

Brussels, 25/04/2012

## Application guide for certification process rules - Rev02

### Background

On January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2012, some additional documents entered into force:

- Corrigendum 2:2012,
- Advisories 8, 9 & 10.

These documents are mandatory for application for all companies within the evaluation process and all IRIS approved certification bodies and their IRIS approved auditors.

With this application guide, we would like to draw your attention and explain some corrections/evolutions perhaps perceived as minor, but with consequent impacts on the organisation of the audits, in order to avoid misinterpretations. This shall complete the **ISO 17021** rules on the related subjects.

### **A- Successful audits and certificate validity.**

The clause 4.2.3 of the IRIS booklet Rev02 Chapter one is corrected as follows (see Corrigendum 2:2012):

*...The date of the first **successful** surveillance audit shall not be more than 12 months from the last day of the certification audit...*

and the clause 4.4 of IRIS booklet Rev 02 Chapter one is amended as follows (see Advisory 10):

*...The IRIS certificate has a validity of maximum 3 years, starting when all the criteria are met (see chapter 2, clause 8) and ending 36 months after the last day of the certification audit, on the precondition that all subsequent surveillance audits during this time are **successful** in meeting the requirements. In case of **successful** re-certification audit, the validity of the certificate will be extended for 3 more years starting the day after the expiration of the previous one...*

The request for successful audits imposes for the companies and the certification bodies to take into account the necessary time to close potential corrective actions opened during the audit. To be **successful**, an audit shall have no open CARs and no KO question failed.

The alignment of the certificate validity date and the last day of the audit allow the certificate and the successful audit being valid at the same time.

The combination of these two rules puts the focus on the realization of **successful** surveillance or re-certification audits on time which will automatically confirm or re-validate the related certificate. Due to the potential raise of corrective actions during a certification audit and the current situation of different certificate validity dates and audit dates, several cases of application will happen. Following situations have to be taken into account:

- a) If a company has a successful certification audit without any CARs, the certificate validity starts on the last day of the certification audit and ends 36 months after => 3 full year validity (see **example 1** in the table 1 below).
- b) If a company needs two months to close CARs, the certificate validity will start on the day of closure of the last CAR and will end 36 months after the last day of the certification audit => the validity of the certificate in this situation is of 34 months (see **example 2** in the table 1 below).
- c) As we request **successful** audits before the anniversary date of the last day of the certification audit, the certificate will automatically be renewed after its expiry. The certificate will simply start its new three years period of time, the day after the reference date and **NOT** after the re-certification date (see **example 3** in the table 1 below).
- d) If a company chose to have a period of non-certification (eg.: by not performing the re-certification or upgrade audit on time), the Certification Body will NOT be allowed to reduce the audit time during the next certification audit, due to a lacking of a valid certificate (see **example 4** in the table 1 below).

Table 1: examples

Example	Situation	Last day of the current valid certification audit (reference date)	Ending date of the current valid certificate	Last day of the audit	Date of the successful audit	Starting date of the certificate	Ending date of the certificate	Consequence
1	New certification audit without CARs	-	-	17/01/2012  (will become the reference date) ←	17/01/2012	17/01/2012	16/01/2015	OK
2	New certification audit with CARs to be closed	-	-	17/01/2012  (will become the reference date) ←	16/03/2012	16/03/2012	16/01/2015	OK
3	Re-certification OR upgrade audit	28/07/2009 ←	21/09/2012  (due to CARs)	23/05/2012	15/07/2012  (due to CARs)	28/07/2012	27/07/2015	OK
4	Late re-certification or upgrade audit	28/11/2008	21/12/2011  (due to CARs)	5/12/2011  (will become the reference date) ←	09/01/2012  (due to CARs)	09/01/2012	04/12/2014	Not certified during 3 weeks, <u>no reduction scheme</u> .

**Note 1:** In order to complete the understanding, the milestones and validities are visible on the schedule in **annex 1**.

**Note 2:** The application of the Advisory 10, for upgrade or re-certification audits, is mandatory from April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2012 on only.

## **B- Five audits for auditors**

The clause 3 of IRIS booklet Rev 02 Chapter one is corrected as follows:

*...An auditor shall not undertake more than five **annual** IRIS audits for the same client. For multi-Site organizations, the five **annual** IRIS audits time starts from the last audited location. The auditor may not be thereafter active for this client for a period of at least two consecutive annual audits.*

As soon as an auditor has performed five **annual** audits in the same site, he has to stop for minimum two years, then a new period of five years starts. A stop of only one year even several times, is not affecting the rule.

An exception is only valid for a multi-site organization were in some sites an auditor may be active longer as the five year period only starts when the last site of the corporation is audited.

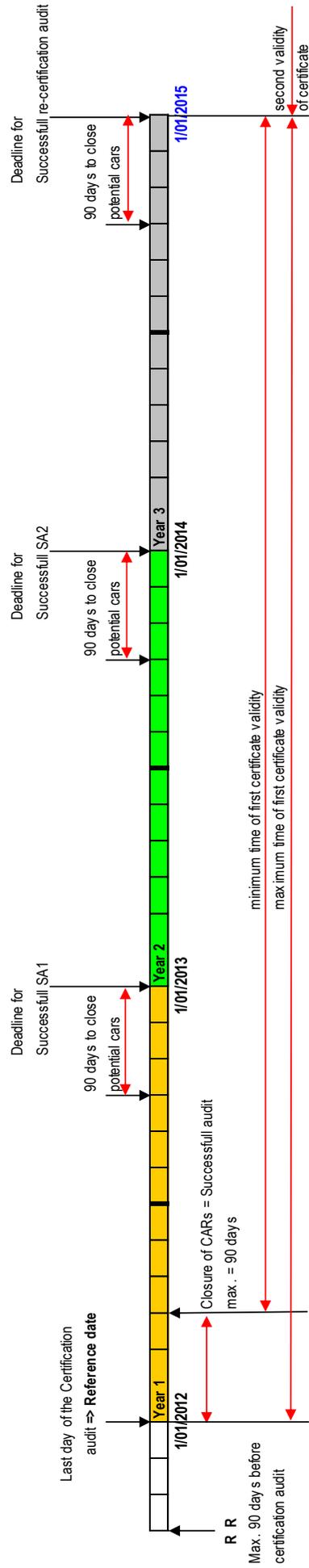
## **Guidelines**

In December 2011, IMC published a first guideline (dedicated to KPIs) for the purpose to help rail companies in the application of some aspects of the IRIS requirements. Other guidelines will follow on subjects like FAI, Obsolescence, RAMS/LCC,...

**Be aware that these guidelines are only for guidance and not for mandatory application and therefore cannot be audited.**

The IRIS Management Centre.

## IRIS Milestones & Certificate Validity (Issuance and Maintenance of IRIS Certificate)



Date of issuance of the certificate:

Max => 14 days after successful certification audit.

An audit is declared successful when the applicable KO questions are fulfilled, the CARs are closed.

The CARs shall be closed within 90 days maximum **BUT not exceeding** the reference date plus 12, 24 or 36 months.