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# HKIAS Supplementary Criteria No. 5

## Accreditation Regulations Specific for HKIAS – Inspection Body

### 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document provides specific regulations for accreditation of inspection bodies under the Hong Kong Inspection Body Accreditation Scheme (HKIAS). An accredited inspection body shall conform to all the regulations stated in this document at all times. For an applicant inspection body, accreditation will only be granted after it has demonstrated to the satisfaction of HKAS Executive its competence and commitment to conforming to all the regulations stated in this document.
- 1.2 This document shall be used in conjunction with HKAS 002 – Regulations for HKAS Accreditation.
- 1.3 This document may be amended from time to time and the up-to-date version is uploaded to the HKAS website at [www.hkas.gov.hk](http://www.hkas.gov.hk).

### 2 INSPECTION BODY ACCREDITATION PROCEDURES

- 2.1 An assessment team may, at its discretion, require witnessing an inspection body while it is performing inspections for which it is accredited or seeking accreditation. The inspection body shall have, where applicable, legally enforceable arrangements with their clients that commit the clients to provide, on request, access to HKAS assessment teams to assess the inspection body's performance when carrying out inspections at their clients' site. When an inspection is selected for witnessing, the inspection body shall explain to its clients concerning the presence of the assessment team during such inspection and assure its client that the presence of the assessment team will not affect the results of the inspection.
- 2.2 HKAS Executive shall conduct a reassessment on the accredited fields of an inspection body:
  - (a) within two years after the date of the notification letter in which HKAS Executive has granted the accreditation to the inspection body;

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- (b) every two years after the due date of the first reassessment or at such time intervals as specified for the Monitoring Plan adopted by the inspection body (refer to HKAS SC-04 for details);
- (c) at such other times as may be stated in the terms of accreditation; and
- (d) upon notification by the authorised representative, or in his absence, other responsible person of an accredited inspection body, of any change in the structure and circumstances of the inspection body since the last assessment or reassessment and in the opinion of HKAS Executive, such change will affect the inspection body's competence or conformity with the accreditation criteria.

HKAS Executive may, at its discretion, vary the reassessment schedule.

- 2.3 HKAS Executive shall conduct a surveillance visit to an accredited inspection body if neither reassessment, assessment for extension of scope of accreditation nor surveillance visit to it has been conducted within the past twelve months' period or at such time intervals as specified for the Monitoring Plan adopted by the inspection body. For certain inspection fields, HKAS Executive may specify a different frequency of surveillance visit and the applicable frequency will be stated in the HKIAS Supplementary Criteria for that field. Furthermore, HKAS may vary the frequency of surveillance visit to any individual accredited inspection body as it sees fit.
- 2.4 Upon granting of accreditation for an inspection field to an inspection body, HKAS Executive shall issue to it a certificate of HKIAS accreditation for such inspection field.

### **3 OBLIGATIONS OF ACCREDITED OR APPLICANT INSPECTION BODIES**

#### **3.1 HKIAS Accreditation Criteria**

An accredited inspection body shall at all times comply with the following accreditation criteria:

HKAS 002 - Regulations for HKAS Accreditation,

HKIAS 003 - Technical Criteria for Accreditation of Inspection Bodies or its equivalent as specified by HKAS Executive,

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Relevant HKIAS Supplementary Criteria, and

Relevant HKAS Supplementary Criteria

HKIAS and HKAS publications relevant to the accreditation of inspection body are listed in HKIAS Application Packages which are available at the website of HKAS. All documents mentioned in the packages and the abridged version of HKIAS 003 can be downloaded from the same website.

Applicant and accredited inspection bodies shall also comply with ILAC P15 'Application of ISO/IEC 17020:2012 for the Accreditation of Inspection Bodies' which is available for downloading free of charge from the ILAC website of [www.ilac.org](http://www.ilac.org). Since the policy document may be revised from time to time, its latest version shall apply unless announced otherwise by the HKAS Executive.

- 3.2 An accredited inspection body shall not use its accreditation status in a way that may be interpreted by any person that any product, process, service, installation, design or any other subject of inspection has been approved or disapproved by HKAS or HKAS Executive. It shall further endeavour to ensure that no person will use any inspection certificate or report issued by it for such activity in a misleading manner.
- 3.3 If an accredited inspection body intends to subcontract any part of its activities for which HKIAS accreditation has been granted, it shall ensure that the activities of the inspection body to which the activities will be subcontracted have been accredited by HKAS or an accreditation body recognised by HKAS under mutual recognition arrangement. A list of such accreditation bodies is available at HKAS website. The accredited inspection body shall notify its client concerned in writing of its intention to subcontract the activities and the extent of such subcontracting. Where appropriate, the inspection body shall obtain the approval of the client and shall keep records showing the agreement of the client to such arrangement. The accredited inspection body shall identify the activities performed and the results obtained by such subcontractor in the inspection report or certificate.
- 3.4 Proficiency testing may be used in some types of inspection where available and justified by the inclusion of testing activities that directly affect and determine the inspection result or when required by law or by regulators. It is, however, recognised that proficiency testing is not a usual and expected element in the accreditation of most types of

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inspections. Where relevant, an applicant or accredited inspection body shall demonstrate its technical competence by satisfactory participation in proficiency testing activities where such activities are available and appropriate.

- 3.4.1 Where participation in suitable proficiency testing activities is not practical, the inspection body shall discuss with HKAS and agree on alternative means by which performance can be assessed and monitored.
- 3.4.2 An applicant or accredited inspection body shall establish a one-year participation plan of proficiency testing and/or related activities (PT activities) where relevant. The coverage of the plan shall be representative and adequate to demonstrate the inspection body's competence in performing the activities under its scope of accreditation. The plan shall be regularly reviewed and updated where necessary. Any change to the plan shall be documented and justified. When the inspection body updates its plan, it shall ensure its continual suitability in relation to its scope of accreditation.
- 3.4.3 Accredited inspection body shall keep records of participation in PT activities in the past four years to show that the inspection body has participated in PT activities representative of the accredited inspection activities under each inspection field of its scope of accreditation if PT activities are available and relevant. An assessment team shall determine the adequacy of the participation plan for PT activities and the appropriateness of any PT activities and may, at its discretion, require the inspection body to participate in other monitoring programmes so as to evaluate its competence in performing the accredited inspection activities.
- 3.4.4 An applicant or accredited inspection body shall investigate the cause of any unsatisfactory results of PT activities and take effective corrective actions where necessary. Relevant records of corrective actions shall be kept. It shall demonstrate promptly to HKAS Executive the effectiveness of its corrective actions and that it can continue to perform the activity in question satisfactorily. If the inspection body cannot rectify the unsatisfactory performance in PT activities for an accredited inspection activity within a reasonable timeframe (e.g. three months), the inspection body shall notify HKAS Executive in writing of the actions taken to address the problem and the

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measures taken to deal with request for the problematic activity.

- 3.5 An applicant inspection body shall nominate person(s) to HKAS Executive for signing endorsed reports and certificates for every inspection activity in the scope of application. Accreditation for such activity will not be granted unless HKAS Executive is satisfied that at least one nominee meets the requirements for approved signatories as laid down in the accreditation criteria. An accredited inspection body shall maintain at least one approved signatory for each accredited inspection activity. Additional persons may be nominated by an accredited inspection body to HKAS Executive for approval as approved signatories at any time.
- 3.6 An accredited inspection body shall inform HKAS Executive of any change in the availability and duties of any of its approved signatories. HKAS Executive shall withdraw the approval concerning such approved signatory who no longer meets the requirements for approved signatories as laid down in the accreditation criteria. HKAS Executive may suspend the accreditation of an inspection body for an inspection activity if it does not have any approved signatory for such activity and has failed to obtain HKAS Executive approval for a new signatory within three months from the date when it ceased to have any approved signatory for such activity.
- 3.7 An applicant inspection body shall maintain complete integrity at any point in the application and assessment process. If there is evidence of fraudulent behaviour, if the applicant inspection body intentionally provides false information or if the applicant inspection body conceals information, HKAS Executive shall reject the application or terminate the assessment process. Under this circumstance, the resulting application and assessment fees paid are not refundable.

#### **4 SUSPENSION AND TERMINATION OF ACCREDITATION**

- 4.1 The authorised representative of an inspection body, shall identify and inform its affected clients within 14 calendar days from the effective date of suspension or termination of accreditation of an activity (whether voluntarily or by HKAS Executive). For example, if any unreliable results associated with such activity had been issued before the suspension/termination and were discovered during related investigation. For voluntary suspension, the effective date shall be advised by the inspection body or the same as the issue date of the notification letter confirming the suspension if the inspection body does not provide an effective date. For suspension imposed by HKAS Executive, the effective date shall be the

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issue date of the relevant notification letter. The inspection body shall provide to HKAS Executive an action plan to address the concerns related to the suspended activity(ies) within four weeks from the date of notice of suspension. Such actions shall be taken to the satisfaction of HKAS Executive within one year from the effective date of suspension.

## **5 USE OF HKIAS ACCREDITATION SYMBOLS AND CLAIMS OF ACCREDITATION STATUS**

5.1 An accredited inspection body may display the HKIAS accreditation symbol in a report or certificate issued by it for reporting the results of an inspection activity accredited under HKIAS. The claiming of accreditation in such a report or certificate for internal use may also be made in the form of a statement specified by HKAS Executive. Such a document is referred hereafter as a HKIAS endorsed inspection report or certificate.

5.2 An accredited inspection body shall include in a HKIAS endorsed report or certificate the following:

(a) the HKIAS accreditation symbol (which includes the inspection body's registration number) at the top right hand corner of the front page. For reports and certificates issued for internal use and where it is technically not possible or very difficult to display the accreditation symbol on a report or certificate, endorsement may be made with the statements in (b) below without displaying the accreditation symbol. Such endorsement without displaying the accreditation symbol is subject to prior written agreement by HKAS Executive, and

(b) on the same page, the following statements:

'HKAS has accredited this inspection body (Reg. No. HKIAS 789) under HKIAS for specific inspection activities as listed in the HKIAS directory of accredited inspection bodies. The results shown in this report (or certificate, where appropriate) were determined by this inspection body in accordance with its terms of accreditation.'

The word 'this inspection body' in the first sentence of the above statement may be replaced by the full identity of the inspection body as listed in the scope of accreditation. When the statement is used alone to claim an inspection body's accreditation without displaying the accreditation

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symbol, the same words shall be replaced by the full identity and registration number in form of e.g. ABC Inspection Limited, Registration Number HKIAS 789.

- 5.3 The term ‘HKIAS’, the HKIAS accreditation symbol and/or a statement claiming accreditation status under HKIAS shall not be used on any inspection report or certificate except as described above.
- 5.4 The form, size, colour and usage of the HKIAS accreditation symbol shall be in accordance with the HKAS SC-01.
- 5.5 A HKIAS endorsed report or certificate shall be signed by a HKIAS approved signatory of the issuing inspection body. For printed reports or certificates, such signature shall be made in hand-written form. For reports or certificates in an electronic form, the signature shall be in the form of an electronic signature acceptable under the Electronic Transactions Ordinance (Cap. 553). The full name of the approved signatory (as in his/her identity document such as identity card or passport) shall be clearly shown alongside the signature.

Other arrangements of signing HKIAS endorsed reports or certificates may be accepted subject to agreement from HKAS Executive. When determining the acceptability of such an arrangement, HKAS Executive will consider all pertinent factors such as the reliability of the arrangement in ensuring proper and traceable authorisation by approved signatories and the demand of users of the accredited service.

- 5.6 A HKIAS endorsed inspection report or certificate may contain signatures of others provided that the inspection body’s HKIAS approved signatory has signed the report or certificate. Where signatures other than the approved signatory also appear on the report or certificate, the capacity of the one who signed (such as his capacity as the quality manager) shall appear on the report or certificate.
- 5.7 Except as permitted in clause 5.8, HKIAS endorsed inspection reports and certificates shall only contain results of accredited activities, i.e., within the inspection body’s scope of accreditation. For inspections for which HKAS has implemented an approved inspector system, a HKIAS endorsed report or certificate issued by an accredited inspection body shall only contain results of inspections performed by an approved inspector of the accredited inspection body.
- 5.8 The result of the following activities shall only be included in a HKIAS endorsed report or certificate if HKAS Executive has explicitly approved

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such inclusion in writing:

- (a) results of any activity for which the inspection body is not holding valid HKIAS accreditation;
- (b) results of any activity performed by a subcontractor which is not accredited by HKAS nor an accreditation body recognised by HKAS through a mutual recognition agreement; or
- (c) results of any activity which is not performed by an approved inspector if HKAS has implemented an approved inspector system for the activity concerned.

The accredited inspection body which includes the result of any of the above activities in any endorsed inspection report or certificate shall in all cases state clearly on the endorsed inspection report or certificate that such activity is not accredited.

- 5.9 If a HKIAS endorsed inspection report or certificate contains any result which is supplied by a subcontractor, the accredited inspection body which issues such report or certificate shall identify in such a report or certificate any of the activities that are performed by the subcontractor.
- 5.10 An accredited inspection body shall keep at least one exact copy of the inspection report or certificate for any accredited activity issued by it for record. It shall also keep such copies, all original observations and records in relation to any accredited inspection activity performed by it for a period as specified by HKAS Executive in HKIAS 003 or relevant HKIAS Supplementary Criteria, as applicable.
- 5.11 Each HKIAS endorsed report/certificate, or any report/certificate with the accreditation status claimed shall comply with all relevant accreditation criteria as specified by HKAS Executive from time to time.
- 5.12 A HKIAS endorsed inspection report and certificate shall bear either:
  - (a) a statement indicating that such report or certificate shall not be reproduced except in full, or
  - (b) a statement indicating the conditions under which such report or certificate may be reproduced either in full or in part.

Any extract or abstract of a HKIAS endorsed inspection report or certificate shall not contain the HKIAS accreditation symbol nor other



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details as specified in clause 5.2 above unless the authorised representative of the accredited inspection body which issues the report or certificate has approved in writing of such inclusion in the extract or abstract. The authorised representative, if granting approval under this clause, shall ensure that such extract or abstract will not be used for any purpose which HKAS Executive may consider it as having misleading effect.

- 5.13 An accredited inspection body may issue a HKIAS endorsed report or certificate which extends the results of an inspection on a sample or samples to the properties or qualities of the inspected lot, batch or consignment from which the samples were drawn provided that the sample(s) concerned was taken by an approved inspector of the accredited inspection body by using an accredited sampling plan and procedure.
- 5.14 A HKIAS endorsed inspection report or certificate may include statements in amplification of results reported therein provided that:
- (a) if a statement on the conformity of an inspected sample or the lot, batch or consignment from which the sample was drawn with specified general requirements is made, the accredited inspection body shall include sufficient information required for the understanding and interpretation of such statement in such report or certificate; and
  - (b) any additional statement interpreting the results shall be limited to explaining whether or not the subject of inspection conforms with the specification requirements and the manner or degree it departs from the specification stated on such report or certificate.
- 5.15 If any opinion which is not supported by objective evidence or any statement in amplification of the inspection results other than those allowed in clause 5.14 above is to be included in a HKIAS endorsed inspection report or certificate, the accredited inspection body shall include a statement in such report or certificate which states clearly that the inspection body is not accredited for providing such opinion or statement.
- 5.16 An accredited inspection body shall not issue any inspection report or certificate containing any logo, symbol or statement that may be interpreted by any person that the activities or results reported are covered by certification.

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- 6.1 Application for any HKIAS service from HKAS shall be made in appropriate forms. These forms are downloadable at the HKAS website.

## **7 SAMPLE HKIAS ENDORSED REPORT BEARING THE HKIAS ACCREDITATION SYMBOL**

- 7.1 An example of a HKIAS endorsed report is provided on page 11. It is provided for reference only. An accredited inspection body shall submit its letterhead and formats of HKIAS endorsed report and certificate, or formats of reports claiming its accreditation status but without the use of the accreditation symbol as per clause 5.2 to HKAS Executive for approval before use.

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*Sample Endorsed Inspection Report*

<p><b>ABC Inspection Body</b> 23 Inspection Avenue, Kowloon, Hong Kong. Tel.: 2399 5555 Fax: 2399 5554 Website: www.abcinspectionbody.com</p>									
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<hr/> <p>Refer to clauses 5.2 (b) and 5.12 of this Supplementary Criteria for the appropriate statement to be included.</p>									