VINÇOTTE nv
Registered office: Jan Olieslagerslaan 35 ▪ 1800 Vilvoorde ▪ Belgium
VAT BE 0462.513.222 ▪ RPM/RPR Brussels ▪ BNP Paribas Fortis: BE24 2100 4113 6338 ▪ BIC: GEBABEBB
Jan Olieslagerslaan 35 ▪ 1800 Vilvoorde ▪ Belgium ▪ phone: +32 2 674 57 11 ▪ brussels@vincotte.be

GENERAL REGULATIONS

VINÇOTTE nv

Vilvoorde – Belgium

Management System Certification

Revision: 15	Written by:	Verified by:	Approved by:
Date: February 2017	K. PEETERS	O. VANDEVOORDE	B. JANSSENS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. SCOPE

The current General Regulations define the rules applicable to the certification and registration of a.o. quality management systems, safety management systems, environmental management systems, food safety management systems, corporate social responsibility management systems and information security management systems operated by Organisations for the supply of goods or services.

The general term “management system” will be used below.

They also apply when the assessment of the management system is done in light of the implementation of European directives for which VINÇOTTE nv is a notified body, or of national normative documents.

2. DEFINITIONS

The definition of the terms used in the current document is determined in ISO 9000:2015 - “Quality Management Systems - Fundamentals and vocabulary” and with the ISO 14001:2015: “Environmental Management System – Requirements with guidance for use”.

Furthermore, the following definitions apply:

- ✓ Applicant: Organisation seeking the certification and registration of the certificate relating to its management system by VINÇOTTE nv .
- ✓ Organisation: under the current Regulations, the term “Organisation” is used to designate an organisation as defined in the ISO 9000:2015 standard (section 3.3.1: group of people and facilities with an arrangement of responsibilities, authorities and relationships).
- ✓ Certified/Registered Organisation: organisation of which the management system has been certified by VINÇOTTE nv and who have received a certificate of conformity issued by VINÇOTTE nv.

3. REFERENCE STANDARDS – CERTIFICATION SCHEMES

The certification process applied is based upon a demonstrated compliance with the requirements of the latest version of the following normative international, European and national documents:

- ✓ ISO 9001: Quality management systems – Requirements
- ✓ ISO 14001: Environmental management systems – Specifications with guidance for use
- ✓ ISO 50001: Energy management systems – Requirements with guidance for use
- ✓ ISO/TS 16949,
- ✓ IATF 16949: Quality Management Systems – Particular Requirements for the Application of ISO 9001 for Automotive Production and Relevant Service Part Organisations
- ✓ OHSAS 18001: Occupational health and safety management systems – Requirements
- ✓ ILO-OSH-2001: Guidelines on safety management systems and occupational health
- ✓ ISO 27001: Information security management systems – Requirements
- ✓ ISO 39001: Road transport safety (RTS) management safety – Requirements
- ✓ SCC/VCA: SHE Checklist Contractors / VGM-Check-list-Aannemers
- ✓ SCT/VCU: SH Checklist Temporary Employment Agencies / Veiligheids-Checklist- Uitzendbureaus
- ✓ IQNet SR10: Social Responsibility Management Systems – Requirements
- ✓ Belgian Royal Decree dated 28/03/2007 regarding the recognition of companies and employers carrying out demolition or removal works during which considerable amounts of asbestos may be released
- ✓ and other similar reference standards

The basis for certification can be extended to other international or national normative documents depending on the approvals/notifications received by VINÇOTTE nv.

- ✓ The environmental management systems certification may be part of a verification and validation procedure within the context of EMAS: Council Regulation (EC) No 1221/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 November 2009 allowing voluntary participation by Organisations in a Community eco-management and audit scheme (EMAS)
- ✓ The quality management system certification may be supplemented by the approval of a quality system under the requirements of a European directive (Directive 2014/33/UE relating to lifts, Directive 2014/34/UE relating to ATEX, Directive 2007/46/CE relating to motorised vehicles, etc.)

4. GENERAL RULES

4.1. The current General Regulations are the only ones VINÇOTTE nv applies for the certification of management systems and the registration of the related certificates that comply with the standards and normative documents listed in section 3.

4.2. Any Organisation seeking certification and registration of the certificate relating to its management system by VINÇOTTE nv must abide by the General Regulations in force at the time the certification contract is concluded. Likewise, when the conformity assessment is carried out within a regulatory framework, any applicable regulatory requirements are in force in compliance with the calendar set by the law.

4.3. When the General Regulations are revised, the Organisations concerned may choose either to adopt the revised version or the one already applicable to them. This option is available until the next (re)certification audit.
An exception to this is when the General Regulations have to be adapted as a result of a change to the accreditation rules.

4.4. The requirements of the current General Regulations supersede the corresponding requirements of the VINÇOTTE nv Standard Terms and Conditions of Supply of Services.

4.5. The specific conditions defined in the certification contracts may neither alter nor modify the requirements of the current General Regulations.

5. CERTIFICATE CHARACTERISTICS

5.1. Scope

The VINÇOTTE nv management system certificate attests that the management system implemented by a Certified Organisation, according to a specific normative document, complies with the requirements of the reference document (standard, directive, sector specifications).

5.2. Period of validity

The VINÇOTTE nv certificate is valid for a period of three years from the date of issue, except for certificates issued to companies that remove asbestos, which are valid for a period of 5 years. The period of validity may be adapted according to the limitations in the period of validity of the normative reference document.

At the end of said period, VINÇOTTE nv automatically starts with a new procedure as defined in section 7.12. of the current General Regulations.

5.3. Conditions of validity

The validity of a VINÇOTTE nv certificate is maintained provided that the Certified Organisation concerned continuously complies with the following requirements:

1. The certified management system is continuously maintained.
2. The required documented information is stored by the Organisation, for review by VINÇOTTE nv.
3. Any significant modification to the management system will be communicated to VINÇOTTE nv within one week of coming into force.

   Examples:

   - ✓ Significant changes within the organisation, product categories or processes, addition of a new production line, addition of new activities, etc.
   - ✓ Stopping or repulsion of existing activities
   - ✓ Significant increase or decrease in the number of employees
   - ✓ Changes in the Organisation's name or address
   - ✓ New organisational structure
   - ✓ Changes in shareholders
   - ✓ Modification of the legal articles of association
   - ✓ Bankruptcy
   - ✓ Potential legal proceedings with respect to product safety or legality (in particular in the food industry)
   - ✓ Product recall

   See also section 8.1.

4. Any complaint raised by a third party about the quality of products or services covered by the certified management system, must be reported and presented to VINÇOTTE nv's auditors at the beginning of each audit or upon auditor's request.

   Any official report concerning an aspect of the Organisation's activities included in the scope of certification has to be presented to the VINÇOTTE nv's auditors at the beginning of the audit or at the auditor's request.

5. Surveillance audits have a frequency of between 6 and 12 months. When the applicable normative documents specifically refer to a period for the surveillance audits (12 months, for example), the surveillance audits for other reference standards will be performed according to the same periodicity, unless there are conflicting requirements. An annual surveillance audit is a minimum necessary to ensure continued certification. In the case of joined certification (see section 8.3), a yearly surveillance audit is not systematically applied for all sites.
6. VINÇOTTE nv is authorized to carry out any unscheduled audit at any time and without prior notice. If the assessment of the management system is carried out within a regular framework, this audit will be carried out when public authorities issue a reasoned complaint concerning the requirements of the applicable directive.
7. All financial obligations with regard to VINÇOTTE nv are covered.

6. CERTIFICATION APPLICATION

6.1. Any Organisation interested in the certification of its management system may apply to VINÇOTTE nv.

6.2. As soon as the Organisation's intention is known, VINÇOTTE nv will supply the Organisation with a Preliminary Questionnaire. The interested Organisation should complete the questionnaire and return it to VINÇOTTE nv together with appropriate documentation which provides a clear description of the Organisation's organisational structure and the activity/activities, product(s) or service(s) to be covered by the management system to be certified.

6.3. VINÇOTTE nv may also send one of its employees to the interested Organisation to collect the necessary data, to get a precise idea about the management system and to present VINÇOTTE nv's services in detail.

6.4. As soon as the necessary information has been collected and reviewed, the Applicant and VINÇOTTE nv will agree on the certification conditions, which are finalized in a quotation.

These conditions must define:

- ✓ the applicable certification scheme (see section 3)
- ✓ the Applicant's entity/entities concerned
- ✓ the activity/activities, product(s) or service(s) concerned and
- ✓ the audit-time based on the EA guidelines and the applicable certification scheme

At the Applicant's request, the certification process may include a pre-audit of the management system that is to be certified.

6.5. Ordering proceeds with the filling in and the signing of the applicable order forms by the Applicant. These forms are part of the VINÇOTTE nv quotation.

The relevant order forms must be returned to VINÇOTTE nv, if necessary attached to a standard order. The provisions of the purchase order cannot contradict the requirements of the VINÇOTTE nv order forms, these current General Regulations or the requirements of the certification scheme.

The conditions of the offer, including the time of audit, may be reviewed during the cycle, based on information received from the Organisation and the auditor's findings (see 5.3.3.).

7. CERTIFICATION PROCESS

7.1. Registration

VINÇOTTE nv acknowledges all orders received.

Before reviewing the documentation, VINÇOTTE nv communicates the auditors' names who will conduct the certification services to the Applicant. The Applicant will be informed beforehand of any change in the assignment.

The Applicant may refuse the participation of an auditor, providing such refusal is made in writing (including justification) and not less than four weeks before the beginning of the certification process. If the Applicant is unable to accept any of the auditors proposed by VINÇOTTE nv, the certification order is considered to be null and void. VINÇOTTE nv will inform the Applicant of this decision in writing.

7.2. Preparation of the audit and review of the Management System documentation

The management system has been implemented for at least 3 months so that significant evidence will be available.

The purpose of the preparation stage (called "stage 1" in many cases, according to the applicable reference standard) is to obtain the optimal preparation of the certification audit.

According to the contract (depending on the reference standard, the size of the Organisation, the scope of the audit, and the status of “initial certification” or “renewal”), this preparation takes the form of a preliminary visit on site (mostly), or will be executed at a distance using phone calls, faxes or e-mail.

It includes, as a general rule,

- Familiarising with the Organisation and its activities,
- the review of the available system documentation (the auditors examine the documented information to assess their compliance with the requirements of the normative reference document, and the Applicant provides these documents to VINÇOTTE nv accordingly),
- checking the level of preparedness for the certification audit based on the internal audits and management review reports,
- the creation of an audit program and all necessary arrangements.

In principle, the Lead Auditor takes care of the preparation, but he may delegate this task to an Auditor of the audit team. This preliminary site visit mainly involves the person with the responsibility of coordinating the Applicant’s Management System.

The auditor will report possible findings regarding non-conformities to the Applicant and he will ask for clarifications deemed necessary. The Applicant takes the required actions and presents any change to the documentation that might resolve the non-conformities to the auditor.

The results of the stage 1 audit may lead to postponing or even cancelling the stage 2 audit. Postponing the stage 2 audit will allow for more time for the Applicant to execute the required actions. The decision to cancel the stage 2 audit may be caused by too great a number or too severe a nature of the observed non-conformities to guarantee a successful stage 2 audit. In that case a new stage 1 will be planned in due time.

The certification audit will be scheduled after completion of the preparation visit/examination (in principle in 3 weeks) on a date allowing the Applicant to make any improvements that may be necessary.

For IATF the stage 2 audit shall commence within 90 calendar days of the stage 1 readiness review approval.

7.3. Certification audit

During the certification audit (called “stage 2” in many cases, according to the applicable reference standard), the appointed auditors verify that the management system is implemented effectively and in compliance with the requirements of the normative reference document. For this purpose, the required documented information is examined, the personnel involved in the management system is interviewed and the relevant management reports are thoroughly analysed. In this phase, all levels of responsibility are involved and the audit is conducted on the Applicant’s site. If other locations or sites are relevant to the agreed scope of the audit, they will also be visited during the cycle.

In the event that a non-conformance or an indication of non-conformance towards a requirement of the regulation is found, the auditor will immediately inform the Applicant.

The auditor will assess if this non-conformity has to be covered by a Corrective Action Request. At the same time, the auditor will categorise the non-conformity as major or minor. See section 7.4. for a breakdown of the non-conformities.

For SCC, SCT and SCP, any non-conformity found is considered to be major.

For the duration of the audit, an office with sufficient seating and desks will be allocated to the audit team for their own internal meetings.

The audit process starts with an opening meeting generally involving the Applicant’s management and the auditors. During the meeting, the participants introduce themselves and the details of the audit program are defined.

The audit itself begins with an interview of the highest level of responsibility involved (usually the General Management).

The audit ends with a closing meeting with the Applicant's management and the auditors. During the closing meeting, the auditors will present their conclusions and issue any possible Corrective Action Requests.

If this is the case, the Applicant will respond to the Corrective Action Request by giving his position and action plan and a proposed completion date for each accepted Corrective Action Request. The Applicant will send these responses to VINÇOTTE nv at the earliest convenience but not later than two weeks after the end of the audit.

7.4. Corrective Action Requests

Non-conformities may be discovered during an audit. The non-conformities are classified as major or minor according to the following criteria:

7.4.1. Major non-conformity:

- Insufficient planning of the quality management system considering the objectives to be reached: insufficient, unsuitable or non-existent management plan or **lack of resources** to realize the established objectives (missing capability).
- Absence of an essential management system component: not documenting or implementing a **criterion** (or of a **significant part** of a criterion) of the reference standard.
- When only a part of a system component is missing and **when the missing part has a critical influence** on the general operation of the system or on the delivered product, and this **to such an extent that the negative consequences of this failure are established in the past period of time**.
- Flagrant and/or deliberate non-conformance with statutory or regulatory requirements.
- **Breach of a statutory requirement** threatening employee safety (or the general interest).

  In particular:

  - Significant non-conformity with specific requirements of the applicable European directive when the certification is requested in this context.
  - Absence of an essential element of a license/permit, without introducing a regularization request, or a major breach of the conditions of the permit.
- When a non-conformity is such that the **balance of the system and its global working is harmed** (in particular: when in such a situation, the improvement loop cannot be demonstrated: from the evaluation of client needs and expectations to the definition of relevant objectives, the monitoring and measurement of processes, the analysis of data, the management review and finally back to the definition of new objectives in a continual improvement perspective, etc.).
- Accumulation of minor non-conformities threatening the system's efficiency.
- Too long a period for the resolution of the corrective action requests established by the auditors, in such that the Organisation's general capability may be questioned.

7.4.2. Minor non-conformity:

Any non-conformity that does not threaten the Management System's operability, if not categorised as major, for instance:

- Incomplete documentation of an applicable criterion of the reference standard, on the condition that the missing documentation is not essential for the operation.

- Incomplete implementation of an applicable criterion of the reference standard, on the condition that the missing implementation is not essential for the operation.
- Insufficient of evidence demonstrating the conformity with a criterion of the reference standard, if this does not harm the confidence in the implementation of an essential element of the system.
- Incomplete license/permit (no essential item), non-compliance with the conditions of the license or a minor breach of relevant regulations.

7.4.3. Specific cases

For IATF

- ✓ Major non-conformity:
  - The absence of or a total system failure to meet an IATF requirement. A number of minor nonconformities against one requirement can represent a total system failure and thus be considered a major non-conformity
  - Any noncompliance that would result in the shipment of probable nonconforming product. A situation that may result in the failure or materially reduce the usability of the products or services for their intended purpose
  - A noncompliance that, based on the auditors judgment and experience, is likely to result in the failure of the management system or to materially reduce its ability to ensure controlled processes and products
- ✓ Minor non-conformity:
  This is a failure to comply with IATF which based on the judgment and experience is not likely to result in failure of the management system or in reducing its ability to ensure controlled processes or products. It may be one of the following:
  - A failure in some part of the client's management system relative to IATF
  - A single observed lapse for one item of a company's management system
- ✓ An non-conformity is 100% resolved if
  - Control of a situation that represents a risk to the customer is achieved
  - A documented evidence, such as action plan, instructions or records to correct the nonconformity, including assigned responsibilities or follow-up verifications, have been defined

For SCC, SCT and SCP

An unsatisfactory answer to a mandatory question in the checklist directly leads to a major non-conformity.

7.4.4. Opportunity for improvement:

An opportunity for improvement is a situation where the evidence presented indicates a requirement has been effectively implemented, but based on the auditor experience and knowledge, improved effectiveness or reliability might be possible with a modified approach

7.5. Answers on Corrective Action Request

Within two weeks of the audit, the Organisation provides answers to the Corrective Action Requests along with an action plan. The auditor checks if the proposed actions are suitable for correcting the non-conformities found and their causes.

If the audit team is not able to verify the implementation of corrections and corrective actions of any major nonconformity within 6 months after the last stage 2 audit day, another stage 2 has to be conducted prior to recommending certification.

Note: For IATF 16949: the rules (latest edition) need to be taken into account

7.6. Audit report

Following the audit, the auditors prepare a confidential report.

This report includes a brief description of the Applicant, a description of the products or services covered by the management system, and the Corrective Action Requests for all non-conformities found.

The report also contains the Applicant's responses to the Corrective Action Requests.

Note: For SCC and SCT, the report also contains the assessment of the mandatory and optional questions.

Note: For IATF 16949: the rules (latest edition) need to be taken into account

7.7. Certification file

The Lead Auditor prepares the certification file. This file contains:

- ✓ the audit report,
- ✓ the recommendation of the audit team regarding the certification of the audited management system.

This certification file is presented to VINÇOTTE nv's Certification Committee.

7.8. Certification

The certification file is reviewed by VINÇOTTE nv's Certification Committee.

The Certification Committee is composed of a Chairman, the Senior Auditors and the persons who have a veto-right during the certification process according to certain applicable normative documents. The Senior Auditor is a Lead Auditor having a vast experience and is highly esteemed in his field of activity. For SCC, SCT and SCP, it is the coordinator who gives his/her advice to the certification committee for a decision to be made.

In principle, the Certification Committee meets every week. At each meeting, the committee reviews all files that have been submitted. If necessary, the concerned auditor(s) is/are heard. In each case, the Certification Committee will decide either to grant a certificate and under what conditions, or to refuse the certification and for what reason(s).

A certificate is refused when the Certification Committee concludes that the implemented management system substantially deviates from the requirements of the normative reference document. This conclusion is based upon the following factors:

- ✓ Evidence of critical / major non-conformities.
- ✓ Accumulation of minor non-conformities threatening the effectiveness of the management system.
- ✓ The Applicant's attitude towards the Corrective Action Requests.

The Certification Committee decision is communicated to the Applicant within three working days.

If the certificate is granted, the certificate issuance date is the date of the Certification Committee's meeting. The certificate is generally valid for 3 years, except for the limitations described in section 15 (change in reference standards documents).

7.9. Registration and publication

As soon as a certificate is granted, a registration number is assigned. It is printed on the certificate.

The certificate is created in compliance with international requirements applicable to certification bodies and notified bodies. The certificate normally states:

- ✓ the normative reference document(s),
- ✓ the certified Organisation's name and address,
- ✓ the scope of the certification (activities, products or services covered),
- ✓ the reference of the latest audit report, and

- ✓ the period of validity.

Note: For IATF 16949: the certificate will be uploaded in the IATF database

Note: For IQNet and SR 10 the name of the certified company is encoded in the IQNet database

Note: For EMAS, VINÇOTTE nv grants a Validation Declaration which the organisation must sentto the competent body along with the verified Environmental Declaration. The competent body will deliver the EMAS registration certificate. EMAS registration has a validity period of one year.

Note: For SCC, SCT and SCP: the information on the certificate is encoded in the VCA-BESACC association database.

7.10. IQNet certification

VINÇOTTE nv is member of IQNet "The International Certification Network". This network is made up of top-level certification bodies in different countries from around the world. Each country is represented by a local certification body.

The certificate issued by VINÇOTTE nv is associated with an IQNet certificate, recognized by all its members. This is only applicable for certification schemes recognized by IQNet.

7.11. Certification surveillance

When a certificate is granted, a surveillance program is defined. Maintaining the certificate requires the execution of this surveillance program, whereby the first audit has to be executed within 12 months of the certification or renewal audit. The practical arrangements are defined at the ordering stage, based on the VINÇOTTE nv quotation.

The surveillance audits include:

- ✓ the review of complaints and official reports received since the last audit,
- ✓ the processing of the Corrective Action Requests raised during the previous audit(s),
- ✓ the review of internal audits and their scheduling,
- ✓ the review of parts of the management system,
- ✓ the review of the use of the certificate.

As a general rule, all requirements of the normative reference document will be subjected to auditing during the validity period of the certificate.

In the case of a certification that includes the assessment of conformity with the regulatory requirements (European directives), the requirements established by law are automatically applicable.

Additional audits may be organised in a number of cases such as:

- ✓ a (some) major modification(s) of the certified management system;
- ✓ major non-conformities found during the scheduled surveillance audits,
- ✓ a complaint raised by a third party.

These additional audits involve reviewing the documentation at VINÇOTTE nv's offices or audits at the Certified Organisation's premises or at the site that so requires.

A report is written for all audits. These reports are sent to the (certified) Organisation within one month of receipt of the acceptable actions in response to corrective action requests.

The reports, along with the auditors' recommendations, are presented to the Certification Committee during its next meeting. The Certification Committee decides whether to maintain, modify, suspend or withdraw the corresponding certificate or to impose additional requirements.

Section 7.8 also applies in this situation.

Note: For IATF 16949: Surveillance audits must be planned and executed according to the

rules. (latest edition)

7.12. Renewal

The Applicant has to submit a request for the renewal of its certification in due time, to avoid an interruption in the certificate's validity. Three months before the end of the validity period of a given certificate, VINÇOTTE nv issues a proposal for the certificate's renewal.

The renewal process is similar to the original certification. However:

- ✓ the program takes into account the obtained knowledge of the management system to be re- assessed,
- ✓ the General Regulations valid at the date of the renewal proposal are applicable.

The renewal process must be performed before the certificate's expiration date. Beyond this date, a temporary certificate cannot be issued, but VINÇOTTE nv can create a written confirmation that the renewal process is ongoing, if the renewal contract has been signed and the audit dates are determined.

If the audit cannot be scheduled before the certificate's expiration date, a renewal audit cannot be performed and the subsequent audit is considered as a new initial certification audit. A new quotation will be prepared and the audit time duration will be reassessed.

The certificate is then issued for 3 years from the new decision date (after the audit) and a new registration number is allocated.If the audit team has reported major non-conformities, the implementation of corrections and corrective actions has to be verified prior to the expiration date of the certificate.

In the case of renewal of a certificate previously issued by another certification body, the "Renewal" status may be maintained after a "transfer procedure" similar to that described in section 8.4.

Note: For IATF 16949: The recertification audit shall be planned and executed according the rules. (latest edition)

8. SPECIFIC CASES

In addition to the standard certification program described above, special cases can also be accommodated. The most common examples are detailed below. The Certification Committee may be requested to take a decision.

8.1. Change to the certification

A Certified Organisation may request that modified activities be covered by its current certificate (see also section 5.3.3.). This request may involve new products, services, activities or sites or another reference standard. See section 6 for the applicable procedure.

In such a case, a specific program is developed, taking the nature of the request into account. In principle, the program is limited to the Certified Organisation's new activities.

If the modification is granted, either the initial certificate is adapted to the new situation or it is withdrawn and replaced by a new certificate with new conditions, or an additional certificate is established. The certification surveillance program is modified accordingly.

8.2. Combined certification

Upon request, VINÇOTTE nv may certify the management system for several reference standards and/or compliance with a regulation/directive at the same time if this is practically feasible.

The intention of combined certification is to examine the common parts for the different systems, thus potentially saving time and resources.

The specific parts of every management system are examined separately in conformance with the requirements of the different reference standards (see section 3).

Note: For IATF 16949: combined audits are not permitted

8.3. Joined certification

Upon request, VINÇOTTE nv may organize the certification of multiple Organisations belonging to the same group with or without the co-operation of its approved partners (IQNet network) and this on a global scale.

In such a case, VINÇOTTE nv issues one single or multiple certificates. Besides, some or all of the certificates may be issued by the approved partners.

8.4. Transfer of certificates

Upon the Certified Organisation's request wishing to transfer a certificate issued by another certification body to VINÇOTTE nv, VINÇOTTE nv may, under certain conditions, issue a certificate based on previous audit results and take over the certification programs.

The original certificate and the latest audit reports are examined and assessed, including the status of outstanding non-conformities, as well as complaints and actions taken.
The results of this Transfer Review are submitted to the Certification Committee, which grants (or not) a certificate, expiring on the same date as the original certificate.

The Certification Committee decides about potential additional actions (preliminary audit, etc.) and defines the new surveillance program (or confirms the original one).

Note: For some reference standards (e.g. IATF 16949), a transfer is not possible during the 3-year validity period of a certificate. A new certification audit is required if an Organisation wishes to change its certification body. However, this audit may be considered as a renewal if a transfer review, as presented above (and in section 7.12), is performed. Prior to the start of a transfer audit, VINÇOTTE nv must have written approval from the Supervisory Office.

9. USE OF THE CERTIFICATE AND THE REGISTRATION LOGO

The Certified Organisation may:

- ✓ display, reproduce and issue copies of the certificate (additional originals are available from VINÇOTTE nv),
- ✓ disclose only full copies of the audit reports to any third party,
- ✓ reproduce the VINÇOTTE nv registration logo referring to the applicable normative document, but only on correspondence, promotional documentation, advertising documentation (including websites) and company vehicles. In this case, the following conditions apply.
  - The registration logo will always be used together with the name of the certified Organisation.
  - The logo will never be associated with activities that are not mentioned in the scope of certification, or with products or services in such a way that the impression might exist that the latter are certified by VINÇOTTE nv themselves.
  - Therefore, the logo may not be applied on the product itself or on its direct packaging.
  - The registration logo will only be related to activities, products or services covered by the relevant certificate. The Certified Organisation will identify the activities, goods or services to which the certificate applies when the use of the logo might lead to confusion.
  - The Certified Organisation discontinues any use of the logo, deemed unacceptable by VINÇOTTE nv and any form of declaration relating to the authority of the Certified Organisation for the use of the logo, which VINÇOTTE nv might deem to be misleading.
  - Upon termination of the certification for whatever reason (expiration of the validity period, withdrawal notified by VINÇOTTE nv, etc.), the Certified Organisation undertakes to discontinue all use of the logo immediately, and destroy the stock of any

material on which it appears.

- In the case of scope modification (extension or decrease) of the certification, the Certified Organisation commits to use the new certificate issued and/or the modified logo.
- The registration logo may be printed in black or in blue (quadrichromatic 100% CYAN or trichromatic PANTONE/ Process blue). The use of any other colour must be requested in writing and addressed to the Certification Committee.
- For SCC and SCT, use the corresponding logo.
- For IATF 16949, the IATF logo may appear only on the IATF 16949 certificate.
- For EMAS, only the logo delivered by the competent body may be used. The logo should be used in combination with the body's registration number.

10. CERTIFICATE SUSPENSION OR WITHDRAWAL

Suspension is only applicable for IATF certificates. IATF certificates can be suspended for the following reasons:

- ✓ Performance complaint from an IATF OEM member against the IATF certified organisation
- ✓ An IATF OEM member has placed the IATF certified organisation under special status condition
- ✓ A follow-up or recertification audit ends with important non conformities
- ✓ On voluntary request by the client
- ✓ Surveillance overdue
- ✓ Information missing to draw up an effective audit plan

The suspended certificates remain valid during the suspension.
The suspension period takes maximum 90 days. During this period a special shall be carried out. Depending of the results of this special audit, the certificate will be reinstated or withdrawn.

A certificate may be withdrawn by VINÇOTTE nv only in the following cases:

- ✓ The Certified Organisation introduces a written request to VINÇOTTE nv,
- ✓ The Certified Organisation does not abide by the applicable General Regulations,
- ✓ The Lead Auditor's recommendation.

Only VINÇOTTE nv's Certification Committee has the authority to withdraw a certificate.

A withdrawal is notified to the Certified Organisation concerned by registered mail and is signed by the chairman of the Certification Committee.

All original certificates should be returned to VINÇOTTE nv.

11. APPEALS AND APPEAL PROCEDURE

Any party concerned may object to a decision made by the Certification Committee. To be considered, all objections must be sent to VINÇOTTE nv by registered mail. The Certification Committee's decision remains valid during the appeal procedure.

Objections are handled by the Appeals Committee.

The Appeals Committee is composed of the VINÇOTTE nv Director and invariably includes an external member of the impartiality Committee.

In the event of an appeal involving the certification of a safety management system, a representative of the College of Experts is invited to sit on the Appeals Committee.

The composition of the Appeals Committee will be communicated to the appellant, who has the right to contest it by registered mail within 8 days.

A meeting of the Appeals Committee is called within two weeks of the final agreed constitution of the Committee members. At the meeting, both the appellant and the Certification Committee

will be entitled to be heard in confidence. The Appeals Committee may also hear any other individual who may be relevant to the appeal. Each interviewee will be given one week's notice of the time and place of the meeting.

The Appeals Committee shall release its decision on the appeal within two weeks of the meeting. The decision, taken by majority of the Appeal Committee, as declared by its Chairman, will be final. The appealed decision will stand for the duration of the appeal procedure.

12. CONFIDENTIALITY

All information about the applicants and the Certified Organisations is treated as confidential and measures are taken to restrict access to the certification files.

VINÇOTTE nv commits to not disclosing any confidential information about the applicant or Certified Organisations nor any information collected during the audits, except for the data directly related to the status of the certification (all the data mentioned on the certificate, see section 7.9).

However, VINÇOTTE nv may disclose parts or all of the certification files to the accreditation or notification bodies and to auditors of other certification bodies with which a mutual recognition agreement of certificates is sought or is in effect.

Where appropriate, the Organisations accept the presence of representatives of the accreditation or notification bodies, or auditors in training.

13. IMPARTIALITY

It is VINÇOTTE nv's policy to conduct all certification activities impartially and that all personnel is free from any external pressure of any nature.

Therefore:

- ✓ VINÇOTTE nv ensures that certification activities are executed in an objective manner without any prejudice.
- ✓ VINÇOTTE nv identifies actual and potential conflicts of interest and actively manages them so that objectivity is guaranteed. If impartiality cannot be guaranteed, VINÇOTTE nv will refuse the certification assignment.
- ✓ VINÇOTTE nv ensures that its personnel is independent with regard to any other organisation or person with an interest in the result of certification activities.
- ✓ VINÇOTTE nv is aware of the responsibility and liability associated with certification activities, the decisions taken and the statements and certificates delivered.

To ensure auditor impartiality, an auditor cannot be assigned to and participate in the certification process if there has been any relationship of any kind (consulting, internal audit services, in-house training, employment, financial, personal, first or second degree family) between an audit team member and the applicant within the last 2 years.

The certification commission acts as an independent and autonomous body ensuring that the decision makers are not the same as the ones that have carried out the certification activities.

VINÇOTTE nv has also installed a Committee for Impartiality. This committee's objectives are:

- ✓ Supervise the certification policy with respect to impartiality,
- ✓ Ensure the certification schemes are impartial, transparent and objective,
- ✓ Issue opinions and recommendations through examining certification files,
- ✓ Conduct a review of the impartiality of the audit, certification and decision making processes and of the financial independence. For that reason, the Committee members have access to all the necessary information.
- ✓ Take any steps deemed necessary, such as notifying the accreditation bodies when its recommendations are not acted upon.
- ✓ Discuss and approve:
  - certification, validation and verification rules,
  - template contractual documents,

- the Management System Manual,
- the qualification criteria for auditors and technical experts.
- the technical basis for granting certification (Product and Personnel Certification)

Committee members are appointed by specific bodies representing a variety of sectors for which VINÇOTTE nv has obtained accreditation.

14. LANGUAGES

VINÇOTTE nv normally operates in French, Dutch, German and English. Audits may be conducted in any other language by mutual agreement.

The language(s) to be used during the audit as well as the language of the report will be defined by the Applicant at the time of contract acceptance. If the chosen language for the report is not one of the 4 languages mentioned above, a translation will be provided in one of them (bilingual report). The certificate may be issued in any language by mutual agreement.

15. CERTIFICATION FEES

The certification fees fixed by VINÇOTTE nv are defined in lump sums and a set of daily and hourly rates.

The sums notably cover:

- ✓ the audit preparation and documentation review (section 7.1. to 7.2.)
- ✓ the certification audit and report (section 7.3 to 7.6.)
- ✓ the certification, registration and publication (section 7.6. to 7.10.)
- ✓ the certification surveillance program (section 7.11.)

The sums are defined on the basis of the certification model chosen such that the auditing times depend in particular on the size of the Organisation, her complexity, ... Account can be taken of any existing certification or previous review of the management system by VINÇOTTE nv.

A sum is fixed per certificate for certification, registration and publication. All sums are invoiced after completion of the corresponding certification phase (generally after sending the report to the Organisation).

Supplemental activities, not chargeable to VINÇOTTE nv such as re-review of the documentation, re- audit, additional performances as described in section 7.11., etc. are invoiced at the daily and hourly rates (based on the same principles as the standard costs).

16. REFERENCE STANDARDS CHANGES

When a revised reference standard or normative document is published, a transition period is defined in compliance with the criteria defined by the competent authorities in the matter: ISO, IAF, CEN, EA, BELAC, IATF, National or European Authorities, Colleges van Deskundigen. During this period, Applicants and Certified Organisations will have the choice between the previous or revised version of the normative document. Beyond this period, the latest edition will apply for the purpose of assessing conformity and preparing certificates.

Non-conformities against the new version of the standard will first be noted as remarks and will be written as Corrective Action Requests only after the transition period.

17. LOSS OF ACCREDITATION

VINÇOTTE nv is overseen by one or more accreditation bodies and takes all the necessary measure to maintain the accreditations that have been awarded. Should VINÇOTTE nv lose all or part of an accreditation for a reference standard (for a specific sector, for example), all the relevant contractual obligations with the applicants are immediately terminated and dissolved.

18. APPLICABLE LAW & DISPUTES

The current general regulations are governed by Belgian law.
Subsequent to an attempt to reach an amicable settlement, any dispute about the validity, interpretation and implementation of the regulation shall be judged by the Brussels first court of instance.