



**LAO SYSTEMS CERTIFICATION UNIT (LSCU)
MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS CERTIFICATION PROCEDURE
(For public use)**

1. Purpose:

- This document describes the procedure that LSCU follows for grant, extension, interruption, renewal and withdrawal of Management Systems Certification to its client company including obligations of LSCU and client company
- On request, this procedure is also shared with prospective clients and has been posted on the website of DOSM/LSCU
- Any specific information required by the prospective clients will be provided by LSCU on request.

2. About LSCU:

- LSCU is a division of Department of Standardization and Metrology (DOSM), Ministry of Science and Technology, Government of Lao PDR
- LSCU is an independent public organization and its certification activities are governed by a Certification Advisory Committee, headed by Director General, DOSM
- Industry sectors for which LSCU provides accredited certification of Management Systems are displayed on the website of DOSM/LSCU from time to time. To start with LSCU is only providing certification of Quality Management Systems (QMS) in accordance with ISO 9001:2015 subsequently other management systems when added will be displayed on the website of DOSM/ LSCU
- All companies that apply for certification to LSCU are treated equally, with objective interpretation of implementation of Management Systems Standards
- LSCU is not involved, in any way, in providing consulting services for designing and implementing the management systems of the interested companies
- All internal and external personnel of LSCU are fully aware of the need for maintaining impartiality

3. General requirements:

- Companies located in any region of Lao PDR, of any size or activity, can apply to LSCU for the Certification of Management System
- Applications are evaluated on first come first served basis for initiating certification process and must meet the following conditions:



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- The company has defined the scope of its management systems for which it intends to obtain certification and must have developed relevant system's documentation
- Have implemented the Management System for at least three months and keeping necessary records
- The company is able to demonstrate that its management system fulfils the requirements of relevant ISO management systems standard viz ISO 9001 for QMS, ISO 14001 for EMS, etc.
- Is willing to sign a legally enforceable Agreement for certification with LSCU
- LSCU management and staff (permanent and external associates) handle all information that comes in their hold during certification process, as strictly confidential.

4. Pre-certification and Initial Certification Activities:

- a. The company makes Application for Certification to LSCU along with the relevant documents listed in application form
- b. the content of the application is reviewed by LSCU. If required, LSCU may ask for further information/documents. In case of application not being accepted, the Company is informed in writing by LSCU
- c. In case the application is accepted for further processing, a formal estimate of fee involved is sent by LSCU to the applicant
- d. On receipt of acceptance of the estimate of fee from the applicant and the receipt of application fee, further processing of application is done
- e. At this stage the Company must sign an Agreement with LSCU. The Agreement is initially valid for three years and can be renewed.
- f. LNCB develops a three-year audit program which describes the requirements of management systems standard's key requirements that are going to be assessed in the three-year certification cycle, and every year an audit plan that describes the audit team formation, time and location of audit is also prepared and shared with the Company. The company has the obligation to accept the program and the audit plan or ask it's modification, if any, in writing.
- g. The initial audit of the Management System is carried out in two (2) stages. The time interval between the two stages cannot exceed six months.
- h. The audit team is composed of one or more Auditors of LSCU, internal or external,



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and a Technical Expert, if required. The team members have the technological, industrial and the business sufficiency to be able to assess the Management System of the company.

- i. Technical experts may come from different sectors of industries, public sector, educational institutions, research centers, etc. The company has the right to object on audit team credentials and ask for replacement with reasons in writing.
- j. LSCU takes all the appropriate measures to safeguard impartiality, confidentiality, and objectivity during the audit by its internal/external auditors and experts deputed for audit
- k. The company has the obligation to allow to the audit team members including observers and assessors of accreditation body, access in its premises, to provide any documents and records relevant to the requirements of Management Systems Standard, to provide a proper facility for the audit team meetings, facilitate interview of company's staff/management and ensure that the representative of the company and suitable responsible staff is present during the audit.
- l. If required, the company has the obligation to provide the proper personal protective equipment to the audit team for their safety during the audit.
- m. During the audit the company's processes are assessed for their compliance with standards' requirements, and their implementation. The effectiveness of Management System is assessed with regard to the company's policies and objectives and ability of management system to ensure the company meets applicable statutory, regulatory, and contractual requirements
- n. In case there are deviations from the specified requirements then non-conformities are recorded, identifying in detail the objective evidence on which the nonconformity is based. Nonconformities are discussed with the company to ensure that the evidence is accurate and that the nonconformities are understood. Nonconformity statements are signed both by company and audit team leader as a token of acceptance.
- o. Nonconformities are categorized as major or minor and corrective actions on both are required to be taken by the company. During closing meeting of the audit, summary of audit report is presented to company by audit team and implication of major nonconformity on the certification decision is explained. If corrective action on major nonconformity is not completed within 6 months, another Stage 2 audit will be carried out by LSCU with additional fee.



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- p. A detailed audit report is also shared with the company by LSCU
- q. Audit report along with corrective action on nonconformities, if any, duly verified by the audit team is reviewed within LSCU and by its Certification Decision Making Committee. Based upon the decision of the committee, certificate is issued by LSCU with a validity of 3 (three) years subject to annual renewal.
- r. Certified companies can use LSCU's certification mark on its publicity material/website/letter heads/brochures. Design of mark and conditions for its use is shared with company along with certificate.
- s. In case the certified client is interested in using Accreditation body's logo/mark, LSCU will authorize within the scope of its accreditation to use the accreditation mark in combination with LSCU certification mark. Accreditation body logo/mark cannot be used in isolation of LNCB Certification Mark or otherwise by certified client
- t. Name of certified companies along with scope of its certification (products and services and locations etc) is included in the list of other companies certified by LSCU which is displayed on the website of DOSM/LSCU and may also be published in media.
- u. LSCU is not responsible in case there are any demands arise from failure of the certified company to comply with applicable statutory, regulatory, or contractual requirements. The company, however, is obligated to inform this immediately to LSCU and in writing.

5. Maintenance of certification, surveillance and re-certification Activities:

- a. Maintenance of the certification of the certified company is based on demonstration by the company of continued compliance to the management system standard requirements, as well as the company meeting the terms and conditions of the Agreement with LSCU
- b. Surveillance audits, generally Stage 2 audit only, of the certified company is conducted at least once a year. The date of the first surveillance audit following initial certification should not be more than 12 months from the date of certification decision. Other surveillance activities include;
- c. Reviewing any certified company's statement with respect to its operations (e.g. promotional material, website)



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- d. Requests by LSCU to the certified client to provide documented information (on paper or electronic media)
 - e. During the certification period of three years, all the areas, locations and functions covered by scope of the management system are audited at least once among the scheduled two annual surveillance audits
 - f. A recertification audit, Stage 2 audit only, is conducted to assess continued compliance and effectiveness of the management system as a whole and its continued relevance to the scope of certification. Before recertification audit, the stage 1 audit is only conducted where there are significant changes to the management system of the company or on significant revision of the management systems standard(s)
 - g. For any major nonconformity raised during a recertification audit, the correction and corrective actions should be implemented by the company at least one month before expiration of certification to allow for their verification prior to expiry of certification.
 - h. Decision on renewing certification for another 3 years is based on the recertification audit results, results of review of the system over the entire 3 year period of certification and results of complaints received from customers' of the certified company.
 - i. On request from certified company, during the period of certification special audits may be conducted by recertification audit for expanding the scope of certification, or for investigation of complaints, if any, about products and services of the company, as received from its customers
- 6. Suspending, withdrawing or reducing the scope of certification**
- a. The LSCU has right to suspend certification in cases when, for example
 - 1. When company's certified management system has persistently or seriously failed to meet certification requirements, including requirements for the effectiveness of the management system;
 - 2. The certified company does not allow surveillance or recertification audits to be conducted at the required frequencies
 - 3. The certified company has voluntarily requested a suspension.
 - b. Under suspension, the client's management system certification is temporarily invalid.
 - c. The LSCU can restore the suspended certification if the issue that has resulted in the suspension has been resolved by the company. Failure to resolve the issues that



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have resulted in the suspension in a timely manner as agreed with LSCU, results in withdrawal or reduction of the scope of certification of the company.

- d. In most cases, the suspension would not exceed six months.
- e. The LSCU will reduce scope of certification to exclude the parts not meeting the requirements when the client has persistently or seriously failed to meet the certification requirements for those parts of the scope of certification. Any such reduction will be in line with the requirements of the standard used for certification.

7. Terms of payment of fee

- a. The total cost to company includes one-time application fee, certification fee for 3 years and fee for man days for each audit and its related travel, lodging and boarding cost of auditor(s) as agreed with the company. The schedule of fee is available on the website of DOSM/LSCU
- b. Company must pay fee to LSCU before the initial audit for first year and fee before each surveillance audit and recertification audit
- c. LSCU will take the following actions if company fails to pay the fee as invoiced
 - i. Stop further processing of the application
 - ii. Do not offer certification
 - iii. Suspend and/or withdraw the certification

8. Complaints and appeals

- a. Companies can file appeals and complaints against the decisions of LSCU related to management system certification. These are independently investigated by committees established within LSCU and their resolution/decisions are made public
- b. It is ensured that submission, investigation, and decision on complaints/appeals does not result in any discriminatory actions against the complainant/appellant.