

**A6.4-PROC-ACCR-001**

# Procedure

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## Article 6.4 accreditation

Version: 02.0



**United Nations**  
Framework Convention on  
Climate Change

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Background

1. The Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA), at its third session, adopted rules, modalities and procedures (RMPs) for the mechanism established by Article 6, paragraph 4, of the Paris Agreement (the Article 6.4).<sup>1</sup> In accordance with the RMPs, a proposed or registered Article 6.4 activity (A6.4 activity) as well as monitored greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reductions or net GHG removals achieved by an A6.4 activity shall be independently assessed by a designated operational entity (DOE) against the requirement set out in the RMPs in order for the activity to be registered or renewed under Article 6.4, or Article 6.4 emission reductions to be issued.<sup>2</sup>
2. Pursuant to the RMPs, the Supervisory Body is responsible for the accreditation of operational entities as DOEs and establishment of the requirements and process necessary to operate the accreditation.<sup>3</sup> The CMA, at its third session, requested the Supervisory Body to review the accreditation standards and procedures of the clean development mechanism (CDM) with a view to applying them with revisions, as appropriate, to Article 6.4 by the end of 2023, and expeditiously accredit operational entities as DOEs.<sup>4</sup>

### 1.2. Objectives

3. The objective of the “Procedure: Article 6.4 accreditation” (hereinafter referred to as this procedure) is to set forth concise and transparent rules and related process for the accreditation of operational entities<sup>5</sup> under Article 6.4.

## 2. Scope

### 2.1. Scope and applicability

4. This procedure sets out the process to operationalize the accreditation of operational entities.
5. This procedure contains the series of rules and actions that shall be followed and/or undertaken by applicant entities (AEs) and DOEs to obtain or maintain accreditation, as well as by the Supervisory Body and its support structure to conduct accreditation assessments of whether AEs/DOEs comply with the Article 6.4 accreditation requirements.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Decision 3/CMA.3, annex. Available at: [https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/cma2021\\_10a01E.pdf#page=25](https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/cma2021_10a01E.pdf#page=25).

<sup>2</sup> RMPs, paragraphs 46, 51 and 57.

<sup>3</sup> RMPs, paragraphs 24(a)(i) and 24(b).

<sup>4</sup> Decision 3/CMA.3, paragraph 5(d)–(e).

<sup>5</sup> In this procedure, as in the “Standard: Article 6.4 accreditation”, the term “operational entity” includes both applicant entity (AE) and designated operational entity (DOE).

<sup>6</sup> The term “Article 6.4 accreditation requirements” is defined in the “Standard: Article 6.4 accreditation”.

## 2.2. Entry into force

6. This document enters into force on 10 October 2025.

## 3. Normative reference

7. The following documents are indispensable for the application of this procedure:
- (a) “Standard: Article 6.4 accreditation”;
  - (b) “Procedure: Article 6.4 activity cycle procedure for projects”;
  - (c) “Procedure: Article 6.4 activity cycle procedure for programmes of activities”;
  - (d) “Procedure: Performance monitoring of Article 6.4 designated operational entities” (hereinafter referred to as the DOE performance monitoring procedure);
  - (e) “Procedure: Selection and performance evaluation of experts on the Article 6.4 accreditation roster of experts”;
  - (f) Forms used in the Article 6.4 accreditation procedure.

## 4. Definitions

8. In addition to the definitions contained in the Article 6.4 accreditation standard, the following terms apply in this procedure:
- (a) “Shall” is used to indicate requirements to be followed;
  - (b) “Should” is used to indicate that among several possibilities, one course of action is recommended as particularly suitable;
  - (c) “May” is used to indicate what is permitted.

## 5. Basics of the Article 6.4 accreditation process

### 5.1. Actors in the Article 6.4 accreditation process and main functions

9. There are several actors involved in the Article 6.4 accreditation process, and the responsibility of each is as follows:
- (a) The **Supervisory Body** takes decisions on whether to:
    - (i) Accredite AEs as DOEs, maintain the accreditation of DOEs and reaccredit DOEs;
    - (ii) Conduct spot-checks of DOEs;
    - (iii) Place DOEs under observation;
    - (iv) Suspend the accreditation of DOEs for some or all sectoral scopes;
    - (v) Withdraw the accreditation of DOEs for some or all sectoral scopes.
  - (b) The **Article 6.4 Accreditation Expert Panel (AEP)** serves as the technical panel under the guidance of the Supervisory Body and, in accordance with its terms of

reference, considers the results of accreditation assessments of AEs/DOEs by Article 6.4 assessment teams, provides recommendations to the Supervisory Body on the accreditation status of, or related actions for, AEs/DOEs, and takes decisions on the matters in its areas of responsibility as defined in this procedure. The AEP may consider cases electronically or at its meetings;

- (c) **Article 6.4 assessment teams (ATs)** assess in accordance with this procedure, the Article 6.4 accreditation standard and under the guidance of the AEP whether AEs/DOEs comply with the Article 6.4 accreditation requirements. ATs submit their assessment reports to the AEP. ATs are selected from the roster of experts established for the purpose of accreditation assessments (hereinafter referred to as the Accreditation Roster of Experts) which contains both external experts and secretariat staff;
- (d) The **secretariat** supports implementation of this procedure;
- (e) **AEs/DOEs** apply for accreditation, extension of accreditation for additional sectoral scopes and/or reaccreditation and undergo accreditation assessments to demonstrate compliance with Article 6.4 accreditation requirements.

## 5.2. Scope and status of accreditation

- 10. The Article 6.4 accreditation is based on the validation and verification/certification functions as well as on sectoral scopes of accreditation.<sup>7</sup> An AE may apply for accreditation for both validation and verification/certification functions in one or more sectoral scopes.
- 11. The accreditation of a DOE is valid for five years from the date of the accreditation decision by the Supervisory Body (hereinafter referred to as the accreditation term).
- 12. Accreditation is granted to an entity registered or incorporated under applicable national laws,<sup>8</sup> irrespective of whether the entire entity or a part of it performs validation and/or verification/certification functions.
- 13. Accreditation is granted for both validation and verification/certification functions together, in one or more sectoral scopes. Likewise, if accreditation is suspended or withdrawn, it is done so for both validation and verification/certification functions together, in one or more sectoral scopes.

## 5.3. Objective and scope of accreditation assessments

- 14. The objective of an accreditation assessment of an AE/DOE is to assess and determine whether the AE/DOE complies with Article 6.4 accreditation requirements.
- 15. If the validation and/or verification/certification functions are performed by a part of an AE/DOE, and other parts of the AE/DOE are involved in the activities other than the validation and/or verification/certification functions, these other activities may be assessed as they may affect validation and/or verification/certification activities, in particular with regard to independence and impartiality.

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<sup>7</sup> Sectoral scopes of accreditation are defined in the "Standard: Article 6.4 accreditation".

<sup>8</sup> Please refer to section 6 of the "Standard: Article 6.4 accreditation" for more details.

#### 5.4. General modalities of accreditation assessments

16. The assessment of an AE for **initial accreditation** and of a DOE for **reaccreditation** consists of the following main elements:
  - (a) Desk review of the application documentation submitted by the AE/DOE with a view to identifying all missing or unclear information and having the AE/DOE gather all necessary information and documentation, as in preparation for the on-site assessment;
  - (b) On-site assessment to assess whether the documented systems of the AE/DOE, and its competence and operational capability to perform validation and/or verification/certification functions comply with the Article 6.4 accreditation requirements. An on-site assessment shall take place at the central office of the AE/DOE and may also take place at any other offices of the AE/DOE or outsourced entities where the validation and/or verification/certification functions of the AE/DOE are performed. For reaccreditation, if the on-site assessment takes place at other offices, the selection of these other offices shall be based on the results of previous assessments (regular on-site surveillances and performance assessments), the results of the implementation of the “Procedure: Performance monitoring of designated operational entities” and the outcome of risk analysis.
17. If, after completion of an on-site assessment, the AE/DOE has demonstrated compliance with all Article 6.4 accreditation requirements, accreditation or reaccreditation shall be granted to the AE or the DOE, respectively, for both validation and verification/certification functions and in the sectoral scopes in which the AE/DOE has demonstrated its competence to perform its validation and verification/certification functions.
18. After the Supervisory Body has granted accreditation or reaccreditation, the DOE is allowed to perform its validation and verification/certification functions in the accredited sectoral scopes.
19. A DOE shall be subject to **performance assessments** during its accreditation term. The purpose of a performance assessment is to assess the implementation of the systems of the DOE and the DOE’s competence in an accredited sectoral scope through an assessment of a specific validation or verification/certification activity. The number and types of performance assessments for a DOE are set out in section 7.1 below.
20. A DOE shall be subject to two **regular on-site surveillances**, as referred to in section 8 below, during its accreditation term. The purpose of a regular on-site surveillance is to verify whether the systems, competence and operational capability of the DOE continue to meet Article 6.4 accreditation requirements over the accreditation term. A regular on-site surveillance should take place at the central office of the DOE and may also include any other offices of the DOE or its outsourced entities where the validation and/or verification/certification functions of the DOE are performed.
21. The Supervisory Body may decide to conduct a **spot-check** of a DOE, as referred to in section 11 below, at any time during the accreditation term of the DOE. In addition, the AEP may initiate a spot-check of a DOE in accordance with the “Procedure: Performance monitoring of designated operational entities”. The purpose of a spot-check is to assess whether a DOE still meets one or more specific Article 6.4 accreditation requirements because of a specific concern brought up to the Supervisory Body regarding the compliance of the DOE with Article 6.4 accreditation requirements or because of inadequate performance of the DOE monitored through the “Procedure: Performance

- monitoring of designated operational entities". A spot-check may include a desk review, and/or an on-site assessment at any office of the DOE and outsourced entities where the validation and/or verification/certification functions of the DOE are performed, and/or an assessment at the site of the Article 6.4 project (A6.4 project) or programme of activities (A6.4 PoA) being validated or verified/certified.
22. A **pre-assessment**, optional for the AE prior to the initial accreditation on-site assessment, is conducted to determine the AE's readiness by comparing the AE's existing documented system against the "Standard: Article 6.4 accreditation". A pre-assessment can be voluntarily requested by the AE or prescribed by the AEP subject to the Supervisory Body's decision. The pre-assessment application fee is not required, and the costs related to the AT members are at the cost of the AE.
23. In the planning of an assessment, the risk associated with the activities, locations and personnel covered by the scope of accreditation shall be taken into account in:<sup>9</sup>
- (a) Selection of the number and types of offices, outsourced entities and validation and verification/certification activities of the AE/DOE to be assessed during the initiation and preparation stages of the assessment;
  - (b) Planning of activities to be assessed by ATs.
24. For the conducting of an assessment, the standard person-days and the number of AT members participating in the assessment are covered in Appendix 9 to this procedure. The standard on-site assessment provisions required in this procedure shall be used by an AT to conduct on-site assessment. Under special circumstances the secretariat may propose to deviate from the standard assessment provisions, based on the risk associated with activities, locations and personnel covered by the scope of accreditation referred to in paragraph 23 above, including in relation to:
- (a) The number of experts on the AT, with the possibility to have a one-person team;
  - (b) The number of days to be spent by the AT on-site, with a possibility to have a one-day assessment;
  - (c) The format of the assessment, with a possibility to have some or all of the AT members working remotely through, for example, videoconferencing;
  - (d) The sites to be included in the assessment, with a possibility to visit only the non-central offices during the regular on-site surveillance assessments.
25. In the event of a deviation, as referred to in paragraph 24 above, the time between consecutive on-site assessments shall not exceed two years. Also, a deviation shall not be exercised for performance assessments as referred to in section 7 below.
26. If a significant number (i.e more than 10) of non-conformities (NCs) are raised by the AT in either the initial accreditation assessment, performance assessment, regular on-site surveillance assessment, reaccreditation assessment or extension of accreditation for additional sectoral scopes assessment, an additional seven days may be allocated by the

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<sup>9</sup> See section 4.3 of the "Standard: Article 6.4 accreditation" on the risks associated with validation and verification/certification conducted by a DOE.

secretariat to the time frames required for the AE/DOE and the AT, respectively, to complete the required actions referred to in this procedure.<sup>10</sup>

27. Where accreditation assessments are conducted simultaneously, the following modalities shall apply:
- (a) If a regular on-site surveillance or the reaccreditation process is initiated while a performance assessment is still under way, the outcomes of the performance assessment should be taken into account in preparing the workplan for the regular on-site surveillance or the reaccreditation process;
  - (b) The outcomes of all performance assessments, regular on-site surveillances and any other accreditation assessments in the current accreditation term should be taken into account in preparing the workplan for the reaccreditation process;
  - (c) If a spot-check is initiated while a regular on-site surveillance or reaccreditation process is under way or will start shortly, the regular on-site surveillance or reaccreditation process should specify the issues that triggered the spot-check, where possible.
28. Where there is evidence identified by the AT that a DOE intentionally provided false information, intentionally omitted information that should have been provided, or deliberately violated any accreditation requirement,<sup>11</sup> the AT shall promptly submit a draft assessment report to the AEP. In this case, the following steps shall follow:
- (a) The AEP shall consider the case and decide whether to recommend that the Supervisory Body place the DOE under observation or suspend or withdraw the accreditation of the DOE, based on the criteria contained in Appendix 3 to this procedure. At this stage, the AEP may request the DOE to provide information relating to the alleged conduct;
  - (b) If the AEP recommends that the Supervisory Body suspend or withdraw the accreditation of the DOE, the secretariat shall inform the DOE of the recommendation of the AEP. The DOE may request an independent review of the AEP recommendation in accordance with the provisions contained in Appendix 5 to this procedure, and/or request a hearing before the Supervisory Body in accordance with the provisions contained in Appendix 8 to this procedure. In these cases, the consideration by the Supervisory Body of the AEP recommendation in accordance with paragraph 28(d) below shall take place only after the Supervisory Body has received the independent review report referred to in Appendix 5 to this procedure and has decided on the review case, and only after the hearing has taken place, as applicable;
  - (c) If the AEP decides not to recommend that the Supervisory Body suspend or withdraw the accreditation of the DOE, the AT shall resume the accreditation assessment;

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<sup>10</sup> In this procedure, the number of days is to be considered as calendar days, unless specified otherwise, and the term NC includes the type of major NCs as referred to in paragraph 31 below.

<sup>11</sup> The terms “intentionally” and “deliberately” mean active or passive omission or violation, which cover situations occurring through an act or through failure to act, through active intent or through gross negligence or negligent disregard.

- (d) The Supervisory Body shall consider the recommendation of the AEP, together with the independent review report and/or the hearing of the DOE, as applicable, and decide whether to suspend or withdraw the accreditation of the DOE in accordance with provisions in section 13 or 14 below, respectively, and based on the criteria contained in Appendix 3 to this procedure;
  - (e) If the Supervisory Body decides not to suspend or withdraw the accreditation of the DOE, the AT shall resume the accreditation assessment.
- 29. Under exceptional circumstances, while considering the assessments conducted under sections 6–17 below, the AEP may recommend to the Supervisory Body supported by proper justification that the Supervisory Body:
  - (a) Conduct an on-site assessment to verify the implementation of corrective actions, including the modalities of such assessment (e.g. AT members, time frame);
  - (b) Submit any appropriate recommendation. The Supervisory Body shall consider such a recommendation at its next meeting and decide on the course of action.
- 30. The AEP may submit any appropriate recommendation to the Supervisory Body for failure of a DOE to meet deadlines specified in the regulations and decisions of the Supervisory Body or the AEP. Such recommendation shall be supported by a proper justification. The Supervisory Body shall consider such recommendation at its next meeting and decide on the course of action, including authorizing deviation from this procedure.
- 31. If the AT identifies any findings during an assessment, these findings shall be classified as NCs or major NCs. Any assessment finding is an NC if it is a non-fulfilment of an accreditation requirement. If a finding is not an NC, opportunities for improvement may be raised by the AT and recorded in the final assessment report (form A6.4-FORM-ACCR-013). An NC is classified as a major NC if it affects the capability of the management system to achieve the intended results, which may cover the following circumstances and trigger suspension or withdrawal (as specified in Appendix 3 below):
  - (a) If there is a significant doubt that effective process control is in place, or that validation and verification/certification activities will meet specified requirements;
  - (b) A number of NCs associated with the same requirement or issue could demonstrate a systemic failure and thus constitute a major NC.
- 32. If the AT identifies a major NC, the AT shall, within 10 days of completion of the visits to all offices as per the assessment workplan, submit to the AEP a draft assessment report and all NC reports raised. The AEP shall consider the case and decide whether to recommend that the Supervisory Body place the DOE under observation or suspend accreditation of the DOE, based on the criteria contained in Appendix 3 to this procedure. If the NC raised during a performance assessment resulting in finding of incompetent of validation/verification and certification as per paragraph 106 below, the NC is classified as a major NC and the procedural steps for processing such major NC are followed in accordance with the paragraph 106 below. If the major NC is identified during an initial accreditation assessment, the AEP shall consider the case in accordance with the paragraph 29 above.
- 33. Appendix 5 and Appendix 7 to this procedure provide AEs/DOEs with mechanisms to request a review of AEP recommendations and the raising of NCs by ATs, respectively.

34. Further to the Standard: Article 6.4 accreditation, paragraph 15, if the secretariat receives a report on a judicial process pending or instituted against a AE/DOE that is incompatible with its functions as an AE/DOE, the secretariat shall report the same to the Supervisory Body within seven days for its consideration. Based on severity of the judicial case, the Supervisory Body may decide to place the DOE under-observation, suspension, or withdrawal of accreditation as per the provisions defined under this procedure.
35. All documentation provided by an AE/DOE for an accreditation assessment shall be in English.
36. The language to be used in any accreditation assessment shall be English. AEs/DOEs may use interpretation/translation services where necessary to ensure effective communication with ATs.

## **6. Initial accreditation**

### **6.1. General**

37. The process for initial accreditation comprises the following steps:
  - (a) Submission of an application for accreditation by an entity;
  - (b) Completeness check of the application documentation by the secretariat;
  - (c) Preparation of a workplan and appointment of an AT by the secretariat;
  - (d) Desk review by the AT of the documentation provided by the AE;
  - (e) On-site assessment by the AT at the central office of the AE and, as applicable, at any other offices of the AE or outsourced entities where the AE validation and/or verification/certification functions are to be performed;
  - (f) Recommendation by the AEP to the Supervisory Body for accreditation or rejection of application;
  - (g) Decision by the Supervisory Body for accreditation or rejection of application.

### **6.2. Application for accreditation**

38. An entity that wishes to be accredited and designated as a DOE shall submit to the secretariat a duly completed application form (form A6.4-FORM-ACCR-001), a declaration of all other offices of the entity or outsourced entities where the entity's validation and verification/certification functions are to be performed (form A6.4-FORM-ACCR-002) and all other documents specified in Appendix 1 to this procedure, and pay the application fee specified in Appendix 9 to this procedure.
39. The application of an AE for accreditation shall be considered duly submitted when the secretariat has received both the application documentation and the application fee.
40. The AE may voluntarily withdraw its application for accreditation by submitting a written notification of withdrawal any time before the meeting of the Supervisory Body at which a decision on the accreditation is due to be made in accordance with paragraph 86 below.

### **6.3. Completeness check**

41. The secretariat shall start processing the application once it is considered duly submitted in accordance with paragraph 39 above.
42. The secretariat shall undertake a completeness check of the application documentation. If the documentation is found incomplete, the secretariat shall inform the AE of the missing elements within seven days of the application being considered duly submitted. Subsequent steps of the process shall only continue once all requested documentation has been received by the secretariat. If the AE does not provide the requested documentation within one year of receipt of an incompleteness notification from the secretariat, the Supervisory Body may decide to withdraw its application for accreditation based on a recommendation from the AEP.
43. The secretariat shall publish the name of the AE and the sectoral scopes applied for by the AE on the UNFCCC Article 6.4 website for global stakeholder consultation promptly after receiving all required documents from the AE. Parties, stakeholders<sup>12</sup> and UNFCCC-accredited observer organizations shall have 30 days to provide any comments or information in respect of the AE to the secretariat through a dedicated interface on the UNFCCC Article 6.4 website (form A6.4-FORM-ACCR-025).

### **6.4. Appointment of the AT and preparation of workplan**

44. The secretariat shall, within seven days of receipt of all required documents from the AE and any information received during the period of global stakeholder consultation, appoint an AT for the assessment, selecting its members from the Accreditation Roster of Experts in accordance with relevant terms of reference. The AT shall consist of at least two members, including a team leader (hereinafter referred to as the AT leader). The size of the AT may vary depending on the size of the AE and the expected volume of validation and verification/certification activities to be performed by the AE, the application documentation and the sectoral scopes of accreditation applied for.
45. The secretariat shall inform the AE of the composition of the AT. The AE may object, in writing or by email within seven days, to the selection of any AT member on the basis of conflict of interest by identifying such conflict of interest.
46. If the AE objects to the selection of an AT member, the secretariat shall, within seven days of receipt of the objection, consider modifying the composition of the AT. If the secretariat considers the objection unjustified, or the AE does not object to the selection of any AT member within the time frame referred to in paragraph 45 above, the composition of the AT shall be deemed accepted. If the secretariat considers the objection unjustified, it shall inform the AE accordingly. If the secretariat considers the objection justified and replaces an AT member, it shall inform the AE of the new AT member within the same seven days. After this, the same steps in paragraphs 45 and 46 above shall repeat until the composition of the AT is deemed accepted.
47. Once the composition of the AT is deemed accepted, each AT member shall sign a confidentiality agreement and conflict of interest declaration (form A6.4-FORM-ACCR-004).
48. The secretariat shall, within seven days of the end of the global stakeholder consultation, prepare a workplan (form A6.4-FORM-ACCR-007) for the assessment, based on the

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<sup>12</sup> For the purpose of this procedure, all members of the public are considered to be stakeholders.

application documentation and the comments and information received during the global stakeholder consultation in accordance with paragraph 43 above, and submit it to the AEP for comments. The workplan shall identify whether additional assessments shall be performed at offices other than the AE central office. The AEP may provide comments on the workplan within seven days of receipt of the workplan. The secretariat shall finalize the workplan within seven days of the deadline for commenting by the AEP.

49. The secretariat shall provide the AT with:
- (a) All information related to the application, including the application documentation;
  - (b) The workplan for the assessment.

## **6.5. Assessment by the AT**

### **6.5.1. Desk review**

50. The AT shall undertake the desk review of the application documentation.
51. If the AT considers the information contained in the application documentation sufficient and adequate for the assessment, it shall prepare and finalize a desk review report (form A6.4-FORM-ACCR-008) and send it to the AE within 15 days of receipt of the documents referred to in paragraph 49 above, and proceed with the on-site assessment in accordance with paragraph 60 below. The AT shall not raise any NC at the stage of desk review.
52. If the AT considers that there is missing, unclear and/or inadequate information in the application documentation, the AT shall prepare a draft desk review report and send it to the AE within 15 days of receipt of the documents referred to in paragraph 49 above, and request the AE to provide additional and/or amended documentation.
53. The AE shall provide the requested additional and/or amended documentation within 20 days of receipt of the draft desk review report.<sup>13</sup>
54. No later than 30 days after sending the draft desk review report to the AE, the AT shall prepare a final desk review report. If the AT, at the final desk review stage of the first round of the desk review, considers the additional and/or amended documentation adequate, or otherwise considers the additional and/or amended documentation inadequate or that there are still missing documents but they can be assessed during the on-site assessment, the AT shall send it to the AE and proceed with the on-site assessment in accordance with paragraph 60 below. If the AT, at the final desk review stage of the first round of the desk review, considers that:
- (a) The additional and/or amended documentation is not adequate or there are still missing documents and they need to be addressed or submitted prior to the on-site assessment, the AT shall submit a final desk review report to the AEP requesting it to consider allowing the AT to conduct an additional round of desk review. Based on the conclusion summarized in the final desk review report, the secretariat can decide whether to directly initiate the additional round of desk review or report to the AEP for the AEP's consideration at its next meeting;<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> The amended documentation shall be in clean and track-change versions.

<sup>14</sup> The secretariat shall inform the AEP of its decision via an e-mail.

- (b) The AE's documented system is not in compliance with the Standard: Article 6.4 accreditation, the AT shall submit a final desk review report to the AEP requesting withdrawal of the AE's application for accreditation, for consideration by the AEP at its next meeting. The AEP may recommend to the Supervisory Body, supported by justification, to withdraw the AE's application for accreditation or to request the AT to conduct the pre-assessment.

### **6.5.2. Pre-assessment**

- 55. A pre-assessment is conducted to identify gaps and to raise deficiencies, instead of any NC(s), between the AE's current documentation/processes and the requirements specified in the Standard: Article 6.4 accreditation and to record the deficiencies in the pre-assessment report (form A6.4-FORM-ACCR-027) based on the scope below:
  - (a) If the pre-assessment is requested by the Supervisory Body as per paragraph 56 below, the pre-assessment is to be conducted based on the scope identified by the Supervisory Body and outcome of the desk review conducted prior to the additional round of desk review and to identify additional deficiencies;
  - (b) If the pre-assessment is voluntarily requested by the AE as per paragraph 57 below, the pre-assessment is to be conducted based on the outcome of the desk review conducted prior to the additional round of desk review and to identify additional deficiencies.
- 56. The AEP may recommend to the Supervisory Body, supported by justification, to request the AT to conduct the pre-assessment while considering the AT's request to allow the AT to conduct an additional round of desk review or to withdraw the AE's application for accreditation as referred to in paragraph 54(a) and (b) above respectively. The Supervisory Body shall consider the AEP's recommendation and decide the scope of pre-assessment if the pre-assessment is required. The secretariat shall inform the AE of the Supervisory Body's decision, and the AE shall inform the secretariat within 14 days of receipt of the Supervisory Body's decision as below:
  - (a) If the AE agrees with the Supervisory Body's request, the secretariat shall initiate the pre-assessment process as per paragraph 58 below;
  - (b) If the AE does not agree with the Supervisory Body's request to conduct the pre-assessment, the secretariat shall report the AE's decision to the AEP for its consideration and the Supervisory Body may decide to withdraw the AE's application for accreditation at its next meeting, based on the AEP's recommendation.
- 57. An AE may wish to select voluntarily a pre-assessment at the stage after completing the first round of desk review and before conducting the additional round of desk review as referred to in paragraph 54 above. The AE shall submit the pre-assessment application form (A6.4-FORM-ACCR-026) within 10 days of receiving the notification of allowing to conducting the additional round of desk review. The secretariat shall process the pre-assessment application within seven days of receiving the pre-assessment application. If the pre-assessment application is accepted, the additional round of desk review as

referred to in paragraph 54 above is postponed until the completion of the pre-assessment as referred to in paragraph 59 below.<sup>15</sup>

58. The AT appointed for pre-assessment is the same AT appointed for conducting the desk review and on-site assessment as referred to in paragraph 44 above.<sup>16</sup> The AT leader, taking into account the availability of the AT members and the AE and with support from the secretariat, shall coordinate the dates and logistics for the on-site assessment at the AE's office. The pre-assessment AT leader shall send the pre-assessment plan to the AE at least 10 days prior to the on-site assessment. The pre-assessment shall be conducted within 60 days of receipt of accepting the pre-assessment. The AT leader shall conduct the opening meeting to explain how the pre-assessment is conducted and the closing meeting to explain any deficiencies identified. The pre-assessment AT shall prepare the pre-assessment report (form A6.4-FORM-ACCR-027) and make it available to the AE within 10 days of the completion of the visit to the AE's office.
59. The pre-assessment is deemed as completed once the pre-assessment report is sent to the AE. With the completion of the pre-assessment, the additional round of desk review as referred to in paragraph 54 above resumes.

### **6.5.3. On-site assessment**

60. After the desk review, the AT shall conduct an on-site assessment covering all offices identified in the workplan. If there is more than one office assessed, all office assessments shall be compiled into one report, and the final decision on accreditation shall be made based on the outcomes of all offices assessed.
61. The AT leader, taking into account the availability of the AT members and the AE and with support from the secretariat, shall coordinate the dates and logistics for the on-site assessment. The AT leader shall send the assessment plan to the AE at least 10 days prior to the office visit. The visit to the central office shall be conducted within 60 days of receipt of the final desk review report by the AE. The visits to other offices or outsourced entities, if any, shall be conducted after the visit to the central office as per the workplan.
62. If the AE is not available for the AT visit to the central office within the time frame referred to in paragraph 61 above, the secretariat shall request the AE to reconfirm its interest in proceeding with the application for accreditation and seek justification in writing or by email for the delay, and the AE shall reply to the secretariat within seven days of its receipt of the request from the secretariat. The secretariat shall present the case to the AEP for its decision whether to allow the delay or recommend that the Supervisory Body reject the application.
63. The AT shall conduct the assessment at each office identified in the workplan. The AT leader shall conduct an opening meeting and closing meeting based on the agenda for opening and closing meetings (form A6.4-FORM-ACCR-009) and complete the attendance register for the opening meeting and closing meeting (form A6.4-FORM-ACCR-010). If the AT identifies any NC, it shall prepare a non-conformity report (form A6.4-FORM-ACCR-012) for each NC during the office visit. The AT shall provide the AE

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<sup>15</sup> The pre-assessment is applicable for entities with no or limited prior experience being accredited. The pre-assessment is applicable for the initial accreditation assessment and the extension of additional sectoral scopes assessment, and it is not applicable for the re-accreditation assessment.

<sup>16</sup> The pre-assessment AT may be different based on the latest information related to availability and impartiality of the AT members at the time of initiating the pre-assessment process.

- with objective evidence for each NC raised. The AE shall have an opportunity to seek clarification from, and ask questions of the AT on the NCs raised.
64. The AE shall provide a written acceptance of any NCs that it agrees with during the AT office visit.
  65. If the AE disagrees with any NCs raised by the AT, the AE may request a review of the NCs by the AEP in accordance with the provisions contained in Appendix 7 to this procedure. All agreed NCs shall continue to be addressed as per the provisions in this section of the procedure up to the step immediately before the preparation of a draft final assessment report. For the NCs placed under review, if the AEP decides to maintain the NCs in accordance with the provisions contained in Appendix 7 to this procedure, they shall be addressed as per the provisions in this section and the AT shall prepare a draft final assessment report covering all NCs. If the AEP decides to drop them in accordance with the provisions contained in Appendix 7 to this procedure, the AT shall prepare a draft final assessment report excluding the dropped NCs.
  66. The AT shall prepare an on-site assessment report (form A6.4-FORM-ACCR-011) and make it available to the AE with non-conformity reports, as applicable, for information, within 15 days of the completion of the visits to all the offices as per the workplan.
  67. If the AT has not identified any NC, it shall prepare a draft final assessment report (form A6.4-FORM-ACCR-013) and make it available to the AE for comments at the same time as the on-site assessment report. The AE shall have seven days from the day the draft final assessment report was made available to it to provide comments on the draft final assessment report. The AT shall finalize the final assessment report, taking into consideration the comments of the AE, and make it available to the AE for information, and submit it to the AEP together with the on-site assessment report within seven days of the deadline for commenting by the AE. The AEP shall consider the case in accordance with section 6.6 below.
  68. If the AT has identified one or more NCs, the AE shall conduct a root-cause analysis, and propose corrective actions for each agreed NC, including a time frame for implementation, within 15 days of receipt of the on-site assessment report.
  69. The AT shall assess the proposed corrective actions together with the root-cause analysis and communicate its acceptance or non-acceptance to the AE within seven days of receipt of them.
  70. If the AE does not present a root-cause analysis or propose corrective actions by the deadline referred to in paragraph 68, the AT shall prepare a final assessment report, make it available to the AE for information, and submit it to the AEP together with the on-site assessment report and non-conformity reports within seven days of the deadline. The AEP shall consider the case in accordance with section 6.6 below.
  71. If the AT does not accept the proposed corrective actions, it shall provide the AE with explanations for the rejection. The AE shall have an additional seven days to propose revised corrective actions.
  72. The AT shall assess the revised proposed corrective actions within seven days of their receipt.
  73. If the AT does not accept the revised proposed corrective actions, or if the AE does not propose revised corrective actions by the deadline referred to in paragraph 71 above, the AT shall prepare a final assessment report, make it available to the AE for information,

and submit it to the AEP together with the on-site assessment report and non-conformity reports within seven days of the deadline. The AEP shall consider the case in accordance with section 6.6 below.

74. If the original or revised proposed corrective actions for all agreed NCs are accepted by the AT, the AE shall implement all the corrective actions and submit evidence of their implementation to the AT within 60 days of their acceptance by the AT.
75. The AT shall assess the implementation of all the corrective actions within 10 days of receipt of the evidence of implementation.
76. If the AE does not submit evidence of implementation by the deadline referred to in paragraph 74 above, the AT shall prepare a final assessment report, make it available to the AE for information, and submit it to the AEP together with the on-site assessment report and the non-conformity reports within seven days of the deadline. The AEP shall consider the case in accordance with section 6.6 below.
77. If the AT considers that all the agreed NCs have been adequately addressed through the implementation of the corrective actions, the AT shall close the NCs and prepare a draft final assessment report and make it available to the AE for comments within seven days of the completion of the assessment of the implementation of all the corrective actions.
78. If the AT considers that at least one NC has not been adequately addressed, the AE shall have an additional 30 days to pursue implementation of the corrective actions and submit further evidence to the AT.
79. The AT shall assess the further implementation of the corrective actions within 10 days of receipt of the further evidence. Regardless of whether the AT still considers the implementation of corrective actions unsatisfactory, or whether the AE has submitted adequate further evidence of implementation of the corrective actions, the AT shall prepare a draft final assessment report and make it available to the AE for comments within seven days of the completion of the assessment of the further implementation of the corrective actions, or the deadline for submission of further evidence, as applicable.
80. The AE shall have seven days from the day the draft final assessment report was made available to it to provide comments on the draft final assessment report. At this stage, the AE shall not provide additional evidence of implementation of corrective actions to the NCs.
81. The AT shall finalize the final assessment report, taking under consideration the comments provided by the AE, make it available to the AE for information, and submit it to the AEP together with the on-site assessment report and non-conformity reports within seven days of the deadline for commenting by the AE.

## **6.6. Consideration by the AEP**

82. The AEP shall consider the reports prepared by the AT. If the AEP considers that one or more NCs remain open, it may provide one final opportunity to the AE to resolve the remaining NCs in accordance with relevant provisions in the previous section of this procedure, before the AEP concludes the assessment.
83. If the AEP considers that all NCs have been closed or if no NCs have been raised, the AEP shall recommend that the Supervisory Body accredit the AE for all sectoral scopes applied for.

84. If the AEP considers that, after the final opportunity referred to in paragraph 82 above, as applicable, there remains one or more open NCs, it shall recommend to the Supervisory Body one of the following options:
- (a) Accredit the AE only for some sectoral scopes applied for;
  - (b) Reject the application for accreditation.
85. The secretariat shall inform the AE of the recommendation of the AEP. If the AEP recommendation is one of the options referred to in paragraph 84(a) or (b) above, the AE may request an independent review of the AEP recommendation in accordance with the provisions contained in Appendix 5 to this procedure. In this case, the consideration by the Supervisory Body of the AEP recommendation in accordance with paragraph 86 below shall take place only after the Supervisory Body has received the independent review report referred to in Appendix 5 to this procedure and has decided on the review case.

## **6.7. Consideration by the Supervisory Body**

86. The Supervisory Body shall consider the recommendation of the AEP together with the independent review report, as applicable, and decide on one of the following options:
- (a) Accredit the AE for all sectoral scopes applied for;
  - (b) Accredit the AE for some sectoral scopes applied for;
  - (c) Reject the application for accreditation.
87. If the Supervisory Body decides to accredit the AE for some or all sectoral scopes applied for, the secretary of the Supervisory Body shall issue an accreditation certificate to the AE.
88. The secretariat shall maintain a public list of DOEs on the UNFCCC Article 6.4 website, containing information on:
- (a) Their accredited sectoral scopes;
  - (b) Contact details and addresses of the central office and any other offices of the entity as well as those of the outsourced entities where its validation and/or verification/certification functions are performed;
  - (c) A summary of the requests for registration and issuance submitted per DOE.

## **7. Performance assessment**

### **7.1. General**

89. The number and types of performance assessments are as follows:
- (a) A minimum of three performance assessments, reasonably spaced along with the regular surveillances, in the five-year accreditation term for any DOE as the mandatory basis;<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> The total number of performance assessments may increase to one performance assessment per year or more than five performance assessments within the accreditation term based on the risk-based approach analysis and the number of sectoral scopes accredited.

- (b) Additional performance assessment(s) based on the volume of work as follows:
    - (i) One additional performance assessment on a validation activity per year if the DOE submitted 50 or more requests for registration in the previous 12 months;
    - (ii) One additional performance assessment on a verification activity per year if the DOE submitted 150 or more requests for issuance in the previous 12 months;
  - (c) Addition or reduction of the number of performance assessments based on the output of the “Procedure: Performance monitoring of designated operational entities” by:
    - (i) One additional performance assessment on a validation or verification/certification activity if the indicator  $I_{2,REG}$  or  $I_{2,ISS}$  is in the yellow zone for the registration or issuance process, respectively, for three consecutive monitoring periods;
    - (ii) One less performance assessment on a validation or verification/certification activity if the indicator  $I_{2,REG}$  or  $I_{2,ISS}$  is in the green zone for the registration or issuance process, respectively, for four consecutive monitoring periods. This reduction in the number of performance assessments shall be effected only from those added in accordance with paragraph 89(b) above.
90. The launching of performance assessments is subject to a DOE notifying the secretariat, through a dedicated interface on the UNFCCC website, of the timing of the site inspection of the proposed A6.4 activities related to requests for registration or renewal or requests for issuance, as per the provisions related to such notifications in the “Procedure: Article 6.4 activity cycle procedure for projects” and “Procedure: Article 6.4 activity cycle procedure for programme of activities”.
91. The DOE shall make at least one submission of a request for registration, renewal or issuance under the “Procedure: Article 6.4 activity cycle procedure for projects” and “Procedure: Article 6.4 activity cycle procedure for programme of activities” within the accreditation term to ensure implementation of the established quality management system of the DOE and its competence; otherwise, the DOE’s reaccreditation shall be rejected as in paragraph 182(c) below.

## **7.2. Initiation**

92. The secretariat shall select validation and/or verification/certification activities for performance assessments to be conducted for a DOE based on the notification of site inspection by the DOE for requests for registration or renewal or requests for issuance, as in paragraph 90 above.
93. The secretariat shall notify the DOE of the validation or verification/certification activity selected for performance assessment. The DOE shall submit to the secretariat the documentation for the assessment specified in Appendix 1 to this procedure within seven days of receipt of the notification. If any of the required documents are not received by the secretariat by the deadline, the secretariat shall send a reminder to the DOE within seven days of the deadline. If any of the required documents are still not received by the secretariat within seven days of sending the reminder, the secretariat shall report the case to the AEP, and the AEP shall make a recommendation to the Supervisory Body to place the DOE under observation.

### **7.3. Completeness check**

94. The secretariat shall undertake a completeness check of the documentation for the assessment within seven days of receipt of all required documents referred to in paragraph 93 above. If the secretariat considers the documentation inadequate for the assessment, the secretariat shall notify the DOE and the DOE shall provide the additional documents within seven days of receipt of the notification. The secretariat shall undertake an additional completeness check within seven days. The completeness check can be repeated until receiving all the required documents and the DOE shall ensure all the required documents are submitted 7 days prior to conducting the performance assessment.

### **7.4. Appointment of the AT**

95. The secretariat shall, within seven days of receipt of all required documents from the DOE, including the confirmation of the on-site inspection date, appoint an AT for the assessment, selecting its members from the Accreditation Roster of Experts in accordance with relevant terms of reference. The AT shall consist of at least two members, including an AT leader and an expert qualified in the sectoral scopes of the A6.4 project or PoA in the validation or verification/certification activity selected for the performance assessment. The size of the AT may be reduced or increased to ensure that the competence of the AT is maintained and that the AT may adequately observe the DOE validation/verification team during a performance assessment based on a validation and/or verification/certification.
96. The secretariat shall inform the DOE of the composition of the AT. The DOE may object, in writing or by email within seven days, to the selection of any AT member on the basis of conflict of interest by identifying such conflict of interest.
97. If the DOE objects to the selection of an AT member, the secretariat shall, within seven days of receipt of the objection, consider modifying the composition of the AT. If the secretariat considers the objection unjustified, or the DOE does not object to the selection of any AT member within the time frame referred to in paragraph 96 above, the composition of the AT shall be deemed accepted. If the secretariat considers the objection unjustified, it shall inform the DOE accordingly. If the secretariat considers the objection justified and replaces an AT member, it shall inform the DOE of the new AT member within the same seven days. After this, the same steps in paragraphs 96 and 97 above shall repeat until the composition of the AT is deemed accepted.
98. Once the composition of the AT is deemed accepted, each AT member shall sign a confidentiality agreement and conflict of interest declaration (form A6.4-FORM-ACCR-004).
99. The secretariat shall provide the AT with the documentation for the assessment referred to in paragraph 93 above.

### **7.5. Assessment by the AT**

100. The AT may request the DOE to provide additional documents based on an initial review of the documentation for the assessment within seven days of receipt of the documentation referred to in paragraph 93 above. The DOE shall provide the requested additional documents within seven days of receipt of the request.
101. A performance assessment on a validation or verification/certification activity shall be based on the observation of the validation or verification carried out by the DOE team

during the on-site inspection at the project activity site(s) and on the desk-review evaluation of the draft validation and verification report and other documentary evidence submitted by the DOE.<sup>18</sup> Regarding the on-site inspection, the DOE shall, with the support of the secretariat, coordinate the dates and logistics for the visit to the project activity site(s) by its validation or verification/certification team with the AT. The AT leader shall conduct an opening meeting and a closing meeting based on the agenda for opening and closing meetings (form A6.4-FORM-ACCR-009) and complete the attendance register for the opening meeting and closing meeting (form A6.4-FORM-ACCR-010). The DOE shall submit to the AT a draft validation and verification report, duly reviewed internally for its completeness and adequacy, including Corrective Action Requests, Clarification Requests and/or Forward Action Requests, within 45 days of the on-site inspection.

102. The AT shall conduct the assessment of the documentation, including any additional documents that have been requested by the AT.
103. The AT shall, within 15 days of receipt of the documentation for the assessment referred to in paragraph 93 above, prepare a draft performance assessment report (form A6.4-FORM-ACCR-014, A6.4-FORM-ACCR-015, A6.4-FORM-ACCR-028 and A6.4-FORM-ACCR-029 as applicable), containing findings including those of potential NCs, objective evidence for each finding and a conclusion on whether the DOE conducted the validation or verification/certification activity competently, and make it available to the DOE for comments.
104. The DOE shall have seven days from the day the draft performance assessment report was made available to it to seek or provide clarification and/or submit additional documents regarding the findings from or to the AT.
105. The AT shall raise an NC for each finding that the AT concludes to be an issue showing non-compliance with an Article 6.4 accreditation requirement, prepare a non-conformity report for each NC, as applicable, finalize the performance assessment report, including a conclusion on whether the DOE conducted the validation or verification/certification activity competently, and make them available to the DOE for information within seven days of the deadline for commenting by the DOE.
106. If the AT concludes that the DOE conducted the validation or verification/certification activity incompetently, the AT shall submit the performance assessment report to the AEP within 10 days of the deadline for commenting by the DOE. The AEP shall consider the case in accordance with section 7.6 below. In the interim, any NCs shall continue to be addressed in accordance with the relevant provisions of this section.
107. The DOE shall consider the performance assessment report and non-conformity reports and provide a written acceptance of any NCs that it agrees with within seven days of receipt of the reports.
108. If the DOE disagrees with any NCs raised by the AT, the DOE may request a review of the NCs by the AEP in accordance with the provisions contained in Appendix 7 to this procedure. All agreed NCs shall continue to be addressed as per the provisions in this section up to the step immediately before the preparation of a draft final assessment

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<sup>18</sup> In accordance with the “Article 6.4 validation and verification standard for projects” and the “Article 6.4 validation and verification standard for programmes of activities”, an on-site inspection by a DOE may be exempted from certain verification/certification activities. If such verification/certification activity is chosen for a performance assessment, the assessment may be based on the remote inspection and/or the desk-review evaluation.

report. For the NCs placed under review, if the AEP decides to maintain them in accordance with the provisions contained in Appendix 7 to this procedure, they shall be addressed as per the provisions in this section and the AT shall prepare a draft final assessment report cover all NCs. If the AEP decides to drop them in accordance with the provisions contained in Appendix 7 to this procedure, the AT shall prepare a draft final assessment report excluding the dropped NCs.

109. If the AT has not identified any NC, it shall prepare a draft final assessment report (form A6.4-FORM-ACCR-013) and make it available to the DOE for comments at the same time as the performance assessment report. The DOE shall have seven days to provide comments on the draft final assessment report. The AT shall finalize the final assessment report, taking into account the comments of the DOE, and make it available to the DOE for information, and submit it to the AEP together with the performance assessment report within seven days of the deadline for commenting by the DOE. The AEP shall consider the case in accordance with section 7.6 below.
110. If the AT has identified one or more NCs, the DOE shall conduct a root-cause analysis and propose corrective actions for each agreed NC, including a time frame for implementation, within 15 days of receipt of the performance assessment report and non-conformity reports.
111. The AT shall assess the proposed corrective actions together with the root-cause analysis and communicate its acceptance or non-acceptance to the DOE within seven days of receipt of them.
112. If the DOE does not present a root-cause analysis or propose corrective actions by the deadline referred to in paragraph 110 above, the AT shall prepare a final assessment report, make it available to the DOE for information, and submit it to the AEP together with the performance assessment report and non-conformity reports within seven days of the deadline. The AEP shall consider the case in accordance with section 7.6 below.
113. If the AT does not accept the proposed corrective actions, it shall provide the DOE with explanations for the rejection. The DOE shall have an additional seven days to propose revised corrective actions.
114. The AT shall assess the revised proposed corrective actions within seven days of their receipt.
115. If the AT does not accept the revised proposed corrective actions, or if the DOE does not propose revised corrective actions by the deadline referred to in paragraph 113 above, the AT shall prepare a final assessment report, make it available to the DOE for information, and submit it to the AEP together with the performance assessment report and non-conformity reports within seven days of the deadline. The AEP shall consider the case in accordance with section 7.6 below.
116. If the original or revised proposed corrective actions for all agreed NCs are accepted by the AT, the DOE shall implement all the corrective actions and submit evidence of their implementation to the AT within 30 days of their acceptance by the AT.
117. The AT shall assess the implementation of all the corrective actions within 10 days of receipt of the evidence of implementation.
118. If the DOE does not submit evidence of implementation by the deadline referred to in paragraph 116 above, the AT shall prepare a final assessment report, make it available to the DOE for information, and submit it to the AEP together with the performance

assessment report and the non-conformity reports within seven days of the deadline. The AEP shall consider the case in accordance with section 7.6 below.

119. If the AT considers that all the agreed NCs have been adequately addressed through the implementation of the corrective actions, the AT shall close the NCs and prepare a draft final assessment report and make it available to the DOE for comments within seven days of the completion of the assessment of the implementation of all the corrective actions.
120. If the AT considers that at least one NC has not been adequately addressed, the DOE shall have an additional 15 days to pursue implementation of the corrective actions and submit further evidence to the AT.
121. The AT shall assess the further implementation of corrective actions within 10 days of receipt of the further evidence. Regardless of whether the AT still considers the implementation of corrective actions unsatisfactory, or whether the DOE has submitted adequate further evidence of implementation of the corrective actions, the AT shall prepare a draft final assessment report, including a conclusion on whether the DOE conducted the validation/verification activity competently, and make it available to the DOE for comments within seven days of the completion of the assessment of the further implementation of the corrective actions, or the deadline for submission of further evidence, as applicable.
122. The DOE shall have seven days from the day the draft final assessment report was made available to it to provide comments on the draft final assessment report. At this stage, the DOE shall not provide additional evidence of implementation of corrective actions to the NCs.
123. The AT shall finalize the final assessment report, taking into consideration the comments provided by the DOE, make it available to the DOE for information, and submit it to the AEP together with the performance assessment report and non-conformity reports within seven days of the deadline for commenting by the DOE.

#### **7.6. Consideration by the AEP**

124. The AEP shall consider the reports prepared by the AT. If the AEP considers that one or more NCs remain open, it may provide one final opportunity to the DOE to resolve the remaining NCs in accordance with the relevant provisions in the previous section of the procedure, before the AEP concludes the assessment.
125. If the AEP considers that all NCs have been closed or if no NCs have been raised, it shall inform the Supervisory Body of the completion of the performance assessment. However, if the AEP considers that the DOE conducted the validation or verification/certification activity incompetently or that at least one NC requires follow-up to verify the effectiveness of the corrective action, it may make a recommendation to the Supervisory Body in accordance with paragraph 29 above.
126. If the AEP considers that, after the final opportunity referred to in paragraph 124 above, as applicable, there remains one or more open NCs, it shall recommend one of the following options to the Supervisory Body:
  - (a) Place the DOE under observation, based on the criteria contained in Appendix 3 to this procedure;
  - (b) Suspend accreditation of the DOE for some or all sectoral scopes, based on the criteria contained in Appendix 3 to this procedure;

- (c) A course of action in accordance with paragraph 29 above.
127. The secretariat shall inform the DOE of the recommendation of the AEP. If the AEP recommendation is one of the options referred to in paragraph 126(a) or (b) above, the DOE may request an independent review of the AEP recommendation in accordance with the provisions contained in Appendix 5 to this procedure. If the AEP recommendation is the option referred to in paragraph 126(b) above, the DOE may also request a hearing before the Supervisory Body in accordance with the provisions contained in Appendix 8 to this procedure. In these cases, the consideration by the Supervisory Body on the AEP recommendation in accordance with paragraph 128 below shall take place only after the Supervisory Body has received the independent review report referred to in Appendix 5 to this procedure and has decided on the review case, and only after the hearing has taken place, as applicable.

### **7.7. Consideration by the Supervisory Body**

128. The Supervisory Body shall consider the recommendation of the AEP together with the independent review report and/or the hearing of the DOE, as applicable, and decide, based on the criteria contained in Appendix 3 to this procedure, on one of the following options:
- (a) Maintain the accreditation of the DOE;
  - (b) Place the DOE under observation;
  - (c) Suspend accreditation of the DOE for some or all sectoral scopes.
129. The conditions of under-observation status and suspension of accreditation are given in Appendix 4 to this procedure. The modalities for placing and lifting an under-observation status and a suspension of accreditation are defined in section 12 and section 13 below, respectively.
130. If the Supervisory Body decides to place the DOE under observation or suspend its accreditation, the secretariat shall promptly update the status of the DOE on the public list of DOEs referred to in paragraph 88 above.

## **8. Regular on-site surveillance**

### **8.1. General**

131. A DOE shall be subject to two regular on-site surveillance assessments during its accreditation term: one during the second year and another one during the fourth year of the term.<sup>19</sup>
132. If a regular on-site surveillance takes place at more than one office, all office assessments shall be compiled into one report, and the final decision on accreditation shall be made based on the outcomes of all offices assessed.

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<sup>19</sup> The time to launch the regular surveillance assessment can be adjusted based on the risk-based approach analysis.

## **8.2. Initiation**

133. The secretariat shall notify the DOE at least 90 days in advance of the 30-day period within which all the office visits for a regular on-site surveillance assessment will take place. The DOE may request a shift of the period by not more than 30 days earlier or later. The DOE and the secretariat shall agree on the period promptly.
134. The DOE shall submit to the secretariat the documentation for the assessment specified in Appendix 1 to this procedure within 15 days of the agreement on the period for the office visits. If any of the required documents are not received by the secretariat by the deadline, the secretariat shall send a reminder to the DOE within seven days of the deadline. If any of the required documents are still not received by the secretariat within seven days of sending the reminder, the secretariat shall report the case to the AEP, and the AEP shall make a recommendation to the Supervisory Body to place the DOE under observation.

## **8.3. Completeness check**

135. The secretariat shall undertake a completeness check of the documentation for the assessment within seven days of receipt of all required documents referred to in paragraph 134 above. If the secretariat considers the documentation inadequate for the assessment, the secretariat shall notify the DOE and the DOE shall provide the additional documents within seven days of receipt of the notification. The secretariat shall undertake an additional completeness check within seven days. The completeness check can be repeated until receiving all the required documents and the DOE shall ensure all the required documents are submitted two months prior to conducting on-site assessment.

## **8.4. Appointment of the AT and preparation of workplan**

136. The secretariat shall, within seven days of receipt of all required documents from the DOE, submit the draft workplan for the regular on-site surveillance assessment to the AEP for comments. The workplan shall identify the offices where the regular on-site surveillance assessment will be conducted and provide instructions to the AT on how to assess the corrective actions that were implemented by the DOE to address the NC(s) raised in previous assessments. The workplan may also include that the AT is to observe a meeting of the impartiality committee of the DOE.
137. In preparing the draft workplan (form A6.4-FORM-ACCR-007) and in identifying which sites to visit, the secretariat shall consider:
- (a) The documents submitted by the DOE;
  - (b) The number of employees of the DOE;
  - (c) The functions performed at each office;
  - (d) The required technical competence of the AT;
  - (e) The performance of the DOE as monitored through the implementation of the "Procedure: Performance monitoring of designated operational entities";
  - (f) The volume of the DOE's validation and verification/certification work;
  - (g) Any other influencing factors.

138. The AEP may provide comments on the draft workplan within seven days of receipt of the workplan. The secretariat shall finalize the workplan within seven days of the deadline for commenting by the AEP.
139. The secretariat shall, within seven days of finalization of the workplan, appoint an AT for the assessment, selecting its members from the Accreditation Roster of Experts
140. The secretariat shall inform the DOE of the composition of the AT. The DOE may object, in writing or by email within seven days, to the selection of any AT member on the basis of conflict of interest by identifying such conflict of interest.
141. If the DOE objects to the selection of an AT member, the secretariat shall consider modifying the composition of the AT within seven days of receipt of the objection. If the secretariat considers the objection unjustified, or the DOE does not object to the selection of any AT member within the time frame referred to in paragraph 140 above, the composition of the AT shall be deemed accepted. If the secretariat considers the objection unjustified, it shall inform the DOE accordingly. If the secretariat considers the objection justified and replaces an AT member, it shall inform the DOE of the new AT member within the same seven days. After this, the same steps in paragraphs 140 and 141 above shall be repeated until the composition of the AT is deemed accepted.
142. Once the composition of the AT is deemed accepted, each AT member shall sign a confidentiality agreement and conflict of interest declaration (form A6.4-FORM-ACCR-004).
143. The secretariat shall provide the AT with:
  - (a) The documentation for the assessment referred to in paragraph 134 above;
  - (b) The workplan for the assessment.

## **8.5. Assessment by the AT**

144. The AT leader shall coordinate the dates and logistics for the office visits, taking into account the availability of the team members and the DOE and with support from the secretariat. The AT leader shall send an assessment plan to the DOE at least 10 days prior to each office visit.<sup>20</sup>
145. The AT shall review the documentation for the assessment before the office visits.
146. The AT shall conduct the assessment at each office identified in the workplan. The AT leader shall conduct an opening meeting and a closing meeting based on the agenda for opening and closing meetings (form A6.4-FORM-ACCR-009) and complete the attendance register for the opening meeting and closing meeting (form A6.4-FORM-ACCR-010). If the AT identifies any NC, it shall prepare a non-conformity report (form A6.4-FORM-ACCR-012) for each NC during the office visit. The AT shall provide the DOE with objective evidence for each NC raised. The DOE shall have an opportunity to seek clarification from, and ask questions of, the AT on the NCs raised.
147. The DOE shall provide a written acceptance of any NCs that it agrees with during the AT office visit.

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<sup>20</sup> The assessment plan shall contain the assessment requirements, assessment schedule, responsibilities among AT members and information on administration and logistic.

148. If the DOE disagrees with any NCs raised by the AT, the DOE may request a review of the NCs by the AEP in accordance with the provisions contained in Appendix 7 to this procedure. All agreed NCs shall continue to be addressed as per the provisions in this section up to the step immediately before the preparation of a draft final assessment report. For the NCs placed under review, if the AEP decides to maintain them in accordance with the provisions contained in Appendix 7 to this procedure, they shall be addressed as per the provisions in this section, and the AT shall prepare a draft final assessment report covering all NCs. If the AEP decides to drop them in accordance with the provisions contained in Appendix 7 to this procedure, the AT shall prepare a draft final assessment report excluding the dropped NCs.
149. The AT shall prepare an on-site assessment report (form A6.4-FORM-ACCR-011) and make it available to the DOE with non-conformity reports, as applicable, for information, within 15 days of the completion of the visits to all the offices as per the workplan.
150. If the AT has not identified any NC, it shall prepare a draft final assessment report (form A6.4-FORM-ACCR-013) and make it available to the DOE for comments at the same time as the on-site assessment report. The DOE shall have seven days from the day the draft final assessment report was made available to it to provide comments on the draft final assessment report. The AT shall finalize the final assessment report taking under consideration the comments of the DOE, make it available to the DOE for information, and submit it to the AEP together with the on-site assessment report within seven days of the deadline for commenting by the DOE. The AEP shall consider the case in accordance with section 8.6 below.
151. If the AT has identified one or more NCs, the DOE shall conduct a root-cause analysis and propose corrective actions for each agreed NC, including a time frame for implementation, within 15 days of receipt of the on-site assessment report.
152. The AT shall assess the proposed corrective actions together with the root-cause analysis and communicate its acceptance or non-acceptance to the DOE within seven days of receipt of them.
153. If the DOE does not present a root-cause analysis or propose corrective actions by the deadline referred to in paragraph 151 above, the AT shall prepare a final assessment report, make it available to the DOE for information, and submit it to the AEP together with the on-site assessment report and non-conformity reports within seven days of the deadline. The AEP shall consider the case in accordance with section 8.6 below.
154. If the AT does not accept the proposed corrective actions, it shall provide the DOE with explanations for the rejection. The DOE shall have an additional seven days to propose revised corrective actions.
155. The AT shall assess the revised proposed corrective actions within seven days of receipt of them.
156. If the AT does not accept the revised proposed corrective actions, or if the DOE does not propose revised corrective actions by the deadline referred to in paragraph 154 above, the AT shall prepare a final assessment report, make it available to the DOE for information, and submit it to the AEP together with the on-site assessment report and non-conformity reports within seven days of the deadline. The AEP shall consider the case in accordance with section 8.6 below.

157. If the original or revised proposed corrective actions for all agreed NCs are accepted by the AT, the DOE shall implement all the corrective actions and submit evidence of their implementation to the AT within 30 days of their acceptance by the AT.
158. The AT shall assess the implementation of all the corrective actions within 10 days of receipt of the evidence of implementation.
159. If the DOE does not submit evidence of implementation by the deadline referred to in paragraph 157 above, the AT shall prepare a final assessment report, make it available to the DOE for information, and submit it to the AEP together with the on-site assessment report and the non-conformity reports within seven days of the deadline. The AEP shall consider the case in accordance with section 8.6 below.
160. If the AT considers that all the agreed NCs have been adequately addressed through the implementation of the corrective actions, the AT shall close the NCs and prepare a draft final assessment report and make it available to the DOE for comments within seven days of the completion of the assessment of the implementation of all the corrective actions.
161. If the AT considers that at least one NC has not been adequately addressed, the DOE shall have an additional 15 days to pursue implementation of the corrective actions and submit further evidence to the AT.
162. The AT shall assess the further implementation of the corrective actions within 10 days of receipt of the further evidence. Regardless of whether the AT still considers the implementation of corrective actions unsatisfactory, or whether the DOE has submitted adequate further evidence of implementation of the corrective actions, the AT shall prepare a draft final assessment report and make it available to the DOE for comments within seven days of the completion of the assessment of the further implementation of the corrective actions, or the deadline for submission of further evidence, as applicable.
163. The DOE shall have seven days from the day the draft final assessment report was made available to it to provide comments on the draft final assessment report. At this stage, the DOE shall not provide additional evidence of implementation of corrective actions to the NCs.
164. The AT shall finalize the final assessment report, taking under consideration the comments provided by the DOE, make it available to the DOE for information, and submit it to the AEP together with the on-site assessment report and non-conformity reports within seven days of the deadline for commenting by the DOE.

#### **8.6. Consideration by the AEP**

165. The AEP shall consider the reports prepared by the AT. If the AEP considers that one or more NCs remain open, it may provide one final opportunity to the DOE to resolve the remaining NCs in accordance with the relevant provisions in the previous section of this procedure, before the AEP concludes the assessment.
166. If the AEP considers that all NCs have been closed or if no NCs have been raised, the AEP shall inform the Supervisory Body of the successful completion of the regular on-site surveillance.
167. If the AEP considers that, after the final opportunity referred to in paragraph 165 above, as applicable, there remains one or more open NCs, it shall recommend to the Supervisory

Body, based on the criteria contained in Appendix 3 to this procedure, one of the following options:

- (a) Place the DOE under observation;
- (b) Suspend accreditation of the DOE for some or all sectoral scopes.

168. The secretariat shall inform the DOE of the recommendation of the AEP. If the AEP recommendation is one of the options referred to in paragraph 167(a) or (b) above, the DOE may request an independent review of the AEP recommendation in accordance with the provisions contained in Appendix 5 to this procedure. If the AEP recommendation is the option referred to in paragraph 167(b) above, the DOE may also request a hearing before the Supervisory Body in accordance with the provisions contained in Appendix 8 to this procedure. In these cases, the consideration by the Supervisory Body on the AEP recommendation in accordance with paragraph 169 below shall take place only after the Supervisory Body has received the independent review report referred to in Appendix 5 to this procedure and has decided on the review case, and only after the hearing has taken place, as applicable.

### **8.7. Consideration by the Supervisory Body**

169. The Supervisory Body shall consider the recommendation of the AEP together with the independent review report and/or the hearing of the DOE, as applicable, and decide, based on the criteria contained in Appendix 3 to this procedure, on one of the following options:

- (a) Maintain the accreditation of the DOE;
- (b) Place the DOE under observation;
- (c) Suspend accreditation of the DOE for some or all sectoral scopes.

170. The conditions of under-observation status and suspension of accreditation are given in Appendix 4 to this procedure. The modalities for placing and lifting an under-observation status and a suspension of accreditation are defined in section 12 and section 13 below, respectively.

171. If the Supervisory Body decides to place the DOE under observation or suspend its accreditation, the secretariat shall promptly update the status of the DOE on the public list of DOEs referred to in paragraph 88 above.

## **9. Reaccreditation**

### **9.1. Application for reaccreditation**

172. A DOE that wishes to be reaccredited after the expiry of the current accreditation term shall apply for reaccreditation between 10 and 12 months before the expiry date of the current accreditation term.

173. When applying for reaccreditation, the DOE may apply for accreditation in additional sectoral scopes as referred to in section 10 below.

174. The DOE shall submit to the secretariat a duly completed application form (form A6.4-FORM-ACCR-001) and all other documents specified in Appendix 1 to this procedure and pay the application fee specified in Appendix 9 to this procedure.

175. The application of a DOE for reaccreditation shall be considered duly submitted when the secretariat has received both the application documentation and the application fee.

## **9.2. General modalities**

176. The provisions and timelines in sections 6.3–6.5 above regarding the completeness check, appointment of an AT, preparation of a workplan, desk review and on-site assessment shall apply mutatis mutandis, except for:
- (a) Publication of the name of the DOE and the sectoral scopes applied for global stakeholder consultation, which is not necessary;
  - (b) The time frame for implementing corrective actions referred to in paragraph 74 above, which shall be 30 days instead of 60 days;
  - (c) The additional time frame for pursuing the implementation of corrective actions referred to in paragraph 78 above, which shall be 15 days instead of 30 days;
  - (d) The workplan, which shall also provide the instructions to the AT on how to assess the corrective actions that were implemented by the DOE to address the NC(s) raised in previous assessments.
177. The performance assessments initiated but not completed before a DOE is reaccredited shall remain in effect regardless of the proceeding of the reaccreditation assessment.
178. In the case of a delay in the reaccreditation process, the AEP may recommend that the Supervisory Body extend the accreditation of the DOE accordingly and the Supervisory Body shall consider the AEP's recommendation at its next meeting. The extension shall be granted only if the DOE has applied for reaccreditation within the time frame referred to in paragraph 172 above and the DOE is not fully responsible for the delay in the process of reaccreditation.
179. The DOE may voluntarily withdraw its application for reaccreditation by submitting a written notification of withdrawal any time before the meeting of the Supervisory Body at which a decision on the reaccreditation is due to be made in accordance with paragraph 184 below.

## **9.3. Consideration by the AEP**

180. The AEP shall consider the reports prepared by the AT. If the AEP considers that one or more NCs remain open, it may provide one final opportunity to the DOE to resolve the remaining NCs in accordance with the relevant provisions in section 6.5 above, before the AEP concludes the assessment.
181. If the AEP considers that all NCs have been closed or if no NCs have been raised, the AEP shall recommend that the Supervisory Body re-accredit the DOE for all sectoral scopes applied for.
182. If the AEP considers that, after the final opportunity referred to in paragraph 180 above, as applicable, there remains one or more open NCs, it shall recommend to the Supervisory Body one of the following options:
- (a) Re-accredit the DOE only for some sectoral scopes applied for;

- (b) Temporarily extend the accreditation of the DOE and, based on the criteria contained in Appendix 3 to this procedure:
    - (i) Place the DOE under observation; or
    - (ii) Suspend accreditation of the DOE for all sectoral scopes;
  - (c) Reject the application for reaccreditation.
183. The secretariat shall inform the DOE of the recommendation of the AEP. If the AEP recommendation is one of the options referred to in paragraph 182(a), (b) or (c) above, the DOE may request an independent review of the AEP recommendation in accordance with the provisions contained in Appendix 5 to this procedure. If the AEP recommendation is one of the options referred to in paragraph 182(b)(ii) or (c) above, the DOE may also request a hearing before the Supervisory Body in accordance with the provisions contained in Appendix 8 to this procedure. In these cases, the consideration by the Supervisory Body of the AEP recommendation in accordance with paragraph 184 below shall take place only after the Supervisory Body has received the independent review report referred to in Appendix 5 to this procedure and has decided on the review case, and only after the hearing has taken place, as applicable.

#### **9.4. Consideration by the Supervisory Body**

184. The Supervisory Body shall consider the recommendation of the AEP together with the independent review report and/or the hearing of the DOE, as applicable, and decide on one of the following options:
- (a) Re-accredit the DOE for all sectoral scopes applied for;
  - (b) Re-accredit the DOE only for some sectoral scopes applied for;
  - (c) Temporarily extend the accreditation of the DOE and based on the criteria contained in Appendix 3 to this procedure:
    - (i) Place the DOE under observation; or
    - (ii) Suspend accreditation of the DOE for all sectoral scopes;
  - (d) Reject the application for reaccreditation.
185. The conditions of under-observation status and suspension of accreditation are given in Appendix 4 to this procedure. The modalities for placing and lifting an under-observation status and a suspension of accreditation are defined in section 12 and section 13 below, respectively.
186. If the Supervisory Body decides to reaccredit the DOE, the secretary of the Supervisory Body shall issue an accreditation certificate to the DOE. The new accreditation term shall be valid for five years from the date of expiry of the previous accreditation term.
187. The secretariat shall promptly update the status of the DOE on the public list of DOEs referred to in paragraph 88 above.

## **10. Accreditation for additional sectoral scopes**

188. A DOE may apply for accreditation for additional sectoral scopes at any time within its accreditation term.

189. The AEP shall consider the application and decide on the scope of the assessment, taking into account the sectoral scopes for which the DOE is currently accredited and the additional sectoral scopes applied for.
190. The provisions and timelines defined in sections 6.3–6.7 above regarding the completeness check, appointment of an AT, preparation of a workplan, desk review, on-site assessment, and consideration by the AEP and the Supervisory Body shall apply *mutatis mutandis*, except for:
  - (a) Publication of the name of the DOE and the additional sectoral scopes applied for global stakeholder consultation, which is not necessary;
  - (b) The time frame for implementing corrective actions referred to in paragraph 74 above, which shall be 30 days instead of 60 days;
  - (c) The additional time frame for pursuing the implementation of corrective actions referred to in paragraph 78 above, which shall be 15 days instead of 30 days.
191. An accreditation for a maximum of three additional sectoral scopes may be granted based on an assessment performed and consideration given in accordance with sections 6.5-6.7 above but without conducting any site visit.
192. The accreditation for additional sectoral scopes of a DOE shall be valid only until the expiry of the existing accreditation term of the DOE. It is noted that additional sectoral scopes can also be applied for along with the application for reaccreditation as referred to in paragraph 173 above.

## **11. Spot-check**

### **11.1. Initiation**

193. The Supervisory Body may decide to conduct a spot-check of a DOE at any time during its accreditation term.
194. The consideration by the Supervisory Body to conduct a spot-check of a DOE may be triggered by, *inter alia*:
  - (a) The review process conducted by the Supervisory Body on a request for registration, request for renewal, request for post-registration change or a request for issuance submitted by the DOE as per “Procedure: Article 6.4 activity cycle procedure for projects” and “Procedure: Article 6.4 activity cycle procedure for programmes of activities”;
  - (b) Information received from a third party on the possible inadequate performance of the DOE in its validation and/or verification/certification activities as well as on any changes which may significantly impair the compliance of the DOE with Article 6.4 accreditation requirements, such as changes in ownership, organizational structure, internal policies and procedures, resources and personnel;
  - (c) A recommendation of the AEP based on, *inter alia*, the result of handling complaints against the DOE in accordance with Appendix 6 to this procedure.
195. The reason that triggered a spot-check shall remain confidential.

196. The Supervisory Body may decide to immediately suspend accreditation of the DOE under a spot-check. If the Supervisory Body decides to do so, it shall provide the DOE with an opportunity for a hearing at a Supervisory Body meeting prior to suspension. Also in this case, the assessment for lifting the suspension, in accordance with section 13 below, shall not be initiated until and unless the Supervisory Body decides to continue the suspension based on the outcome of the spot-check conducted in accordance with the present section.
197. The Supervisory Body, once it has decided to conduct a spot-check, shall agree on the scope of the spot-check. For this purpose, if the AEP recommends that the Supervisory Body conduct a spot-check, it shall also propose the scope of the spot-check.
198. The AEP shall initiate a spot-check of a DOE if its performance on validation and/or verification/certification activities as monitored through the implementation of the "Procedure: Performance monitoring of designated operational entities" declines, as the final version of a monitoring report prepared in accordance with the procedure shows that the DOE is in the red zone for the indicator I<sub>2</sub>.
199. Notwithstanding the provision in paragraph 198 above, the AEP may not initiate a spot-check of a DOE that has reached the red zone of indicator I<sub>2</sub> if the following two conditions are met:
  - (a) The issues in the scope of the spot-check have been covered and resolved in recent assessments;
  - (b) A visit to the central office of the DOE under a regular on-site surveillance or reaccreditation assessment is planned to take place in the next 90 days; in such case, the issues envisaged for the spot-check shall be considered and addressed in the regular on-site surveillance or reaccreditation assessment.
200. If the AEP initiates a spot-check of a DOE in accordance with paragraph 198 above, it shall agree on the scope of the spot-check and inform the Supervisory Body of the initiation of the spot-check and the scope. The scope shall be based on the information gathered in the implementation of the "Procedure: Performance monitoring of designated operational entities".
201. The scope of a spot-check shall include the following:
  - (a) Identification of the type and the site of the spot-check, such as:
    - (i) On-site assessment at the central office of the DOE and/or any other offices of the DOE or outsourced entities where the DOE validation and/or verification/certification functions are performed;
    - (ii) On-site assessment at an A6.4 project or PoA site regarding which the DOE performed a validation and/or verification/certification;
    - (iii) Off-site document review;
  - (b) Specific aspects to be focused on during the spot-check, such as:
    - (i) Management personnel of the DOE and its validation and verification/certification personnel in relation to its competence to perform validation and verification/certification functions;

- (ii) Organizational and management structure of the DOE, in particular with respect to providing validation and verification/certification services in an independent and impartial manner;
- (iii) Any other area identified as relevant to verify the compliance of the DOE with Article 6.4 accreditation requirements.

202. The name of the DOE under spot-check shall be made public in the report of the Supervisory Body meeting at which the Supervisory Body decided to conduct the spot-check or was informed by the AEP of the initiation of the spot-check.

## **11.2. Appointment of the AT and preparation of workplan**

203. The secretariat shall, within seven days of the Supervisory Body's decision to conduct the spot-check in accordance with paragraph 193 above, or of the initiation of the spot-check by the AEP in accordance with paragraph 198 above, appoint an AT for the spot-check, selecting its members from the Accreditation Roster of Experts. The AT shall consist of at least two members, including an AT leader. The size of the AT may vary depending on the nature of the issue that triggered the spot-check.

204. The secretariat shall inform the DOE of the composition of the AT. The DOE may object, in writing or by email within seven days, to the selection of any AT member on the basis of conflict of interest by identifying such conflict of interest.

205. If the DOE objects to the selection of an AT member, the secretariat shall consider modifying the composition of the AT within seven days of receipt of the objection. If the secretariat considers the objection unjustified, or the DOE does not object to the selection of any AT member within the time frame referred to in paragraph 204 above, the AT shall be deemed accepted. If the secretariat considers the objection unjustified, it shall inform the AE accordingly. If the secretariat considers the objection justified and replaces an AT member, it shall inform the DOE of the new AT member within the same seven days. After this, the same steps in paragraphs 204 above and 205 shall repeat until the composition of the AT is deemed accepted.

206. Once the composition of the AT is deemed accepted, each AT member shall sign a confidentiality agreement and conflict of interest declaration (form A6.4-FORM-ACCR-004).

207. The secretariat shall, within seven days of the Supervisory Body's decision to conduct the spot-check in accordance with paragraph 193 above, or the initiation of the spot-check by the AEP in accordance with paragraph 198 above, prepare a workplan (form A6.4-FORM-ACCR-007) for the spot-check and submit it to the AEP for comments, based on the scope defined by the Supervisory Body or the AEP, as applicable. The AEP may provide comments on the workplan within seven days of receipt of the workplan. The secretariat shall finalize the workplan within seven days of the deadline for commenting by the AEP.

208. The secretariat shall provide the AT with:

- (a) All relevant information on the areas to be assessed;
- (b) The workplan for the assessment.

209. If the spot-check is to be conducted at an A6.4 project or PoA site, the secretariat shall:

- (a) Send a notification to the DOE and to respective activity participants before the spot-check;
- (b) Request the DOE to coordinate arrangements with activity participants.

### **11.3. Assessment by the AT**

- 210. The AT shall review the documentation provided by the secretariat and prepare an assessment plan taking into account the scope of the spot-check.
- 211. After completion of its assessment, the AT shall prepare a draft spot-check report using the relevant accreditation assessment form and non-conformity reports, as applicable, and make them available to the DOE for comments within seven days.
- 212. The DOE shall have seven days from the day the draft spot-check report was made available to it to provide comments on the draft spot-check report and the non-conformity reports, as applicable.
- 213. The AT shall finalize the spot-check report, within seven days of the deadline for commenting by the DOE and submit it to the AEP together with the non-conformity reports, as applicable.

### **11.4. Consideration by the AEP**

- 214. The AEP shall consider the spot-check report, the non-conformity reports, as applicable, and the comments provided by the DOE, and, based on the criteria contained in Appendix 3 to this procedure, shall recommend to the Supervisory Body one of the following options:
  - (a) Confirm accreditation of the DOE for all accredited sectoral scopes;
  - (b) Request the DOE to identify and implement corrective actions to address the identified NCs within a specified time frame. The implemented corrective actions shall be verified by the AT through a site visit or an off-site document review, as appropriate;
  - (c) Place the DOE under observation;
  - (d) Suspend accreditation of the DOE for some or all sectoral scopes;
  - (e) Withdraw accreditation of the DOE for some or all sectoral scopes.
- 215. The secretariat shall inform the DOE of the recommendation of the AEP. If the AEP recommendation is one of the options referred to in paragraph 214(b) –(e) above, the DOE may request an independent review of the AEP recommendation in accordance with the provisions contained in Appendix 5 to this procedure. If the AEP recommendation is one of the options referred to in paragraph 214(d) or (e) above, the DOE may also request a hearing before the Supervisory Body in accordance with the provisions contained in Appendix 8 to this procedure. In these cases, the consideration by the Supervisory Body of the AEP recommendation in accordance with paragraph 216 below shall take place only after the Supervisory Body has received the independent review report referred to in Appendix 5 to this procedure and has decided on the review case, and only after the hearing has taken place, as applicable.

## **11.5. Consideration by the Supervisory Body**

216. The Supervisory Body shall consider the recommendation of the AEP together with the independent review report and the hearing of the DOE, as applicable, and decide, based on the criteria contained in Appendix 3 to this procedure, on one of the following options:
- (a) Confirm accreditation of the DOE for all accredited sectoral scopes;
  - (b) Request the DOE to identify and implement corrective actions to address the identified NCs within a specified time frame. The implemented corrective actions shall be verified by the AT through a site visit or an off-site document review as appropriate;
  - (c) Place the DOE under observation;
  - (d) Suspend accreditation of the DOE for some or all sectoral scopes;
  - (e) Withdraw accreditation of the DOE for some or all sectoral scopes.
217. The conditions of under-observation status and suspension and withdrawal of accreditation are given in Appendix 4 to this procedure. The modalities for placing and/or lifting an under-observation status, a suspension and a withdrawal of accreditation are defined in section 12, section 13 and 14 below, respectively.
218. If the Supervisory Body decides to place the DOE under observation, or suspend or withdraw its accreditation, the secretariat shall promptly update the status of the DOE on the public list of DOEs referred to in paragraph 88 above.

## **12. Under observation**

219. The Supervisory Body may decide to place a DOE under observation for one or more sectoral scopes based on an AEP recommendation made in accordance with paragraphs 28–30, 32, 129, 170, 185, 216 above, or 281 below.
220. The conditions of under-observation status are given in Appendix 4 to this procedure.
221. If the Supervisory Body decides to place a DOE under observation, it shall provide the reason for such action to the DOE, make publicly available the requirements regarding which such action was prompted, and indicate to the DOE the modalities for lifting such status, including:
- (a) If the under-observation status is triggered due to an open NC:
    - (i) Identification of the NC that shall be addressed;
    - (ii) Specification of a deadline for the DOE to present a root-cause analysis or propose corrective actions, propose revised corrective actions, or provide evidence of implementation of corrective actions to the NC, as applicable;
    - (iii) Type and modalities of the assessment to be carried out to assess the implementation of the corrective actions;
  - (b) If the under-observation status is triggered due to the recurrence of the same NC within a period of 12 months:
    - (i) Identification of the NC that recurred in the last 12 months;

- (ii) Specification of a deadline for the DOE to present an analysis of the reason for, and preventive actions to address, the recurrence of the NC;
    - (iii) Type and modalities of the assessment to be carried out to assess the implementation of the preventive actions;
  - (c) If the under-observation status is triggered due to the raising of a major NC:
    - (i) Identification of the major NC that shall be addressed;
    - (ii) Specification of a deadline for the DOE to present a root-cause analysis or propose corrective actions, propose revised corrective actions, or provide evidence of implementation of corrective actions to the NC, as applicable;
    - (iii) Type and modalities of the assessment to be carried out to assess the implementation of the corrective actions;
  - (d) If the under-observation status is triggered due to a failure to follow a provision in this procedure:
    - (i) Identification of the provision that the DOE failed to follow;
    - (ii) Specification of a deadline for the DOE to comply with the provision, or to present the reason for the failure to follow the provision and preventive actions to address the recurrence of such failure, as appropriate;
    - (iii) Type and modalities of the assessment to be carried out to assess the implementation of the preventive actions, as appropriate.
- 222. The same AT that conducted the accreditation assessment that, through the AEP recommendation, led to the Supervisory Body's decision to place the DOE under observation shall conduct the assessment referred to in paragraph 221(a)(iii), (b)(iii) or (c)(iii) above.
- 223. The AT shall conduct the assessment in accordance with the modalities indicated by the Supervisory Body and submit a final assessment report (form A6.4-FORM-ACCR-013) to the AEP together with non-conformity reports.
- 224. The AEP shall consider the reports prepared by the AT and recommend to the Supervisory Body, based on the criteria contained in Appendix 3 to this procedure, one of the following options:
  - (a) Lift the under-observation status of the DOE;
  - (b) Maintain the under-observation status of the DOE for some or all accredited sectoral scopes, and:
    - (i) Request the DOE to further define and implement revised and/or other corrective actions to resolve the NCs;
    - (ii) Conduct an additional assessment to assess the implementation of revised and/or new corrective actions;
  - (c) Suspend accreditation of the DOE for some or all sectoral scopes.
- 225. The secretariat shall inform the DOE of the recommendation of the AEP. If the AEP recommendation is one of the options referred to in paragraph 224(b) or (c) above, the

DOE may request an independent review of the AEP recommendation in accordance with the provisions contained in Appendix 5 to this procedure. If the AEP recommendation is the option referred to in paragraph 224(c) above, the DOE may also request a hearing before the Supervisory Body in accordance with the provisions contained in Appendix 8 to this procedure. In these cases, the consideration by the Supervisory Body on the AEP recommendation in accordance with paragraph 226 below shall take place only after the Supervisory Body has received the independent review report referred to in Appendix 5 to this procedure and has decided on the review case, and only after the hearing has taken place, as applicable.

226. The Supervisory Body shall consider the recommendation of the AEP together with the independent review report and/or the hearing of the DOE, as applicable, and decide, based on the criteria contained in Appendix 3 to this procedure, on one of the following options:
- (a) Lift the under-observation status of the DOE;
  - (b) Maintain the under-observation status of the DOE and:
    - (i) Request the DOE to further define and implement revised and/or other corrective actions to resolve the NCs;
    - (ii) Conduct an additional assessment to assess the implementation of revised and/or new corrective actions;
  - (c) Suspend accreditation of the DOE for some or all sectoral scopes in accordance with section 13 below.
227. If the Supervisory Body decides to lift the under-observation status of the DOE, the secretariat shall promptly update the status of the DOE on the public list of DOEs referred to in paragraph 88 above.
228. If the Supervisory Body decides on the option referred to in paragraph 226(b) above, the DOE, the AEP and the AT shall undertake further actions accordingly.

### **13. Suspension of accreditation**

229. The Supervisory Body may decide to suspend accreditation of a DOE for some or all sectoral scopes in accordance with paragraphs 28–30, 32, 129, 169, 184, 216, 226 above or 281 below.
230. The conditions of suspension of accreditation are given in Appendix 4 to this procedure.
231. If the Supervisory Body decides to suspend accreditation of the DOE, it shall provide the reason for such action to the DOE, make publicly available the requirements regarding which such action was prompted, and indicate to the DOE the modalities for lifting such status, including:
- (a) Identification of the NCs that shall be addressed;
  - (b) Specification of a deadline for the DOE to present a root-cause analysis or propose corrective actions, propose revised corrective actions, or provide evidence of implementation of corrective actions to the NCs, as applicable. This deadline shall not exceed 12 months;

- (c) Type and modalities of the assessment to be carried out to assess the implementation of the corrective actions.
232. If the DOE does not meet the deadline referred to in paragraph 231(b) above, the AEP shall recommend to the Supervisory Body that either the accreditation status of the DOE be withdrawn or its sectoral scopes of accreditation be reduced.
233. The same AT that conducted the accreditation assessment that, through the AEP recommendation, led to the Supervisory Body's decision to suspend accreditation of the DOE, shall conduct the assessment referred to in paragraph 231(c) above.
234. The AT shall conduct the assessment in accordance with the modalities indicated by the Supervisory Body and submit a final assessment report (form A6.4-FORM-ACCR-013) to the AEP together with non-conformity reports.
235. The AEP shall consider the reports prepared by the AT and recommend to the Supervisory Body, based on the criteria contained in Appendix 3 to this procedure, one of the following options:
- (a) Lift the suspension of accreditation of the DOE;
  - (b) Lift the suspension of accreditation of the DOE and decide on an additional assessment to be performed to verify the effectiveness of the implemented corrective actions;
  - (c) Maintain the suspension of accreditation of the DOE for some or all accredited sectoral scopes, and:
    - (i) Request the DOE to further define and implement revised and/or other corrective actions to resolve the NCs;
    - (ii) Conduct an additional assessment to assess the implementation of revised and/or new corrective actions;
  - (d) Withdraw accreditation of the DOE for some or all sectoral scopes in accordance with section 14.2 below.
236. The secretariat shall inform the DOE of the recommendation of the AEP. If the AEP recommendation is one of the options referred to in paragraph 235(c) or (d) above, the DOE may request an independent review of the AEP recommendation in accordance with the provisions contained in Appendix 5 to this procedure. If the AEP recommendation is the option referred to in paragraph 235(d) above, the DOE may also request a hearing before the Supervisory Body in accordance with the provisions contained in Appendix 8 to this procedure. In these cases, consideration by the Supervisory Body of the AEP recommendation in accordance with paragraph 237 below shall take place only after the Supervisory Body has received the independent review report referred to in Appendix 5 to this procedure and has decided on the review case, and only after the hearing has taken place, as applicable.
237. The Supervisory Body shall consider the recommendation of the AEP together with the independent review report and/or the hearing of the DOE, as applicable, and decide, based on the criteria contained in Appendix 3 to this procedure, on one of the following options:
- (a) Lift the suspension of accreditation of the DOE;

- (b) Lift the suspension of accreditation of the DOE and decide on an additional assessment to be performed to verify the effectiveness of the implemented corrective actions;
  - (c) Maintain the suspension of accreditation of the DOE for some or all accredited sectoral scopes, and:
    - (i) Request the DOE to further define and implement revised and/or other corrective actions to resolve the NCs;
    - (ii) Conduct an additional assessment to assess the implementation of revised and/or new corrective actions;
  - (d) Withdraw accreditation of the DOE for some or all sectoral scopes in accordance with section 14.2 below.
238. If the Supervisory Body decides to lift the suspension of accreditation of the DOE, the secretariat shall promptly update the status of the DOE on the public list of DOEs referred to in paragraph 88 above.
239. If the Supervisory Body decides on the option referred to in paragraph 237(c) above, the DOE, the AEP and the AT shall undertake further actions accordingly.

## **14. Withdrawal of accreditation**

### **14.1. Voluntary withdrawal**

240. A DOE may withdraw its accreditation status for some or all accredited sectoral scopes at any time by submitting a written notification to the secretariat.
241. The secretariat shall acknowledge receipt of the notification, promptly update the status of the DOE on the public list of DOEs referred to in paragraph 88 above, and inform the Supervisory Body and the AEP of the withdrawal.
242. Upon receipt of the acknowledgement of receipt, the entity shall return the accreditation certificate referred to in paragraph 87 above to the secretariat and cease all validation and verification/certification activities for the sectoral scopes for which it withdrew its accreditation.
243. The DOE shall inform, if applicable, any affected clients of the withdrawal of its accreditation status.
244. The DOE shall settle all outstanding fees and costs to be paid to AT members for their assessment work for the DOE.

### **14.2. Withdrawal by the Supervisory Body**

245. The Supervisory Body may decide to withdraw accreditation of a DOE for some or all sectoral scopes based on an AEP recommendation made in accordance with paragraphs 28–30, 216, 237 above, 265 or 281 below.
246. The conditions of withdrawal of accreditation are given in Appendix 4 to this procedure.
247. If the Supervisory Body's consideration of withdrawal is triggered in accordance with paragraph 28 above, the Supervisory Body shall consider the recommendation of the AEP, together with the independent review report referred to in Appendix 5 to this

procedure and/or the hearing of the DOE, as applicable, and decide, based on the criteria contained in Appendix 3 to this procedure, on one of the following options:

- (a) Request the AEP to instruct the AT to resume the accreditation assessment;
  - (b) Suspend accreditation of the DOE for some or all sectoral scopes;
  - (c) Withdraw accreditation of the DOE for some or all sectoral scopes.
248. If the Supervisory Body's consideration of withdrawal is triggered in accordance with paragraphs 216, 237 above, 265 or 281 below, the Supervisory Body shall decide on one of the options listed in the same paragraph.
249. If the Supervisory Body decides to withdraw accreditation of the DOE, it shall provide the reason for such action to the DOE and make publicly available the requirements regarding which such action was prompted.
250. Upon withdrawal of accreditation by the Supervisory Body, the entity shall return the accreditation certificate referred to in paragraph 87 above to the secretariat and cease all validation and verification/certification activities for the sectoral scopes for which the accreditation was withdrawn.
251. If the Supervisory Body decides to withdraw accreditation of the DOE, the secretariat shall promptly update the status of the DOE on the public list of DOEs referred to in paragraph 88 above.
252. The DOE shall inform, if applicable, any affected clients of the withdrawal of its accreditation status.
253. The DOE shall settle all outstanding fees and costs to be paid to AT members for their assessment work for the DOE.

## **15. Expiry of accreditation**

254. Upon expiry of accreditation of a DOE, the entity shall not continue any validation and/or verification/certification activities for the sectoral scopes for which the accreditation has expired.
255. The DOE shall inform, if applicable, any affected clients of the expiry of its accreditation status.

## **16. Transfer of accreditation to another entity**

256. A DOE may submit to the secretariat a request for the transfer of its accreditation to another entity (succeeding entity) by providing information on, inter alia:
- (a) Requested date of transfer of accreditation, which shall be at least 90 days after submission of the request;
  - (b) Reason for the request for the transfer of accreditation;
  - (c) Relationship between the DOE and the succeeding entity, including changes to ownership and/or shareholding, as appropriate;
  - (d) Financial stability and insurance coverage of the succeeding entity;

- (e) Pending judicial processes that could affect the validation and/or verification/certification functions of the succeeding entity;
  - (f) Impact on the validation and/or verification/certification functions, including changes to:
    - (i) Legal status and applicability of national laws and regulations;
    - (ii) Relevant policies, procedures and practices;
    - (iii) Relevant personnel;
  - (g) List of ongoing validation and verification/certification activities and impact on them.
257. The secretariat shall undertake a completeness check of the request. If the information provided is found incomplete or insufficient, the secretariat shall inform the DOE of the missing elements within seven days of receipt of the request. Subsequent steps of the process shall only continue once all requested information has been received by the secretariat.
258. The secretariat, after receipt of all requested information, shall carry out and conclude a desk review of the requested documentation within 10 days and submit the outcome to the AEP.
259. The desk review shall cover at minimum the following:
- (a) How financial stability would be impacted the transfer;
  - (b) Whether any pending judicial processes could impede the succeeding entity from carrying out its validation and verification/certification functions;
  - (c) How relevant policies, procedures and practices would be impacted by the transfer;
  - (d) How availability and competence of personnel involved in the validation and verification/certification functions would be impacted by the transfer;
  - (e) How ongoing validation and verification/certification activities would be impacted by the transfer.
260. The AEP shall consider the request based on the outcome of the desk review and decide whether to request an AT or the secretariat to conduct a further assessment, and if so, the type and modalities of the assessment.
261. If the AEP decides to request an AT to conduct a further assessment, the appointment of the AT and preparation of a workplan shall follow the provisions in paragraphs 136-143 above *mutatis mutandis*.
262. If the AEP decides to request an AT or the secretariat to conduct a further assessment, the AT or the secretariat shall conduct the further assessment in accordance with the type and modalities specified by the AEP.
263. The AEP shall, after receipt of the outcome of the further assessment, as applicable, recommend to the Supervisory Body one of the following options:
- (a) Approve the transfer of accreditation;

- (b) Reject the request for transfer of accreditation and:
    - (i) Maintain accreditation of the DOE; or
    - (ii) Withdraw accreditation of the DOE in accordance with section 14.2 above.
264. The secretariat shall inform the DOE of the recommendation of the AEP. If the AEP recommendation is the option referred to in paragraph 263(b) above, the DOE may request an independent review of the AEP recommendation in accordance with the provisions contained in Appendix 5 to this procedure. If the AEP recommendation is the option referred to in paragraph 263(b)(ii) above, the DOE may also request a hearing before the Supervisory Body in accordance with the provisions contained in Appendix 8 to this procedure. In these cases, the consideration by the Supervisory Body of the AEP recommendation in accordance with paragraph 265 below shall take place only after the Supervisory Body has received the independent review report referred to in Appendix 5 to this procedure and has decided on the review case, and only after the hearing has taken place, as applicable.
265. The Supervisory Body shall consider the recommendation of the AEP, together with the independent review report and/or the hearing of the DOE, as applicable, and decide on one of the following options:
- (a) Approve the transfer of accreditation;
  - (b) Reject the request for transfer of accreditation and:
    - (i) Maintain accreditation of the DOE; or
    - (ii) Withdraw accreditation of the DOE;
  - (c) Conduct an additional assessment.
266. If the Supervisory Body decides to approve the transfer of accreditation, the DOE shall transfer all records of past and ongoing validation and verification/certification activities to the succeeding entity, and the succeeding entity shall assume all responsibilities associated with those validation and verification/certification activities.
267. Upon approval of transfer of accreditation, the DOE shall return the accreditation certificate referred to in paragraph 87 above to the secretariat and cease all validation and verification/certification activities. The secretariat shall promptly issue an accreditation certificate to the succeeding entity.
268. The conditions of withdrawal of accreditation are given in Appendix 4 to this procedure. The modalities for placing a withdrawal of accreditation status are defined in section 14 above.
269. If the Supervisory Body decides to approve the transfer of accreditation or withdraw the accreditation of the DOE, the secretariat shall promptly update the status of the DOE on the public list of DOEs referred to in paragraph 88 above.
270. The DOE shall inform, if applicable, any affected clients of the transfer of its accreditation.
271. If the Supervisory Body decides to reject the request for transfer of accreditation, it shall provide the reason for such action to the DOE. In this case, the DOE may voluntarily withdraw its accreditation in accordance with section 14.1 above, and the succeeding entity may apply for accreditation in accordance with section 6 above.

272. If the Supervisory Body decides to conduct an additional assessment, the AEP and the secretariat or the AT shall undertake further actions accordingly.

## 17. Notification of changes

273. An AE/DOE shall notify the secretariat, at least 90 days before its implementation, of a planned change in its legal, commercial or organizational status.

274. An AE/DOE shall inform the secretariat, at least 30 days before its implementation, of the following planned changes:

- (a) In the organizational structure and/or top management;
- (b) Companies to which the AE/DOE will outsource one or more validation and/or verification/certification functions.

275. In case of an unexpected change that may significantly affect the compliance of an AE/DOE with the Article 6.4 accreditation requirements, the AE/DOE shall notify the secretariat no later than 15 days after the change took place.<sup>21</sup>

276. If the AE/DOE does not notify the secretariat of changes referred to in paragraphs 273–275 above by the deadlines specified in these paragraphs, the AEP may recommend that the Supervisory Body initiate a spot-check or place the DOE under observation.

277. The AEP shall consider the notified change and decide whether to conduct a further assessment (e.g. document review and/or site visit) on a case-by-case basis. In doing so, the AEP may decide not to conduct a specific assessment, but to assess the notified changes in a future regular on-site surveillance or reaccreditation assessment.

278. If the AEP decides to request an AT to conduct a further assessment, the appointment of the AT and the preparation of a workplan shall follow the provisions in paragraphs 136–143 above *mutatis mutandis*.

279. The AEP shall, based on the outcome of the further assessment, as applicable, decide on one of the following options:

- (a) Accept or reject the changes of the AE/DOE;
- (b) Reject the changes of the AE and request the AT conducting the assessment for initial accreditation of the AE to take into account the changes;
- (c) Recommend that the Supervisory Body place the DOE under observation;
- (d) Recommend that the Supervisory Body suspend accreditation of the DOE for some or all sectoral scopes;
- (e) Recommend that the Supervisory Body withdraw accreditation of the DOE for some or all sectoral scopes.

280. The secretariat shall inform the DOE of the decision of the AEP. If the AEP decision is one of the options referred to in paragraph 279(b) –(e) above, the DOE may request an

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<sup>21</sup> Unexpected changes include all changes under paragraphs 273 and 274 above which have not been notified to the secretariat within the indicated timelines (e.g. top management and/or key professional personnel recruitments and/or resignations due to short-notice, change of the organization name due to short notice of management decisions to work under a new name) and supported by a justification.

independent review of the AEP recommendation in accordance with the provisions contained in Appendix 5 to this procedure. If the AEP decision is one of the options referred to in paragraph 279 (d) or (e) above, the DOE may also request a hearing before the Supervisory Body in accordance with the provisions contained in Appendix 8 to this procedure. In these cases, the consideration by the Supervisory Body of the AEP recommendation in accordance with paragraph 281 below shall take place only after the Supervisory Body has received the independent review report referred to in Appendix 5 to this procedure and has decided on the review case, and only after the hearing has taken place, as applicable.

281. If the AEP submits a recommendation to the Supervisory Body in accordance with paragraph 279(c) –(e) above, the Supervisory Body shall consider the recommendation of the AEP, together with the independent review report and the hearing of the DOE, as applicable, and decide, based on the criteria contained in Appendix 3 to this procedure, on one of the following options:
- (a) Accept the changes of the DOE;
  - (b) Place the DOE under observation;
  - (c) Suspend accreditation of the DOE for some or all sectoral scopes;
  - (d) Withdraw accreditation of the DOE for some or all sectoral scopes.
282. The conditions of under-observation status and suspension and withdrawal of accreditation are given in Appendix 4 to this procedure. The modalities for placing and/or lifting an under-observation status, a suspension and a withdrawal of accreditation are defined in section 12, section 13 and section 14 above, respectively.
283. If the Supervisory Body decides to place the DOE under observation, or suspend or withdraw its accreditation, the secretariat shall promptly update the status of the DOE on the public list of DOEs referred to in paragraph 88 above.

## **18. Reporting of activities**

284. A DOE shall submit an annual activity report (form A6.4-FORM-ACCR-022) to the secretariat by 30 September every year until its accreditation expires or is withdrawn.
285. The annual activity report shall cover the period from 1 July of the preceding year to 30 June of the current year.
286. The annual activity report shall be treated as confidential.
287. The annual activity report shall be signed by the chief executive officer of the DOE before submission to the secretariat.

## Appendix 1. Documentation for accreditation assessments

1. To apply for initial accreditation, extension of sectoral scopes or reaccreditation, the applicant entity (AE) or designated operational entity (DOE) shall provide to the secretariat an electronic version of the documents in table 1, except for the completed application form (A6.4-FORM-ACCR-001), which shall be provided in hard copy.

**Table 1. Required documents for assessments for initial accreditation, extension of sectoral scopes, regular on-site surveillance and reaccreditation**

Document	Initial accreditation and extension of sectoral scopes	Regular on-site surveillance	Reaccreditation
1. Completed application form (A6.4-FORM-ACCR-001)	X		X
2. Completed declaration form (A6.4-FORM-ACCR-002), of other offices and/or outsourced entities performing validation and/or verification/certification functions, clearly indicating functions undertaken at each office	X	X	X
3. Completed self-completeness check form (A6.4-FORM-ACCR-003), referring to specific documents, procedures and forms that address the Article 6.4 accreditation requirements, and all documents (e.g. manuals, procedures, forms) referred to in A6.4-FORM-ACCR-003	X	X	X
4. Financial statements of the last three years and business plan or workplan or financial plan for the next three years. For newly established companies (less than three years), any other relevant evidence such as shareholders' commitment and business plan or workplan or financial plan for the next three years. Documented analysis of potential liabilities arising from its validation and verification/certification functions.	X	X	X
5. Documentation on its legal entity status (e.g. registration documents, memorandum, articles of association)	X	X	X

Document	Initial accreditation and extension of sectoral scopes	Regular on-site surveillance	Reaccreditation
6. Names, qualifications, experience and terms of reference of senior management personnel, such as the senior executive, board members, senior officers and other relevant personnel	X	X	X
7. Organizational chart showing lines of authority, responsibility and allocation of functions	X	X	X
8. Quality assurance policy and procedures, including procedures and manuals on how the entity conducts validation and verification/certification activities	X	X	X
9. Administrative procedures, including safeguarding impartiality and documented analysis of all potential conflicts of interest, information management, document control, record control, internal audit, corrective and preventive actions, and management review	X	X	X
10. Policy and procedures for the recruitment and training of AE/DOE personnel, for ensuring their competence for all necessary validation and verification/certification functions, and for monitoring their performance, including qualification procedures and competence matrix	X	X	X
11. Procedures for handling complaints, appeals and disputes	X	X	X
12. Declaration that the AE/DOE has no pending judicial processes for malpractice, fraud and/or other activity incompatible with its functions as a DOE	X	X	X
13. Statement that operations of the AE/DOE are in compliance with applicable national laws	X	X	X

Document	Initial accreditation and extension of sectoral scopes	Regular on-site surveillance	Reaccreditation
14. If the AE/DOE is part of a larger organization and where parts of that organization are, or may become, involved in the identification, development or financing of any Article 6.4 project (A6.4 project) or Article 6.4 programme of activity (A6.4 PoA):			
(a) Declaration of all the organization's actual and planned involvement in a A6.4 project or A6.4 PoA, if any, indicating which part of the organization is involved and in which particular A6.4 project or A6.4 PoA	X	X	X
(b) Clear definition of links with other parts of the organization, demonstrating that no conflict of interest exists	X	X	X
(c) Demonstration that no conflict of interest exists between its functions as a DOE and any other functions that it may have, and how business is managed to minimize any identified risk to impartiality (the demonstration shall cover all sources of conflict of interest, whether they arise from within the AE/DOE or from the activities of related bodies)	X	X	X
(d) Demonstration that it, together with its senior management and staff, is not involved in any commercial, financial or other processes which might influence its judgment or endanger trust in its independence of judgement and integrity in relation to its activities, and that it complies with any rules applicable in this respect	X	X	X
15. Schedule of internal audits, management review meetings and impartiality committee meetings (indicating planned and completed activities)	X	X	X
16. List of A6.4 projects and PoAs completed and in progress for validation or verification/certification (indicating the status)		X	X

Document	Initial accreditation and extension of sectoral scopes	Regular on-site surveillance	Reaccreditation
17. Summary of the changes since the previous on-site assessment		X	X

2. For performance assessments, the DOE shall provide to the secretariat an electronic version of the documents in table 2.

**Table 2. Required documents for performance assessments**

Document	Performance assessment on validation activity	Performance assessment on verification activity
1. Project design document for validation performance assessment	X <sup>(a)</sup>	X
2. Contract review documents and the signed contract	X	X
3. Conflict of interest analysis	X	X
4. Team competence justification with evidence	X	X
5. Monitoring report for verification performance assessment		X
6. Working spreadsheet (in Excel format)		X
7. Assessment plan	X <sup>(b)</sup>	X <sup>(b)</sup>
8. Information about the DOE team to visit the project site	X <sup>(b)</sup>	X <sup>(b)</sup>
9. Draft validation/verification report for internal technical review	X <sup>(c)</sup>	X <sup>(c)</sup>
10. Corrective Action Requests, Clarification Requests and Forward Action Requests	X <sup>(c)</sup>	X <sup>(c)</sup>
11. Any other documents requested by the Article 6.4 assessment team	X	X

<sup>(a)</sup> All versions of the project design document.

<sup>(b)</sup> If an on-site inspection is undertaken.

<sup>(c)</sup> Documents shall be submitted after the on-site assessment. In the case where an on-site inspection is not conducted in accordance with the “Article 6.4 validation and verification standard for projects” or the “Article 6.4 validation and verification standard for programmes of activities”, the documents to be submitted shall include all types of evidence that the verification team has verified.

## Appendix 2. Forms used in the Article 6.4 accreditation process

1. The following forms are to be used in the Article 6.4 accreditation process in accordance with this procedure. The forms are available on the UNFCCC Article 6.4 website.<sup>1</sup>
  - (a) Application for accreditation and reaccreditation:
    - (i) A6.4-FORM-ACCR-001 (Application for accreditation);
    - (ii) A6.4-FORM-ACCR-002 (Declaration of other offices performing validation and verification/certification functions);
    - (iii) A6.4-FORM-ACCR-003 (Self completeness check);
    - (iv) A6.4-FORM-ACCR-025 (Global stakeholder consultation);
  - (b) Article 6.4 assessment team (AT) establishment:
    - (i) A6.4-FORM-ACCR-004 (Confidentiality agreement and conflict of interest declaration);
    - (ii) A6.4-FORM-ACCR-005 (Fee agreement for AT member);
    - (iii) A6.4-FORM-ACCR-006 (AT member performance monitoring report);
  - (c) Initial accreditation, reaccreditation:
    - (i) A6.4-FORM-ACCR-007 (Workplan for AT assessment);
    - (ii) A6.4-FORM-ACCR-008 (Desk review report);
    - (iii) A6.4-FORM-ACCR-009 (Agenda for opening and closing meetings);
    - (iv) A6.4-FORM-ACCR-010 (Attendance register for opening and closing meetings);
    - (v) A6.4-FORM-ACCR-011 (On-site assessment report);
    - (vi) A6.4-FORM-ACCR-012 (Non-conformity, corrective action and clearance report);
    - (vii) A6.4-FORM-ACCR-013(Final assessment report);
    - (viii) A6.4-FORM-ACCR-026 (Pre-assessment application form);
    - (ix) A6.4-FORM-ACCR-027 (Pre-assessment report);
  - (d) Performance assessment on validation activity:
    - (i) A6.4-FORM-ACCR-014 (Performance assessment report on validation activity);

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<sup>1</sup> Available at: <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/bodies/constituted-bodies/article-64-supervisory-body/rules-and-regulations#Forms>.

- (ii) A6.4-FORM-ACCR-028 (Performance assessment report on validation PoA);
- (iii) A6.4-FORM-ACCR-023 (Performance assessment report on validation activity for afforestation and reforestation project activity);
- (iv) A6.4-FORM-ACCR-012 (Non-conformity, corrective action and clearance report);
- (v) A6.4-FORM-ACCR-013 (Final assessment report);
- (e) Performance assessment on verification activity:
  - (i) A6.4-FORM-ACCR-009 (Agenda for opening and closing meetings);
  - (ii) A6.4-FORM-ACCR-010 (Attendance register for opening and closing meetings);
  - (iii) A6.4-FORM-ACCR-015 (Performance assessment report on verification and certification activity);
  - (iv) A6.4-FORM-ACCR-029 (Performance assessment report on verification and certification PoA);
  - (v) A6.4-FORM-ACCR-024 (Performance assessment report on verification and certification activity for afforestation and reforestation project activity);
  - (vi) A6.4-FORM-ACCR-012 (Non-conformity, corrective action and clearance report);
  - (vii) A6.4-FORM-ACCR-013 (Final assessment report);
- (f) Regular on-site surveillance:
  - (i) A6.4-FORM-ACCR-007 (Workplan for AT assessment);
  - (ii) A6.4-FORM-ACCR-009 (Agenda for opening and closing meetings);
  - (iii) A6.4-FORM-ACCR-010 (Attendance register for opening and closing meetings);
  - (iv) A6.4-FORM-ACCR-011 (On-site assessment report);
  - (v) A6.4-FORM-ACCR-012 (Non-conformity, corrective action and clearance report);
  - (vi) A6.4-FORM-ACCR-013 (Final assessment report);
- (g) Review of Article 6.4 Accreditation Expert Panel (AEP) recommendation, complaint against designated operational entities (DOEs), review of non-conformity:
  - (i) A6.4-FORM-ACCR-016 (Request for independent review of AEP recommendation);
  - (ii) A6.4-FORM-ACCR-017 (Independent review report on AEP recommendation);
  - (iii) A6.4-FORM-ACCR-018 (Complaint against DOE);

- (iv) A6.4-FORM-ACCR-019 (Complaint assessment report);
- (v) A6.4-FORM-ACCR-020 (Request for review of non-conformity);
- (vi) A6.4-FORM-ACCR-021 (Independent review report on non-conformity);
- (h) DOE annual activity reporting:
  - (i) A6.4-FORM-ACCR-022 (DOE annual activity report).

### **Appendix 3. Criteria for under-observation status, and suspension and withdrawal of accreditation**

1. Any of the following criteria may be used by the Article 6.4 Accreditation Expert Panel (AEP) to make a recommendation and by the Supervisory Body to make a decision on whether to place a designated operational entity (DOE) under observation or suspend or withdraw its accreditation in accordance with a relevant provision of this procedure.
2. The criteria for placing a DOE under observation are as follows:
  - (a) There is an open non-conformity (NC) that is not referred to in paragraph 3(a) of this appendix; or
  - (b) There is an NC against the same Article 6.4 accreditation requirement with the same nature raised for the DOE for a second time in the last 12 months; or
  - (c) A recommendation is made by the AEP as referred to in paragraphs 28–30 and 32 of this procedure, or
  - (d) There is a failure on the part of the DOE to follow any provision in this procedure, such as:
    - (i) Failure to submit records, information, reports or other materials requested as deemed necessary to determine continued conformity with the accreditation requirements;
    - (ii) Failure to accommodate a request to undergo an assessment.
3. The criteria for suspending the accreditation of a DOE are as follows:
  - (a) There is an open NC that is at the system level and is a significant shortcoming, not an isolated or sporadic lapse, by the DOE to meet an Article 6.4 accreditation requirement, and the continuation of the validation and/or verification/certification activities of the DOE would threaten the credibility the Article 6.4 accreditation system; or
  - (b) The DOE intentionally provided false information, intentionally omitted information that should have been provided, or deliberately violated any Article 6.4 accreditation requirement as referred to in paragraph 28 of this procedure, except for the case referred to in paragraph 4(a) of this appendix;
  - (c) A recommendation is made by the AEP as referred to in paragraphs 28–30 and 32 of this procedure; or
  - (d) The DOE placed under observation fails to close an open NC within the pre-specified time frame.
4. The criteria for withdrawing the accreditation of a DOE are as follows:
  - (a) The DOE intentionally provided false information, intentionally omitted information that should have been provided, or deliberately violated any Article 6.4 accreditation requirement, and such actions were performed at the system level;
  - (b) A recommendation is made by the AEP as referred to in paragraphs 28–30 of this procedure; or

- (c) The DOE whose accreditation is suspended fails to close an open NC within the pre-specified time frame.

## Appendix 4. Conditions of under-observation status, and suspension and withdrawal of accreditation

Table. Conditions of under-observation status, and suspension and withdrawal of accreditation

Measure applied to DOEs	Under observation	Suspension of accreditation	Withdrawal of accreditation
Responding to the secretariat's and the Supervisory Body's requests for clarification/review on requests for registration or issuance already submitted	Allowed	Allowed	Prohibited
Continuing validation or verification activities under existing contracts for which request for registration or issuance is not submitted	Allowed	Allowed	Prohibited
Signing contracts for and undertaking new validations or verifications	Allowed	Prohibited	Prohibited
Notification of site inspection by the DOE for requests for registration or renewal or request for issuance	Allowed	Prohibited	Prohibited
Finalizing and issuing any validation or verification opinion and reports	Allowed	Prohibited	Prohibited
Submitting requests for registration/issuance/ renewal, inclusion of component activities (CAs) in a programme of activities (PoAs), requests for approval of post-registration changes of both project activities and PoAs under the prior-approval track, and notifications of changes to CAs	Allowed	Prohibited	Prohibited
Public notification of the measure	Yes	Yes	Yes

## **Appendix 5. Independent review of Article 6.4 Accreditation Expert Panel recommendations**

### **1. Definitions applicable to this appendix**

1. An “adverse recommendation” is a recommendation made in accordance with the relevant provisions of this procedure by the Article 6.4 Accreditation Expert Panel (AEP) to the Supervisory Body that, if adopted as a decision by the Supervisory Body pursuant to this procedure, would affect the accreditation status of a designated operational entity (DOE) or constitute an obstacle to maintaining or extending accreditation by DOE, or to obtaining accreditation by an applicant entity (AE).
2. A “request for independent review” means a request from an AE or DOE to the Supervisory Body to appoint an independent panel of experts to conduct a review of an adverse recommendation where the AE/DOE considers the adverse recommendation to be in breach of the “Standard: Article 6.4 accreditation standard” and/or this procedure.

### **2. Submission of a request for independent review**

3. An AE/DOE may submit to the secretariat a request for independent review of an adverse recommendation of the AEP, using the relevant form (A6.4-FORM-ACCR-016), within seven days of being informed of the adverse recommendation. The submission shall include evidence of the payment of the fee referred to in paragraph 5 of this appendix.
4. The AE/DOE shall specify the particular provisions of the “Standard: Article 6.4 accreditation” and/or this procedure that it considers the adverse recommendation breaches and shall provide justification and evidence to support its view.
5. A fee of USD 2,000 shall be paid by the AE/DOE upon submission of the request.

### **3. Completeness check of the request for independent review**

6. Upon receipt of the request for independent review in accordance with paragraph 3 of this appendix, the secretariat shall acknowledge receipt promptly.
7. The secretariat shall, within seven days of receipt of the request for independent review, undertake a completeness check to confirm that the request for independent review has been duly submitted and includes all relevant documents to carry out a preliminary assessment, including evidence of payment of the fee. The secretariat may request the AE/DOE to submit further relevant information. The AE/DOE shall submit such information within seven days or explain why such information cannot be submitted. If no response is received from the AE/DOE within this time frame, the secretariat shall cease the completeness check and inform the AE/DOE of the closure of the request for independent review.

### **4. Preliminary assessment of the request for independent review**

8. The secretariat, upon receipt of the request for independent review, or of further relevant information or explanation, if requested in accordance with paragraph 7 of this appendix, shall carry out and conclude a preliminary assessment of the request for independent review within 10 days.

9. The preliminary assessment shall cover as a minimum the following:
  - (a) Whether the request for independent review was submitted by the deadline referred to in paragraph 3 of this appendix;
  - (b) Whether the request for independent review relates to an adverse recommendation;
  - (c) Whether specific provisions of the “Standard: Article 6.4 accreditation” and/or this procedure have been identified.
10. If the preliminary assessment reveals that the request for independent review does not meet all the conditions referred to in paragraph 9 of this appendix, the secretariat shall cease the preliminary assessment and inform the AE/DOE of the closure of the request for independent review.
11. If the preliminary assessment reveals that the request for independent review meets all the conditions referred to in paragraph 9 of this appendix, the secretariat shall inform the AEP and the Supervisory Body of the request for independent review.

## **5. Assessment of the request for independent review**

12. The secretariat shall, within seven days of successful conclusion of the preliminary assessment, provide the AEP and the Supervisory Body with the request for independent review and all supporting documentation received from the AE/DOE or prepared by the secretariat.
13. The secretariat shall, within the same seven days of successful conclusion of the preliminary assessment, also prepare a list of five experts, selecting from the Accreditation Roster of Experts, the Methodologies Roster of Experts or the Registration and Issuance Team, as candidates for an independent panel to conduct an independent review of the adverse recommendation, and send the list to the AE/DOE.
14. The AE/DOE may object, in writing or by email within seven days, to the selection of any expert on the list on the basis of conflict of interest by identifying such conflict of interest.
15. If the AE/DOE objects to the selection of an expert, the secretariat shall, within seven days of receipt of the objection, consider modifying the list of experts. If the secretariat considers the objection unjustified, or the AE/DOE does not object to the selection of any expert within the time frame referred to in paragraph 14 of this appendix, the list of experts shall be deemed accepted. If the secretariat considers the objection unjustified, it shall inform the AE accordingly. If the secretariat considers the objection justified and modifies the list of experts, it shall send the modified list to the AE/DOE within the same seven days. After this, the same steps in paragraphs 14 and 15 of this appendix shall repeat until the list of experts is deemed accepted.
16. At the earliest possible Supervisory Body meeting taking place after the list of experts is deemed accepted, the secretariat shall submit to the Supervisory Body the list of experts. The Supervisory Body shall, at that meeting, establish the independent panel, by appointing up to three experts from the list submitted by the secretariat, and request the independent panel to prepare a report. The secretariat shall inform the AE/DOE and AEP of the names of the appointed experts.

17. Once the Supervisory Body establishes the independent panel, the appointed experts shall sign a confidentiality agreement and conflict of interest declaration (form A6.4-FORM-ACCR-004).
18. The secretariat shall promptly forward the request for independent review and all supporting documentation to the independent panel.

## **6. Independent panel review of the adverse recommendation**

19. The independent panel may, within seven days of receipt of the request for independent review and all related documentation, request further information from the AEP and/or AE/DOE. The AEP and/or AE/DOE shall submit such information or explain why such information cannot be submitted within seven days of receipt of such request. If the AE/DOE fails to do so, the independent panel shall conduct and finalize the review based on the available information in accordance with paragraph 20 of this appendix.
20. The independent panel shall review the case based on the documentation provided to it, and by no later than 15 days from the appointment of the experts shall submit an independent review report (form A6.4-FORM-ACCR-017) to the secretariat, including a summary of the adverse recommendation, an assessment of whether the particular provisions of the “Standard: Article 6.4 accreditation” or this procedure have been breached, and a recommendation to the Supervisory Body on whether to follow the original recommendation of the AEP.
21. The secretariat shall submit the independent review report and all related documentation to the Supervisory Body, the AEP and the AE/DOE within seven days of receipt of the independent review report.

## **7. Decision by the Supervisory Body**

22. The Supervisory Body shall, at the earliest possible meeting taking place after the receipt of the independent review report, consider the request for independent review with all supporting documentation submitted by the AE/DOE, the adverse recommendation, the independent review report, and any other relevant documentation, and decide on one of the following options:
  - (a) The adverse recommendation was not in breach of the “Standard: Article 6.4 accreditation” and/or this procedure. In this case, the Supervisory Body shall consider the adverse recommendation in accordance with the relevant provisions of this procedure; or
  - (b) The adverse recommendation was in breach of the “Standard: Article 6.4 accreditation” and/or this procedure. In this case, the Supervisory Body shall either request the AEP to reconsider the adverse recommendation or take other action in accordance with the relevant provisions of this procedure. The secretariat shall reimburse the fee referred to in paragraph 5 of this appendix to the AE/DOE in full.
23. If the adverse recommendation is to suspend or withdraw accreditation of the DOE and where the DOE has requested a hearing in accordance with the relevant provisions of this procedure, such hearing shall be held at the same meeting and in conjunction with the Supervisory Body’s consideration pursuant to paragraph 22 of this appendix.
24. The secretariat shall promptly inform the DOE and the AEP of the Supervisory Body’s decision.

25. The decision of the Supervisory Body on the request for independent review shall not be subject to further review under this procedure.

## **Appendix 6. Review of complaints against designated operational entities**

### **1. Definitions applicable to this appendix**

1. A “complaint” is a written communication addressed to the Article 6.4 Accreditation Expert Panel (AEP) expressing a view that a designated operational entity (DOE) has breached a specific provision of the “Standard: Article 6.4 accreditation” and/or any relevant procedure under the Article 6.4 mechanism.
2. A “complainant” is, for the purpose of this procedure, restricted to the following:
  - (a) An entity or organization with a contractual relationship with the DOE for the validation and/or verification/certification of the particular Article 6.4 project (A6.4 project) or programme of activities (A6.4 PoA) in respect of which the complaint is made; or
  - (b) An entity, organization or person that submitted comments during the global stakeholder consultation process for an A6.4 project or PoA that were not taken into consideration by the DOE in the final validation report.

### **2. Submission of a complaint**

3. Only a complainant as defined in paragraph 2 of this appendix may submit a complaint.
4. A complainant shall submit a complaint to the secretariat using the completed relevant form (A6.4-FORM-ACCR-018) and providing all supporting documentation. The complainant shall describe the specific conduct of the DOE that is alleged to be in breach of the “Standard: A6.4 accreditation” or this procedure and provide evidence. All documentation submitted by the complainant to support the complaint may be treated as non-confidential by the secretariat in order that such information may be forwarded to the DOE in accordance with paragraph 11 of this appendix.
5. The complainant shall also provide evidence that it has exhausted the internal procedures of the DOE for handling complaints or that the DOE has breached its internal procedures for handling complaints.

### **3. Completeness check of the complaint**

6. Upon receipt of a complaint in accordance with paragraph 4 of this appendix, the secretariat shall acknowledge the receipt promptly.
7. The secretariat shall, within seven days of receipt of the complaint, undertake a completeness check to confirm that the complaint has been duly submitted. The secretariat may request the complainant to submit further relevant information. The complainant shall submit such information or explain why such information cannot be submitted within seven days of receipt of such request. If no response is received from the complainant within this time frame, the secretariat shall cease the completeness check and inform the complainant of the closure of the complaint.

#### **4. Preliminary assessment of the complaint**

8. The secretariat, upon receipt of the complaint, or of further relevant documentation or explanation, if requested in accordance with paragraph 7 of this appendix, shall carry out and conclude a preliminary assessment of the complaint within 10 days.
9. The preliminary assessment shall cover as a minimum the following:
  - (a) Whether the submitter is a complainant;
  - (b) Whether the complainant has identified specific conduct of the DOE that the complainant considers to be in breach of the “Standard: Article 6.4 accreditation” and/or any relevant procedure under the Article 6.4 mechanism;
  - (c) Whether the complainant referred to in paragraph 2(a) of this appendix has exhausted the internal procedures of the DOE for handling complaints or provided evidence that the DOE has breached its internal procedures for handling complaints.
10. If the preliminary assessment reveals that the complaint does not meet all the conditions referred to in paragraph 9 of this appendix, the secretariat shall cease the preliminary assessment and inform the complainant of the closure of the complaint.
11. If the preliminary assessment reveals that the complaint meets all the conditions referred to in paragraph 9 of this appendix, the secretariat shall inform the DOE of the complaint and shall provide the DOE with the complaint and the supporting documentation received from the complainant.
12. The DOE shall have seven days from receipt of the complaint from the secretariat to provide a response to the complaint and shall submit the response to the secretariat with all necessary supporting documentation.

#### **5. Assessment of the complaint**

13. The secretariat shall prepare an assessment report on the substance of the complaint (form A6.4-FORM-ACCR-019) and submit it to the AEP within 30 days of the deadline referred to in paragraph 12 of this appendix, including a summary of the complaint, an assessment of whether the particular provisions of the “Standard: Article 6.4 accreditation” or this procedure have been breached, and a recommendation to the AEP as to whether the complaint is substantiated.
14. The secretariat may, during the preparation of the assessment report, request further information from the complainant and/or DOE . The complainant and/or DOE shall submit such information within seven days of receipt of such request. If no response is received from the complainant and/or DOE within this time frame, the secretariat shall note so in its assessment report.

#### **6. Decision by the Accreditation Expert Panel**

15. The AEP shall consider the complaint with all supporting documentation submitted by the complainant, the assessment report prepared by the secretariat, and any other relevant documentation, and decide on one of the following options:
  - (a) A complaint is considered substantiated if the AEP concludes, based on the documentation available to it in relation to the complaint, that the DOE has

- breached a specific requirement set out in the “Standard: Article 6.4 accreditation” and/or this procedure;
- (b) A complaint is not considered substantiated if the AEP concludes, based on the documentation available to it in relation to the complaint, that the DOE has not breached a specific requirement set out in the “Standard: Article 6.4 accreditation” and/or this procedure, or that the complainant has not sufficiently demonstrated that such a breach has occurred.
16. If the AEP concludes that the complaint is substantiated, it shall specify aspects of the system of the DOE that shall be assessed in a future accreditation assessment of the DOE.
17. If the AEP concludes that the complaint is not substantiated, no further action shall be taken as a result of the complaint.
18. The secretariat shall inform the complainant and the DOE of the AEP decision on the complaint.
19. The decision of the AEP on the complaint shall not be subject to further review under this procedure.

## **Appendix 7. Review of non-conformities raised by Article 6.4 Assessment Team**

### **1. Definitions applicable to this appendix**

1. A “request for review of an NC” is a written communication from an applicant entity (AE) or a designated operational entity (DOE) addressed to the Article 6.4 Accreditation Expert Panel (AEP), expressing disagreement with an Article 6.4 assessment team (AT) on a non-conformity (NC) raised during an accreditation assessment and requesting a review by the AEP on the NC, made in accordance with the relevant provisions of this procedure.

### **2. Submission of a request for review of a non-conformity**

2. An AE/DOE may submit to the secretariat a request for review of an NC, using the relevant form (form A6.4-FORM-ACCR-020) and providing all supporting documentation, within seven days of receipt of the NC report through which the NC was raised by an AT. The submission shall include evidence of payment of the fee referred to in paragraph 4 of this appendix.
3. The AE/DOE may submit to the secretariat more than one request for review of an NC at the same time, each covering one NC. In this case, each request shall be deemed a separate request.
4. A fee of USD 1,000 per request for review of an NC shall be payable by the AE/DOE upon submission of the request.

### **3. Completeness check of the request for review of a non-conformity**

5. Upon receipt of the request for review of an NC in accordance with paragraph 2 of this appendix, the secretariat shall acknowledge receipt promptly.
6. The secretariat shall, within seven days of receipt of the request for review of an NC, undertake a completeness check to confirm that the request has been duly submitted. The secretariat may request the AE/DOE to submit further relevant information. The AE/DOE shall submit such information or explain why such information cannot be submitted within seven days of receipt of such request. If no response is received from the AE/DOE, the secretariat shall cease the completeness check and inform the AE/DOE of the closure of the request for independent review.

### **4. Preliminary assessment of the request for review of a non-conformity**

7. The secretariat, upon receipt of the request for review of an NC, or receipt of further relevant information or explanation, if requested in accordance with paragraph 6 of this appendix, shall carry out and conclude a preliminary assessment of the request for review of an NC within 10 days.
8. The preliminary assessment shall cover as a minimum the following:
  - (a) Whether the request for review of an NC was submitted by the deadline referred to in paragraph 2 of this appendix;

- (b) Whether the request for review of an NC is related to the interpretation of an Article 6.4 accreditation requirement, not a procedural matter;
  - (c) Whether the AE/DOE has provided a reason, and supporting documentation as appropriate, for the disagreement with the AT on the NC.
9. If the preliminary assessment reveals that the request for review of an NC does not meet all the conditions mentioned in paragraph 8 of this appendix, the secretariat shall cease the preliminary assessment and inform the AE/DOE of the closure of the request for review of an NC.
10. If the preliminary assessment reveals that the request for review of an NC meets all the conditions referred to in paragraph 8 of this appendix, the secretariat shall inform the AEP, AT and the AE/DOE of the request accordingly.

## **5. Assessment of the request for review of a non-conformity**

11. Within seven days of the successful conclusion of the preliminary assessment, the AT may provide any information related to the NC, in addition to the submitted on-site assessment report and non-conformity reports, for the purpose of the review.
12. The secretariat shall, within 10 days of successful conclusion of the preliminary assessment, provide the AEP with the request for review of an NC and all supporting documentation received from the AE/DOE, any information from the AT in addition to the submitted on-site assessment report and non-conformity report, and the result of the preliminary assessment conducted by the secretariat.
13. The AEP shall consider the request for review of an NC and decide on one of the following options:
- (a) Establish an independent panel of experts to conduct a review of the NC;
  - (b) Not to establish an independent panel and process the case in accordance with section 7 of this appendix.
14. If the AEP decides to establish an independent panel, the secretariat shall, within seven days of the AEP decision, prepare a list of three experts, selecting from the Accreditation Roster of Experts, the Methodologies Roster of Experts or the Registration and Issuance Team, as candidates for the independent panel, and send the list to the AE/DOE.
15. The AE/DOE may object, in writing or by email within seven days, to the selection of any expert on the list on the basis of conflict of interest by identifying such conflict of interest.
16. If the AE/DOE objects to the selection of an expert, the secretariat shall, within seven days of receipt of the objection, consider modifying the list of experts. If the secretariat considers the objection unjustified, or the AE/DOE does not object to the selection of any expert within the time frame referred to in paragraph 15 of this appendix, the list of experts shall be deemed accepted. If the secretariat considers the objection justified and modifies the list of experts, it shall send the modified list to the AE/DOE within the same seven days. After this, the same steps in paragraphs 15 and 16 of this appendix shall repeat until the list of experts is deemed accepted.
17. Within seven days of the list of experts being deemed accepted, the secretariat shall submit to the AEP the list of experts. The AEP shall establish the independent panel by appointing up to two experts from the list submitted by the secretariat and request the

independent panel to prepare a report. The secretariat shall inform the AE/DOE of the names of the appointed experts.

18. Once the AEP establishes the independent panel, the appointed experts shall sign a confidentiality agreement and conflict of interest declaration (form A6.4-FORM-ACCR-004).
19. The secretariat shall promptly forward the request for review of an NC and all supporting documentation and additional information if any, submitted by the AE/DOE and AT to the independent panel. The case shall then be processed in accordance with sections 6 and 7 of this appendix.

## **6. Independent panel review of the non-conformity**

20. The independent panel may, within seven days of receipt of the request for review of an NC and all supporting documentation submitted by the AT and/or the AE/DOE, request further information by the AT and/or the AE/DOE. The AT and/or the AE/DOE shall submit such information or explain why such information cannot be submitted within seven days of receipt of such request. If the AT and/or the AE/DOE fail to do so, the independent panel shall conduct and finalize the review based on the available information in accordance with paragraph 21 of this appendix.
21. The independent panel shall review the case based on the documentation provided to it, and by no later than 10 days from the appointment of the experts shall submit an independent review report (form A6.4-FORM-ACCR-021) to the secretariat, including a summary of the views of the AT, the AE/DOE and the independent panel on the NC.
22. The secretariat shall submit the independent review report and all related documentation to the AEP, the AT and the AE/DOE within seven days of receipt of the independent review report.

## **7. Decision by the Accreditation Expert Panel**

23. The AEP shall consider the request for review of an NC with all supporting documentation submitted by the AE/DOE, the non-conformity report on the NC prepared by the AT, the independent review report, as applicable, and any other relevant documentation, and decide on one of the following options:
  - (a) The NC shall be maintained. In this case, the AE/DOE shall provide the AT with a written acceptance of the NC and the accreditation assessment regarding the NC shall resume from the applicable paragraph of this procedure; or
  - (b) The NC shall be dropped. In this case, the AEP shall request the AT to drop the NC. The secretariat shall reimburse the fee referred to in paragraph 4 of this appendix to the AE/DOE in full.
24. The secretariat shall promptly inform the AE/DOE and the AT of the AEP decision.
25. The decision of the AEP on the request for review of an NC shall not be subject to further review under this procedure.

## **Appendix 8. Modalities of hearing from designated operational entities**

### **1. Definitions applicable to this appendix**

1. A “hearing” is an administrative process under which a designated operational entity (DOE) expresses its view before the Supervisory Body in relation to a recommendation of the Article 6.4 Accreditation Expert Panel (AEP) that the Supervisory Body suspend or withdraw the accreditation of the DOE.
2. “Relevant information” means all information that forms part of the accreditation assessment based on which the AEP decided to recommend that the Supervisory Body suspend or withdraw the accreditation of the DOE; consideration by the AEP; the independent review report prepared in accordance with the provisions contained in Appendix 5 and/or Appendix 7 to this procedure, as applicable; other information, if any, relating to the relevant accreditation assessment; and any further information that the DOE provides in accordance with this appendix.

### **2. Request for a hearing**

3. A DOE may submit to the secretariat a request for a hearing within seven days of being informed of the recommendation of the AEP that the Supervisory Body suspend or withdraw the accreditation of the DOE.
4. The secretariat shall, as soon as possible, notify the DOE of the date of the hearing.
5. The DOE shall, as soon as possible, inform the secretariat whether it will attend the hearing in person, by telephone, or through the Internet.

### **3. Exchange of relevant information**

6. The DOE shall provide the secretariat with all information that it wishes to be considered in the context of the hearing as soon as possible and no less than 14 days prior to the date of the hearing. The secretariat shall promptly forward such information to the Supervisory Body.
7. The secretariat shall forward to the DOE all relevant information that has not yet been provided to the DOE or that is not within the DOE’s possession as soon as possible and no less than 14 days prior to the date of the hearing.

### **4. Representation**

8. The DOE may attend the hearing with its representatives, including external personnel.

### **5. Hearing**

9. The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Supervisory Body shall manage the hearing.
10. The DOE shall have the opportunity to present its views to the Supervisory Body and ask questions of the Supervisory Body. The Supervisory Body shall have the opportunity to ask questions of the DOE.

11. The information and discussion in the hearing shall be considered by the Supervisory Body in reaching its decision in accordance with the relevant paragraphs of this procedure.

## Appendix 9. Fees and costs

### 1. Application fees for accreditation, reaccreditation and extension of accreditation for additional sectoral scopes

1. The fee for application for accreditation, reaccreditation or extension of accreditation for additional sectoral scopes is USD 15,000. If an applicant entity (AE) or designated operational entity (DOE) decides to withdraw its application for initial accreditation, reaccreditation or extension of accreditation for additional sectoral scopes, the following shall be followed to reimburse the DOE for the application fees:
  - (a) If an AE or DOE withdraws its application before the step where all appointed Article 6.4 assessment team (AT) members sign a confidentiality agreement and conflict of interest declaration in accordance with the relevant paragraphs of this procedure, the application fee as per paragraph 2 below shall be reimbursed in full; otherwise, it shall be non-reimbursable;
  - (b) If an AE or DOE withdraws its application for initial accreditation, reaccreditation or extension of accreditation for additional sectoral scopes before the step where the Accreditation Expert Panel (AEP) is to consider its assessment case in accordance with the relevant paragraphs of this procedure, the AE or DOE shall settle outstanding fees as per sections 2 and 3 below for completed assessment work;
  - (c) If a DOE withdraws its accreditation within the first year after initial accreditation or reaccreditation the second payment of USD 7,500 is waived if paragraph 2 (a) below is applied by an AE or DOE;<sup>1</sup>
  - (d) If a DOE withdraws its accreditation after the first year of initial accreditation or reaccreditation the second payment of USD 7,500 for the current accreditation term shall be paid, if the paragraph 2(a) below is applied by a DOE.<sup>2</sup>
2. An AE or DOE shall pay the application fee for initial accreditation, reaccreditation or extension of accreditation for additional sectoral scopes according to one of the following options:
  - (a) One payment of USD 7,500 at the time of the application for accreditation, reaccreditation or extension of sectoral scopes and a second payment of USD 7,500 within one year after obtaining accreditation, reaccreditation or extension of sectoral scopes; or
  - (b) One payment of USD 15,000 at the time of the application for accreditation, reaccreditation or extension of sectoral scopes.

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<sup>1</sup> In the case of extension of accreditation for additional sectoral scopes, the first year begins from the date the DOE is accredited for the extended sector scopes.

<sup>2</sup> See footnote 1 above in this appendix.

## 2. Fees and costs for accreditation assessments by ATs

3. For any type of accreditation assessment that involves work by an AT conducted in accordance with this procedure,<sup>3</sup> the AE/DOE shall pay for the following items directly to each AT member:
  - (a) Airfare for the AT member to travel to the sites specified in the workplan or by the Supervisory Body, which is by business class for flights of nine hours or more including transit time, or by economy class otherwise (for assessments that involve on-site assessment only);<sup>4</sup>
  - (b) Applicable United Nations daily subsistence allowance (for assessments that involve on-site assessments only);
  - (c) The fee for the work provided by the AT member calculated in accordance with section 3 of this appendix.
4. For the payment of the items referred to in paragraph 3(b) and (c) of this appendix, the secretariat shall provide the AE/DOE with a payment instruction and pre-filled receipt for each AT member indicating the number of days of work.
5. Conducting an assessment that involves a site visit may require that the AE/DOE pay in advance of the fees and costs indicated in paragraph 3 of this appendix. In the case of a spot-check, if the DOE does not pay the fee within 30 days of receipt of the pre-filled receipt referred to in paragraph 4 of this appendix, the secretariat shall inform the Supervisory Body accordingly, and the Supervisory Body shall immediately suspend its accreditation until the DOE makes the payment. In all other cases, if the AE/DOE does not pay the fee within 30 days of receipt of the pre-filled receipt, the secretariat shall inform the Supervisory Body and the AEP accordingly, and the accreditation process for the AE shall be immediately suspended, or the Supervisory Body shall immediately place the DOE under observation, as applicable, until the AE/DOE makes the payment.

## 3. Indicative level of fees for the AT members

6. The following table provides the standard person-days, the number of AT members participating in the task and the consequent total fees to be provided by the AE/DOE for each type of accreditation assessment. The secretariat may adjust the number of team members involved in each task and/or the person-days for the AT leader or team members.

**Table. Indicative level of fees for the Assessment Team (AT) members**

Type of accreditation assessment	Activity	AT leader (person-days)	AT member (person-days)	Number of AT members participating in the task	Number of days times daily fee <sup>(a)</sup> = total cost (USD)
Initial accreditation	Desk review <sup>(b)(c)</sup>	2	1	2 <sup>(d)</sup>	2,000
		2.5	1.5	1 <sup>(e)</sup>	2,000

<sup>3</sup> This appendix does not cover the fees and costs for handling requests for review of Article 6.4 Accreditation Panel (AEP) recommendations and for handling requests for review of non-conformities raised by an AT, which are specified in Appendix 5 and Appendix 7 to this Procedure, respectively.

<sup>4</sup> For AT members from the secretariat, United Nations rules and regulations shall apply.

Type of accreditation assessment	Activity	AT leader (person-days)	AT member (person-days)	Number of AT members participating in the task	Number of days times daily fee <sup>(a)</sup> = total cost (USD)
<b>Reaccreditation</b>	On-site assessment <sup>(f)</sup>	3	2	2 <sup>(d)</sup>	3,500
		4	3	1 <sup>(e)</sup>	3,500
<b>Extension of accreditation for additional sectoral scopes</b>	Verification of implementation of corrective actions	1	1	2 <sup>(d)</sup>	1,500
		2	1	1 <sup>(e)</sup>	1,500
	Preparation of final assessment report <sup>(g)</sup>	2	1	2 <sup>(d)</sup>	2,000
		2.5	1.5	1 <sup>(e)</sup>	2,000
	Pre-assessment	2	1.5	1 <sup>(e)</sup>	1,750
<b>Performance assessment</b>	Desk review and/or on-site assessment	2	2	1	2,000
	Verification of implementation of corrective actions	1	1	1	1,000
	Preparation of final assessment report <sup>(g)</sup>	2	1	1	1,500
<b>Regular on-site surveillance</b>	On-site assessment	3	2	1	2,500
	Verification of implementation of corrective actions	1	1	1	1,000
	Preparation of final assessment report <sup>(g)</sup>	2	1	1	1,500
<b>Spot-check</b>	On-site assessment <sup>(h)</sup>	3	2	1	2,500
	Verification of implementation of corrective actions	1	1	1	1,000
	Preparation of final assessment report <sup>(g)</sup>	2	1	1	1,500
<b>Transfer of accreditation</b>  <b>Notification of changes</b>	Involvement of AT, type and modalities of work to be decided on a case-by-case basis				

Type of accreditation assessment	Activity	AT leader (person-days)	AT member (person-days)	Number of AT members participating in the task	Number of days times daily fee <sup>(a)</sup> = total cost (USD)
<b>Other assessments (e.g. assessment for lifting under-observation status, assessment for lifting suspension status, additional desk reviews)</b>	Type and modalities of the assessment by AT to be decided on a case-by-case basis				

- (a) The level of fee is presently set at USD 500 per day. If the assessment is less than one day, then the level of fee is counted as one day.
- (b) The fee for desk review is included in the application fee.
- (c) If an additional round of desk review is required, a separate payment only for additional round of desk review shall be issued.
- (d) If three-member AT: One team leader and two team members.
- (e) If two-member AT: One team leader and one team member.
- (f) May be exempted for applications for extension of accreditation for up to three sectoral scopes.
- (g) If non-conformity (NC) is closed by the AT but later reopened by the AEP, additional fee applies. Each AT member (e.g. two-person AT) shall be paid for another additional final assessment reports for reopened NCs as below:
- Team Leader: Additional fee for two person-days;
  - Team Member: Additional fee for one person-day.
- (h) If a document review is conducted instead of on-site assessment, then the payment of desk review shall be made instead of on-site assessment and if on-site assessment is conducted remotely, then the on-site assessment fee is applicable.

7. For initial accreditation and reaccreditation, if an AE/DOE notifies the secretariat of the following changes in its application before all appointed AT members sign a confidentiality agreement and conflict of interest declaration, no additional fee shall be charged to the AE/DOE. If the AE/DOE notifies the secretariat of the changes after all appointed AT members have signed a confidentiality and non-disclosure agreement but before the coordination of the on-site assessment, an additional fee of two person-days for the AT leader shall be charged to the AE/DOE for the AT leader undertaking an additional desk review. If the AE/DOE notifies the secretariat of the changes as listed below after the coordination of the on-site assessment, the case shall be considered as a new application and the AE/DOE shall pay another application fee referred to in paragraph 1 of this appendix:

- (a) Addition to the list of sectoral scopes applied for;
- (b) Substantial changes in documentation.

8. The AT members shall send the original receipts of fee payment signed by respective AT members to the AE/DOE and submit an electronic copy of them to the secretariat.

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**Document information**

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<i>Version</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Description</i>
02.0	10 October 2025	SBM 018, Annex 6. Revision to clarify and enhance the accreditation process, drawing on lessons learned from implementation and initial accreditation assessments.
01.2	5 June 2024	Editorial revision to correct paragraph numbering from para. 94 onwards and to include the form A6.4-FORM-ACCR-025.
01.1	27 May 2024	Editorial revision to align the abbreviations of AEP and ATs, as well as the symbol numbers of accreditation-related forms.
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