

IOAS Inc.

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**IOAS Operating Manual**  
**information and requirements specific to**  
**assessment against ISO/IEC 17065**

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# **IOAS Operating Manual**

## **Information and requirements specific to Assessment against ISO/IEC 17065**

### **1. Introduction**

This operating manual contains specific information and requirements for the service of assessment by the IOAS offered to certification bodies against ISO/IEC 17065 'Conformity assessment – Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services'. It should always be read in conjunction with the IOAS General Operating Manual which contains a full description of the IOAS and its overall approach to its work conducting accreditation and surveillance of certification bodies working in the field of organic and sustainable agriculture and related fields which is performed in line with ISO/IEC Guide 17011.

It is the IOAS' approach to harmonise the assessment process for the increasing range of schemes offered so as to reduce the burden of accreditation to all certification bodies. We are also continually working to gain recognition or equivalence of our work with scheme owners and government authorities such that we can offer 'one assessment, many accreditations'.

### **2. Standard owner**

2.1 The ISO/IEC 17065 is published by the International Standards Organisation in Switzerland and is applicable to a wide range of product certification schemes. As the guide itself indicates, these guidelines 'may have to be amplified when specific industrial or other sectors make use of them' and some scheme owners with which the IOAS works have done that (see 3.2 below).

### **3. Requirements for accreditation**

3.1 The ISO/IEC 17065 is a generic guide for certification bodies conducting conformity assessment of products processes and services. It was published on September 15, 2012 and replaces the previous ISO/IEC Guide 65. The standard is available for purchase from [www.iso.ch](http://www.iso.ch) and is not provided by the IOAS.

3.2 The ISO/IEC 17065 is the basic requirement for certification. Assessment against this norm is always performed applicable to a standards scope which must be indicated by the certification body when it makes an application to the IOAS.

3.3 More than one standard scope may be selected at the time of application and the scope may be extended (or reduced) to additional standards at any time. Additional

scopes and extension of scopes are subject to additional fees indicated in the IOAS fee schedule.

3.4 The IOAS only offers ISO/IEC 17065 assessment for schemes limited to standards within its field of expertise and which are compatible with its development objectives of expanding organic and sustainable agriculture and related fields.

3.5 Standards used by certification bodies may be private standards owned by the certification body itself or another scheme owner or be the production standard of a regulation (eg. Regulation (EC) 834/2007, National Organic Program rule of the USA etc). Assessment against ISO/IEC 17065 as part of a wider scheme may or may not achieve approval by the scheme owner depending on the scheme requirements and whether the IOAS has a formal role in that scheme (see also 3.7 below). This will be clarified with the certification body at the time of application.

3.6 Currently accepted standard scopes for ISO/IEC 17065 assessment by the IOAS are in the field of:

- Organic agriculture, processing and handling
- Sustainable agriculture, processing and handling
- Animal welfare
- Fair trade
- Environmental management
- No child labour in rug making

The IOAS is however willing to discuss applications relating to scopes that are not currently covered and will assess whether they contribute to the IOAS mission and whether sufficient expertise and resources are available before proceeding.

3.7 ISO/IEC 17065 also forms the basis for the assessments performed by IOAS under the Canada Organic Regime under the Organic Products Regulations of Canada 2009, the European Recognition Programme under Regulation (EC) 834/2007 and the private scheme of Textile Exchange but these three schemes have amplified the requirements on certification bodies. In these cases, the IOAS assesses the certification body against both the requirements of ISO/IEC 17065 and any additional measures prescribed by the scheme owner in regulations, operating manuals, directives and guidelines. These schemes are not further considered here. Please refer to the IOAS Operating Manual specific to either scheme.

3.8 The IOAS reserves the right to require assistance from a technical expert as it deems necessary and depending on the standard scope. The cost of such experts at on-site visits is borne by the certification body. Such a need and a cost estimation will be communicated before the application proceeds.

3.9 As explained in the IOAS General Operating Manual the IOAS is not always the entity making the accreditation or approval decision but performs the assessment and provides the information to a scheme owner or umbrella organisation. This is the case for some schemes requiring compliance with ISO/IEC 17065.

#### **4. Procedure for assessment**

4.1 The application procedure follows that described in the IOAS General Operating Manual at Section 7.

4.2 The applicant is made fully aware of its rights and obligations before application through the provision of this and related operating manuals and having access to sample copies of the accreditation contract (PL0502) and arbitration agreement (PL0526) and the fee schedule (LS0503).

4.3 The completed application form must indicate the standard or standards being applied by the certification body as scopes of ISO/IEC 17065. Each standard must be supplied by the applicant in a language acceptable to the IOAS.

4.4 The length of initial and subsequent on-site visits and the activities undertaken (such as number of operator visits) will be influenced by the number of standards scopes applied for which will in turn determine the cost of the on-site visits.

#### **5. Reference to IOAS accreditation and the scheme owner**

5.1 The accredited certification body may make reference to being accredited by the IOAS in accordance with the requirements described and referred to in the General Operating Manual. CBs in schemes using ISO/IEC 17065 in which the IOAS is not the decision-maker may not make reference to IOAS accreditation but may refer to being 'assessed' or under surveillance' by IOAS.

5.2 Following the accreditation decision the certification body will sign an accreditation agreement with a five year term which sets out the rights and obligations of both parties. An arbitration agreement is also signed which describes an agreed means of resolving disputes if normal means are exhausted.

5.3 On being accredited, the certification body will receive a formal accreditation certificate which states that the organisation has been found to fulfil the requirements of ISO/IEC 17065 for the scope of the chosen standard(s). The certificate is issued annually and indicates the expiry date of the contract.

5.4 In addition the IOAS will include the certification body in a public listing which will be updated as necessary to include any changes of scope, categories of activity (if relevant) and countries of activity.

5.5 The accredited certification body may make suitable claims on promotional material (brochures, web sites etc.) that the certification body operates in compliance ISO/IEC 17065 as long as the scope of the declaration is made clear and matches that under 5.3.

5.6 Certificates issued by the certification body must bear either the IOAS logo or a declaration stating that the certificate is issued under the scope of IOAS accreditation according to IOAS policy PL0515.

## **6. Fees**

The IOAS fee schedule is available at <http://www.ioas.org/assessment/application/>. The IOAS is able to provide a quotation of fees for the requested services but due to the many variables involved, these can only be used for orientation.

For any specific questions on assessment against ISO/IEC 17065 please contact your assigned Client Manager or Iris Rendon on [rendon@ioas.org](mailto:rendon@ioas.org)

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