



## **ACCREDITATION RULE 22**

Issue Date: 2007/12/10

Implementation Date: 2008/12/01

Supersedes: New

**SUBJECT:** Certified Organizations Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery

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

### **PREFACE**

Natural disasters such as hurricanes, tsunamis, and earthquakes may have an impact on organizations with accredited certifications. Other potentially devastating situations that may have an impact on organizations include but are not limited to threats of terrorism, malicious computer hacking, geopolitical tension, pandemic diseases, and crippling labor strikes.

Several management system standards (TL 9000, ISO 14001, and TS16949) proactively address these types of situations, through requirements for emergency preparedness and response, and contingency plans, and have imposed industry requirements on organizations certified to these standards.

When these situations occur, CBs may be unable or restricted in their ability to conduct regularly scheduled assessments. Clients may ask to retain their certification in spite of being unable to physically undergo planned assessments. When these situations occur, accreditation bodies (ABs) and CBs operating within accreditation guidelines need to partner with these organizations to establish a planned course of action that is reasonable based on the current and expected future situation.

### **ACCREDITATION RULE**

Each CB shall establish a policy and document the process and procedures as applicable, outlining the steps it will take in the event that one or more of its clients is affected by a natural disaster or other situation affecting business continuity.

It is anticipated that CBs should ask their clients the following types of questions in an effort to establish an appropriate course of action:

- When will the facility/organization be able to function?
- When will the facility/organization be able to ship products or perform the service defined within the current scope of certification?
- Will the facility/organization need to use alternative manufacturing and/or distribution sites? If so, are these currently covered under the current certification or will they need to be evaluated?
- Does existing inventory still meet customer specifications or will clients need to be contacted regarding possible concessions?
- If the client is certified to a management system standard that requires a disaster recovery plan or emergency response plan, has the client implemented the plan and was it effective?
- Will some of the processes and/or services performed or products shipped be subcontracted to other organizations? If so, how will the other organizations' activities be controlled by the certified organization?
- To what extent has operation of the management system been affected?

The CB may need to consider alternate short-term methods of assessment to ensure continuing system effectiveness for these clients. This may include requesting crucial documentation (for example, management review meeting minutes, corrective action records, results of internal audits, and the status of process controls) to be reviewed off site by the CB to determine continuing suitability of the certification (on a short-term basis only).

At a minimum, the process shall address the following items:

- Proactive communication between the affected organization and the CB.
- Steps the CB will take to assess those affected clients and how the plan to move forward will be communicated to the client.
- Limits (subject to adjustment under specified conditions) for the allowable time an alternative short-term assessment method could be used before withdrawal of certification would become mandatory.
- Criteria for renewing normal client oversight assessment, including the method and timing of any reinstatement activities and assessments.
- Possible amendments to client oversight plans on a case-by-case basis and in accordance with CB procedures.
- Ensuring that any deviation from accreditation requirements and CB procedures is justified and documented, and written agreement reached with ANAB (if deviation from an accreditation requirement is requested) on plans to address temporary deviations from requirements.
- Re-establishment of surveillance/recertification activities according to CB oversight plans when access to the area is re-established.

If contact with the organization cannot be made, the CB would be required to follow normal processes and procedures for handling such cases.