



ACCREDITATION RULE 18

Issue Date: 2009/12/09

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SUBJECT: Declaration of Competence Based on Competence Analyses

APPLIES TO: ANAB-Accredited and Applicant Certification Bodies (CBs)

PREFACE

Since the publication of ISO 19011 in 2002, parties involved with accredited certification of management systems have been striving to transition from a qualifications-based approach to a competence-based approach for managing audits and certification. The International Accreditation Forum (IAF) revised its guidance to embody the competence-based approach and ISO/IEC 17021:2006 requires a competence-based approach.

Many CBs find it challenging to understand the difference between qualifications and the evaluation of competence. Consequently, some CBs still classify clients and auditors using scopes, such as the 39 scopes in IAF guidance for QMS, and then assign clients and audit teams based on these scopes, which alone may not take into account a full evaluation of the actual competency needed for conducting a satisfactory certification audit.

Certain CBs still find it challenging to demonstrate that they are truly identifying the audit team competence required to audit a specific client (based on its processes, products, or aspects).

To compel the transition to the competence-based approach, ANAB issued this Accreditation Rule requiring that each CB maintain a declaration of competence based on the outcome of its competence analysis.

This requirement is based on ISO/IEC 17021:2006, 7.1.1, which states:

The certification body shall have processes to ensure that personnel have appropriate knowledge relevant to the types of management systems and geographic areas in which it operates. It shall determine the competence needed for each technical area (as relevant for the specific certification scheme), and for each function in the certification activity. It shall determine the means for the demonstration of competence prior to carrying out specific functions.

ISO/CASCO WG21 is developing part 2 of ISO/IEC 17021 and the draft for consideration in June 2009 includes the following definition for competence, and definition and note for elaborating on the term "technical area":

competence

demonstrated ability to apply knowledge and skills to achieve intended results

technical area

area characterized by commonalities of processes relevant to a specific type of management system

The term "technical area" has different meanings when different management system standards are considered. For any management system, the term is related to products and processes in the context of fulfilling the expectations of interested parties. The technical areas may be defined by a specific certification scheme (e.g. ISO/TS 22003 for a food safety management system); otherwise this has to be determined by the

certification body. Examples of the application of the term “technical area” for different types of management systems are as follows:

- For a quality management system standard, the term “technical area” is related to the processes needed to fulfil customer expectations and applicable statutory and regulatory requirements for the organization's products (including services).
- For an environmental management system standard, the term “technical area” is related to the categories of activities, products and services related to the environmental aspects affecting air, water, land, natural resources, flora, fauna and humans.
- For a supply chain security management system standard, the term “technical area” is related to processes in the context of security risk of supplies, such as transportation, storage, and information.

ANAB does not require scoping (by code) for a CB’s management system programs; therefore, the declaration of competence is the means ANAB uses to obtain from a CB the description of the conformity assessment services the CB undertakes, including the limits of capability of the CB, in accordance with ISO/IEC 17011:2004, 7.2.2.a. The CB’s declaration of competence will be used by ANAB to determine conformance of the CB to ISO/IEC 17021:2006, 7.1.1. This declaration shall be a standalone document as outlined below; however, additional evidence to demonstrate these competencies would be included in other tools and/or documents within the CB’s documented system, per ISO/IEC 17021.

ACCREDITATION RULE

A CB shall have a documented declaration of competence as a CB specifying each type of management system (for example, QMS, EMS, ISMS, etc.) and geographic area, and the technical areas (as relevant for each specific certification scheme) for which it has confirmed it has personnel with demonstrated competence for each function in the certification activity. The declaration of competence shall be based on the outcomes of competence analyses it has performed.

The documented declaration shall state the type of management system(s) and the geographic areas and the technical areas for each type of management system.

An example is as follows:

ISO 9001, USA and Canada
Metal fabrication
Metal heat treating
Chemical blending and reaction chemical processing

ISO 14001, USA and Canada
All environmental aspects related to metal fabrication
All environmental aspects related to metal heat treating
All environmental aspects related to chemical blending and reaction chemical processing

ANAB shall evaluate the declaration for conformance to ISO/IEC 17021:2006, 7.1.1, and determine the effectiveness of the approach taken by the CB. The effectiveness is determined by the review of additional evidence provided by the CB to support the declaration and the results of the implementation of the CB’s certification system.

Based on results of ANAB’s evaluation of the documented declaration and applicable processes of the CB, ANAB shall determine if any audits need to be witnessed to evaluate the competence of the CB in accordance with ISO/IEC 17011:2004, 7.5.6.

Upon initial ANAB accreditation of a CB, the documented declaration of competence shall be maintained as an attachment to the accreditation certificate.

The CB shall apply to ANAB for any change to the documented declaration of competence. ANAB shall review the application to determine if the proposed change is acceptable and if any audits need to be

successfully witnessed prior to accepting the change. The CB's ANAB accreditation certificate will be updated with the revised documented declaration accepted by ANAB.