required to execute them.*

*After publication, any new application for accreditation by certification bodies is expected to be to ISO/IEC 17021:2011. Any statement of conformity to ISO/IEC 17021:2006 after the transition period will no longer be valid.*

INAB intends to implement the transition period as follows:

For existing INAB accredited certification bodies, transition plans and progress towards completion will be assessed during headquarters surveillance visits. INAB expects the transition plan to be finalised and submitted with PS10 documentation, for final assessment of transition arrangements in the 2012 visit. Extension to scope applications will be unaffected by the transition. As all accredited certification bodies are expected to be in full compliance with ISO 17021:2011 by 1<sup>st</sup> February 2013, any identified nonconformities related to the new standard must be fully cleared. To ensure clearance of any nonconformities by that date, evidence must be supplied to INAB at the latest by 1<sup>st</sup> December 2012. If, for whatever reason, nonconformities have not been cleared by 1<sup>st</sup> February 2013, a new certificate against ISO 17021:2011 cannot be granted, and accreditation will effectively cease on that date.

For further information, please contact INAB.