



General Rules for the Certification of Services

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Technical rules

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1 GENERAL

1.1

These Rules describe the procedures applied by RINA for the certification of Services and how organisations can apply for, obtain, retain and use this certification, as well as its possible suspension and revocation

For any issues not covered in this document, reference should be made to "GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR THE CERTIFICATION OF SYSTEMS, PRODUCTS AND PERSONNEL" which can be downloaded at www.rina.org.

1.2

RINA issues certification in accordance with UNI CEI EN ISO/IEC 17065:2012 to organisations whose Management System has been recognised as conforming to the all the requirements of the reference standard or regulatory document.

For every standard relative to a Service, RINA publishes specific rules integrating the requirements of these rules.

1.3

Certification is open to all Organisations and does not depend on whether they belong to an association or group.

RINA applies its current certification fees and guarantees fairness and uniformity of application.

RINA is entitled to refuse requests for certification by organisations that have been subject to, or whose production or activities have been subject to restriction, suspension or prescription by a public authority

When RINA decline an application, the reasons shall be communicated to the client.

1.4

The participation of observers in audit is agreed in advance between RINA and the organization.

Aiming to verify that the evaluation methods adopted by RINA are compliant with the reference standards, the Body guarantor of issued certificates (Accreditation Body) may request:

- the participation of its observers to the audits carried out by RINA,
- the execution of audits at the certified Organization, directly making use of its own personnel.

The participation of observers to the audits and/or any audit directly carried out making use of Accreditation Body's personnel must be previously agreed upon between RINA and the Organization.

If the Organization does not grant its approval, the validity of the certificate is suspended until the audit is approved, for up to 3 months

After the three months' period has elapsed, in the absence of any audit approval, the certificate will be revoked.

The auditing modalities adopted by Accreditation Bodies are written in specific rules and/or communications/circulars available on their websites.

Scaduti i 3 mesi, in assenza di benestare alla verifica, la certificazione viene revocata.

Le modalità di accertamento utilizzate dagli Enti di Accreditamento, sono riportate in appositi regolamenti e/o comunicazioni / circolari disponibili sui siti web degli stessi.

L'Organizzazione dovrà rendere disponibile all'Ente di Accreditamento la documentazione che RINA ha preso a riferimento durante le valutazioni precedenti.

The Organization shall make the documentation taken as reference by RINA during the previous audits available to the Accreditation Body.

1.5

The terminology used in these Rules complies with UNI CEI EN ISO/IEC 17000:2005.

2 REFERENCE STANDARD / CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

2.1

Organisations wishing to obtain RINA certification must first and henceforth satisfy the requirements of the reference standard or regulatory document and those indicated in the following paragraphs of this chapter, together with any additional elements indicated by the accreditation bodies (e.g.: ACCREDIA "RT" documents).

During its accreditation activities, in fact, RINA must abide by certain reference documents issued by the accreditation bodies. These documents can be obtained from RINA or directly from the accreditation bodies (consulting their Internet sites, for example).

2.2

In particular, in order to obtain certification, the organisation must comply at least, with the following:

- a) The organization always fulfils the certification requirements, including implementing appropriate changes when they are communicated by the certification body;
- b) The organization makes all necessary arrangements for:
 - 1) The conduct of the evaluation and surveillance (if required), including provision for examining documentation and records, and access to the relevant equipment, location(s), area(s), personnel, and client's subcontractors;
 - 2) Investigation of complaints;
 - 3) The participation of observers, if applicable;
- c) The organization makes claims regarding certification consistent with the scope of certification;
- d) The organization does not use its product certification in such a manner as to bring the certification body into disrepute and does not make any statement regarding its product certification that the certification body may consider misleading or unauthorized;
- e) Upon suspension, withdrawal, or termination of certification, the client discontinues its use of all advertising matter that contains any reference thereto and takes action as required by the certification scheme (e.g. the return of certification documents) and takes any other required measure;
- f) If the client provides copies of the certification documents to others, the documents shall be reproduced in their entirety or as specified in the certification scheme;
- g) In making reference to its product certification in communication media such as documents, brochures or advertising, the client complies with the requirements of the certification body or as specified by the certification scheme;
- h) The organization complies with any requirements that may be prescribed in the certification scheme relating to the use of marks of conformity, and on information related to the service;
- i) The organization keeps a record of all complaints made known to it relating to compliance with certification requirements and makes these records available to the certification body when requested, and

- 1) Takes appropriate action with respect to such complaints and any deficiencies found in products that affect compliance with the requirements for certification;
 - 2) Documents the actions taken;
- j) The organization informs the certification body, without delay, of changes that may affect its ability to conform with the certification requirements.

All the information received from the customer organisation is treated as confidential.

2.3

The conformity of the Service with the reference standard is verified by means of an evaluation programme including:

- an initial evaluation,
- a surveillance evaluation in the first year
- a surveillance evaluation in the second year
- a certification renewal evaluation in the third year.

The following are considered when establishing the evaluation programme: the size of the organisation, the scope and the complexity of the Service, the products and processes, the previous evaluation results, and any certificates already issued to the customer or other evaluations already performed.

3 INITIAL CERTIFICATION

3.1

Organisations wishing to obtain RINA certification for their sERVICE must provide RINA with their main organisation data and site location by filling in all parts of the “Informative Questionnaire” form, available at www.rina.org, and sending it to RINA, which will use it to prepare a quotation

In particular, the informative questionnaire requires information to be provided on:

- the service(s) to be certified;
- the standard and/or other normative documents for which the client is seeking certification;
- the general features of the client, including its name and the address(es) of its physical location(s), significant aspects of its process and operations (if required by the relevant certification scheme), and any relevant legal obligations;
- general information concerning the client, relevant to the field of certification for which the application is made, such as the client's activities, its human and technical resources, including laboratories and/or inspection facilities, and its functions and relationship in a larger corporation, if any;
- information concerning all outsourced processes used by the client that will affect conformity to requirements; if the client has identified a legal entity/entities for producing the certified product(s) that is different from the client, then the certification body can establish appropriate contractual controls over the legal entity/entities concerned, if necessary for effective surveillance; if such contractual are needed, they can be established prior to providing formal certification documentation;
- all other information needed in accordance with the relevant certification requirements, such as information for initial evaluation and surveillance activities e.g. the locations subject to certification and contact personnel at these locations;
- Number of workers covered by the scope.
- company processes and relative dedicated resources
- any relationships with other larger companies
- all the processes outsourced by the organisation that may affect conformity with requirements;
- any certificates already obtained;
- use of any consulting services connected with the management system.

This information has to be provided by an authorized representative of the applicant organization.

On the basis of this information, RINA prepares a suitable offer.

3.2

Prior to performing the audit, RINA makes sure:

- a) there is sufficient information concerning the applicant organisation to perform the evaluation;
- b) certification requirements are clearly established and documented and are sent to the applicant organisation;
- c) every difference of interpretation between RINA and the applicant organisation has been eliminated;
- d) RINA has the skills and capacity to perform certification activities;

3.3

If organisations accept the offer, they must make their application official by sending RINA the specific form attached to the offer, indicating the reference standard and, if relevant, any other reference standard document according to which certification is requested.

On receipt of the application for certification and the relative annexes and having ensured they are complete, RINA will send the organisation written acceptance of its application.

The organisation's request, which makes specific mention of these rules, and its acceptance by RINA, contractually formalise the relationship between RINA and the organisation, and the applicability of these rules and the specific rules applicable to the scheme for which certification is required.

The evaluation tasks can include activities such as design and documentation review, sampling, testing, inspection and audit.

After the satisfactory completion of the initial evaluation and after a positive certification decision by RINA, a Certificate of Conformity with the reference standard is issued, with a validity defined according to the specific certification scheme.

In case of negative completion of the initial evaluation or after a negative certification decision, RINA could refuse to certify the Organisation.

When RINA refuse to certify, the reasons shall be communicated to the client.

For details on the management and validity of the certificates of conformity issued by RINA, see chapter 6.

4 MAINTAINING VALIDITY OF THE CERTIFICATE

4.1

The organisation must ensure its Services continues to comply with the Reference Standard or regulatory document.

4.2

The organisation must record any claims and the relative corrective action implemented and must make these records available to RINA together with the corrective action taken to address the non-conformities made during the periodic surveillance (as described in Par. 5.1.4).

4.3

If required by the specific certification scheme, RINA performs periodic evaluations on the supplied service in order to evaluate whether it remains compliant with the requirements of the reference standard.

The criteria and the process for the surveillance activities are defined in the specific certification scheme.

When the surveillance activities include the evaluation, the review or a decision related to the certification, the requirements of the initial evaluation certification must be satisfied.

When continuing use of a certification mark is authorized for a service, surveillance shall be established and shall include periodic surveillance activities to ensure ongoing validity of the demonstration of fulfilment of process or service requirements.

4.4

RINA also reserves the right to perform additional evaluations, without notice, at the organisation:

- if it receives claims or reports, considered to be particularly significant, relative to the non-compliance of the Service with the requirements of the reference standard and of these Rules;
- in relation to changes taking place in the organisation;
- to organisations whose certification has been suspended.

RINA shall exercise additional care in the assignment of the evaluation team because of the lack of opportunity for the organisation to object to audit team members.

If the organisation refuses without a justified reason, RINA start the suspension/withdrawal certification process.

If RINA considers the claims and reports to be justified, the cost of the supplementary evaluation will be charged to the organisation.

4.5

In the case of major non-conformities (type A findings) or minor non-conformities (type B findings) whose number in the opinion of the evaluation team is such as to impair the correct supplying of the service, the organisation will be subject to a supplementary evaluation within the time limits established by RINA in relation to the importance of the non-conformities and, in any case, not more than six months after the end of the evaluation in order to check the effectiveness of corrections and of the proposed corrective action.

If the major non-conformities are not eliminated within the established times or if the minor non-conformities do not assure the supplied products/services satisfy customer requirements and applicable law, RINA may suspend certification until these major non-conformities have been eliminated and, in any case, as specified in chapter 8.

All costs relative to any supplementary evaluations deriving from shortcomings in the Service will be charged to the organisation.

5 EVALUATION PERFORMANCE

5.1 GENERAL

5.1.1

The dates of the surveillance evaluations are agreed with the organisation.

An "Plan of the activity" is drawn up for each evaluation according to ISO/IEC 17065:2012 which is sent to the customer organisation in good time

RINA also uses the Plan of the activity to inform the Organisation of the names of the auditors and technical experts appointed to perform the evaluation, chosen on the basis of the skills required to perform the evaluation; the Organisation may object to the appointment of these auditors provided it gives a justified reason.

During the evaluation, the audits could collect information through:

- a) Interviews;
- b) Examination of processes and activities;
- c) Review of the documentation and the records.

Each auditor shall be accompanied by a guide appointed by the organization to facilitate the evaluation performance and that can have the following responsibilities:

- a) establishing contacts and timing for interviews;
- b) arranging visits to specific parts of the site or organization;

- c) ensuring that rules concerning site safety and security procedures are known and respected by the audit team members;
- d) witnessing the evaluation on behalf of the client;
- e) providing clarification or information as requested by an auditor.

5.1.2

A written report is prepared for each evaluation indicating any major non-conformities (type A findings), minor non-conformities (type B findings) and improvement recommendations (type C findings).¹

A copy of the report is sent to the customer organisation; the original evaluation report is owned by RINA.

¹ Major non-conformities are:

- failure to fulfill of one or more requirements of the management system standard;
- non-compliance with one or more requirements of these Rules,
- a situation that could lead to the delivery of non-conforming products or products which do not comply with applicable legislation;
- situations that could cause serious shortcomings in the management system or reduce its capacity to ensure the control of processes or products/services.

minor non-conformities are:

- a situation that could reduce the customer's capacity of delivering a conforming product,
- situations that could cause minor shortcomings in the management system or not reduce its capacity to ensure the control of processes or products/services.

Recommendations are:

- suggestions for improving the management system that do not directly concern the requirements of the reference standard.

The organisation may indicate any reservations or comments concerning the findings by the RINA surveyors in the relative space in the evaluation report.

5.1.3

After analysing the reasons for any major or minor non-conformities indicated in the above report, the Organisation must, within the data indicated on the report, inform RINA of its proposals for handling the non-conformities, as well as the corrective action required and the dates envisaged for its implementation.

The organisation fill in the relative forms in use the "Member Area" of the RINA website (www.rina.org) to submit handling and corrective action proposals.²

RINA will review the correct proposals submitted by the customer organisation and communicate acceptance via the RINA website.

5.1.4

In the event of major non-conformities (type A findings) the certification process is suspended; in the event of minor non-conformities the number of which, in the evaluation team's judgement, may compromise the efficiency of the service, the certification process is also suspended.

In these cases, a supplementary evaluation must be performed within six months in order to check the effectiveness of corrections and of the proposed corrective action; if this evaluation is successful the certification process will be resumed.

² *If it is impossible to access the Internet, the organisation may fill in a paper form and send it to the pertinent RINA Office.*

The evaluation team may decide to perform the supplementary evaluation on site or on the documents, depending on the type of corrective action involved.

All costs relative to any supplementary audits deriving from shortcomings in the Service will be charged to the organisation.

6 MANAGEMENT OF CERTIFICATES OF CONFORMITY

6.1

The certificate of conformity issued by RINA, which is the proprietary of the same, is valid as for the specific certification scheme starting from the date of approval by RINA of the initial certification or recertification proposal.

6.2

From the moment of issue of the certificate by RINA, this and the relative evaluation plan will be made available to the organisation in the "Member Area" of the RINA website (www.rina.org). The organisation may therefore enter and download the above documents directly from this area of the RINA website.

If it is impossible to access the Internet, the organisation may request a hardcopy from the pertinent RINA Office.

6.3

The validity of the certificate is subject to the results of the subsequent surveillance evaluation.

The certificate of conformity is reissued following the successful outcome of each recertification evaluation.

The validity of the certificate may be suspended, withdrawn or relinquished in accordance with the contents of Chapters 8 and 9.

RINA directly publishes and updates the following on its website www.rina.org:

- a) the list of certified organisations;
- b) status of validity of the certificates issued, indicating valid, suspended or invalid for each certificate.

7 MODIFICATION OF CERTIFICATION AND COMMUNICATION OF CHANGES

7.1

An organisation in possession of certification may request a modification or extension by presenting a new certification application, accompanied by the duly updated documentation.

RINA reserves the right to examine requests on a case-by-case basis and to decide the evaluation methods for issuing a new certificate according to the "GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR THE CERTIFICATION OF SYSTEMS, PRODUCTS AND PERSONNEL" and the reference standard or regulatory document for the management system.

7.2

The organisation must promptly inform RINA of any changes in factors that may affect the capacity of the Management System to continue to satisfy the requirements of the standard used for certification.

This requirement concerns, for example, modifications to:

- the legal, commercial, organisational or ownership status;
- organisation and management (e.g.: key managers or technical staff, decision making process, change in number of employees.);
- contact addresses and sites;
- field of application of the activities covered by the certified management system;
- significant changes in the management system and processes.

RINA reserves the right to perform additional audits or other actions on the organisation if the modifications communicated are considered particularly significant as regards maintaining the conformity of the Management System with the requirements of the reference standard and of these rules or to review the economic conditions for the possible modification of the contract.

7.3

RINA promptly informs the organisation of every change in the reference standards or RINA certification rules.

7.4

RINA reserves the right to conduct evaluations of certified Organisation at short notice or unannounced to investigate complaints, or in response to changes, or as follow up on suspended clients.

8 SUSPENSION, REINSTATEMENT AND WITHDRAWAL OF CERTIFICATION

8.1

The validity of the certificate of conformity is suspended as indicated in "GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR THE CERTIFICATION OF SYSTEMS, PRODUCTS AND PERSONNEL" and in the following specific cases:

- if the Organisation refuses to allow the scheduled audits to be performed at the required frequencies and the special audits (short-notice audits and unannounced audits);
- if non-conformities are found in the management system which have not been corrected within the time limits established by RINA;
- if the organisation does not observe the deadlines established for the communication of corrective actions, following non-conformities/observations indicated on the audit report;
- if the organisation has made far-reaching changes to its Site/s or moves to another site without informing RINA of such changes;
- if the Organisation has made modifications to its management system that have not been accepted by RINA;
- if the organisation has undergone important re-structuring and has not reported this to RINA;
- if it refuses or obstructs the participation in audits of the observers of an accreditation body;
- for evidence that the Management System does not guarantee the respect of the laws and regulations applicable to the supplied products/services, activity and/or site/s;
- if any justified and serious claims received by RINA are confirmed.

The organisation may also make a justified request to suspend certification, normally for not more than six months and in no case after the date of expiry of the certificate.

This suspension will be notified in writing (certified e-mail or equivalent method), stating the conditions for re-instating certification and the date by which the new conditions are to be complied with.

Suspension of the validity of the certificate is made public by RINA directly on the website www.rina.org as indicated in point 6.3.

8.2

Reinstatement of certification is subject to verification that the shortcomings which led to the suspension itself have been eliminated. This is achieved by means of an analytical audit checking the compliance of the Management System with all the requirements of the reference standard.

It is notified to the organisation in writing (certified e-mail or equivalent method) and made public by RINA on its website www.rina.org as established in point 6.3.

8.3

Failure to fulfil the conditions as per point 8.2 above by the established date will lead to revocation of the Certificate of Conformity.

Revocation of the certificate of conformity may be decided as indicated in "GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR THE CERTIFICATION OF SYSTEMS, PRODUCTS AND PERSONNEL" and in the following specific cases:

- when there are reasons such as those indicated in point 8.1 for suspension, which are held to be particularly serious;
- if the organisation stops the activities or services covered by the certified Management System for over six months as a rule;
- if the organisation does not accept the new contractual conditions;
- for multi-site organisations, if the headquarters or one of the sites does not comply with the criteria required to maintain certification;
- for every other major reason, at RINA's discretion, such as the proven incapacity of the system to pursue its objectives of complying with legislative, contractual or product safety requirements.

Withdrawal of the Certificate of Conformity is notified in writing (certified e-mail or equivalent method), to the Organisation and made public by RINA as indicated in point 6.3.

Any organisation which, following revocation of its Certificate, wishes to be re-certified, must submit a new application and follow the entire procedure all over again.

9 RENUNCIATION OF CERTIFICATION

A certified organisation may send formal communication of renunciation of certification to RINA, before the expiry of the certificate, including the case in which the organisation does not wish to or cannot conform to new provisions established by RINA.

Upon receipt of this communication, RINA starts the procedure for invalidating the certificate.

Generally speaking, within one month from the date of the communication, RINA updates the validity status of the certificate.

10 CONTRACT CONDITIONS

For contract conditions, the contents of the current edition of RINA document "GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR THE CERTIFICATION OF SYSTEMS, PRODUCTS AND PERSONNEL" apply.

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