



TRA SPM – Revision 0.2¹

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Safety Provisional Measures ^{2 3}

1 Object

As an accredited product certification body according to ISO 17065 and notified body for CE-marking, OCAB-OCBS is led to conduct audits including the physical presence of auditors in the premises of the certified companies. This involves in many cases travels using public transportation means such as airplane, train or taxi. The object of the present document is to define objective and non-discriminatory provisional measures with the aim to tackle the potential or actual short- and long-term risks that an auditor may face while executing such a task including the risk of pandemic. Because of the adoption of provisional measures, OCAB-OCBS may face induced risks that are obviously also identified and tackled.

2 Risks

The risks are distinguished between the risks for persons and the risks for the validity of a certification.

2.1 Risks involving the personal integrity of an auditor

The following non-exhaustive risks are identified:

- Situation of armed conflict or terrorism
- Critical environmental conditions (earthquake, storm, hurricane, ...)
- Critical political situation jeopardizing basic human rights
- Epidemic dramatic or unexpected situation
- ...

Those risks are not only to be considered in the location of the audit but also along the areas covered to reach the location of the audit (risks linked to travels).

¹ Horizontal document emitted initially under the frame of daily management of critical matters and later transduced in an application document endorsed by the Board of Directors as revision 0. As far as necessary, mandatory changes to this document that would be needed under the frame of daily management would be edited immediately. The revision indexes (initially negative) confirm the previous and present status and trace the following updates of that document implemented to answer the questions of the auditors and to include gained experience, a positive revision index with decimals indicates changes induced by daily management duties.

² The present document must be applied by taking account of the indications of documents IAF-MD4 and IAF-ID3 (appendixes 5.35 and 5.37 on OCAB-OCBS website and attached to the present document) with particular attention devoted to Risk Management.

³ Table of contents at the end of the document

2.2 Risks involving the personal integrity of audited persons

The following risk is identified:

- Risk induced by the physical presence of an auditor who would be infected.

2.3 Risks involving the validity of a certification

The following non-exhaustive risks are identified:

- Risk to maintain a certification without any possible physical auditing for a given period
- Risk to maintain a certification without any possible auditing for a given period
- Risk to extend an existing certification without any physical dedicated auditing
- Risk to grant a certification without any physical dedicated auditing.

3 Responsibility of OCAB-OCBS

It is to be recalled that the auditors acting for OCAB-OCBS are for most of them employees of accredited inspection bodies and for some of them free-lance persons.

OCAB-OCBS can in no way impose an auditor to assume those risks and therefore cannot impose an auditor or his company to execute such an audit.

OCAB-OCBS can in no way restrict any legal right to an auditor or an independent company to assume risks deemed acceptable.

OCAB-OCBS is fully responsible to respect the Belgian laws and any legal decision adopted by Belgian public authorities.

OCAB-OCBS is aware that when an auditor is present in any territory, that auditor is bound by the legal terms in force in the visited country.

Consequently, OCAB-OCBS does and will assume these responsibilities.

OCAB-OCBS cannot assume any responsibility when anyone of the auditors acting on her behalf is **aware** of his illness and the inherent risks thereof. A clear distinction is to be made regarding that risk as far as it occurs in:

- either normal sanitary situations, which clearly identify the personal responsibility of the auditor
- or exceptional unsanitary situations (pandemical, e.g.) which require a mutual adoption of safety protection measures by any person accepting to meet another person.

OCAB-OCBS is in no way obliged to maintain an existing certification, to extend an existing certification or to grant a new certification when the necessary and sufficient conditions to maintain or extend that certification or to grant the certification are not met or liable to be met.

Consequently, OCAB-OCBS does and will apply these rules and principles.

4 Consequences for the certified companies

4.1 Conceptual consequences

The consequence for the certified companies faced with the above-mentioned risks is that no physical audit is liable to take place during a given short or long duration.

Taking account that depending on the type of certification the periodicity of audits lies between three⁴ months to one year, the following distinction is made:

- Short duration, less than the applicable periodicity **plus one month**
- Long duration, in other cases.

For short durations, the consequence for the concerned company is that the audit which could not be made is simply delayed and executed as soon as possible. That audit can in no way replace other future audits that have to be done on a regular basis.

For long durations, the following provisional measures are adopted and defined in the following chapter.

4.2 Practical consequences

In concrete words, that means that if the physical audit of a given period has not yet been executed, the provisional safety measures apply one month after the end of the concerned period.

5 Provisional measures

5.1 Basic principles underlying the application of provisional measures

For obvious reasons of impartiality and non-discrimination and subject to a risk analysis for the continuation of the certification **under conditions of provisional measures**, OCAB-OCBS considers

1. not having the right to immediately suspend or withdraw an actual certification
2. not having the right to suspend or suppress any control foreseen by the certification scheme
3. not having the mandatory duty to extend an existing certification
4. not having the mandatory duty to initiate a new certification.

Therefore, the provisional measures are designed to execute all controls on a remote basis and on a reinforced way, dictated by the physical absence of the auditor⁵.

5.2 Basic means for the application of provisional measures

The application of provisional measures is based on remote auditing by means of ICT⁶ ensuring acoustic and visual exchanges between the auditor and the to be audited persons with the full capacity to visualize documents, products, production lines, stocks with identification labels and test equipment. As

⁴ Possibly one or two months

⁵ Regarding items 3 and 4 relating to the initiation or the extension of a certification, the rules of chapter 7 are also applicable.

⁶ Information and Communication Technology

far as the comprehensive visualization of documents might be altered, the auditor is entitled to request the submission by suitable electronic transfer of whole or part of concerned documents.

As far as necessary, it is recalled that confidentiality of all information collected by OCAB-OCBS in the frame of inspection and certification activities is ruled and managed by the ISO 17065 accredited system to protect among others the certified manufacturers and the natural persons⁷. As a consequence, the auditor of OCAB-OCBS does not record under vocal or image forms of all or parts of the audit. At the request of the manufacturer who would deem it necessary or as agreed with the manufacturer, the auditor of OCAB-OCBS may take a print screen showing specific necessary information to be published in the audit report only (for example photographs of identified specimens tested or to be tested).

5.3 Applicable dispositions

The following rules are of application for products covered by a certification granted by OCAB-OCBS. In all cases, the reports shall clearly mention that the concerned periodic control was made using Information and Communication Technology (ICT). The report will include in appendix relevant extracts of all received documents. The report must be established account being taken of the use of ICT. The report must describe for each action the type of ICT. This remote audit is to be regarded as one official audit replacing in situ visit and must thus be invoiced with the real costs. As part of the necessary tasks involved by the ISO 17065 accreditation, among others those of risk management, the Quality Manager of OCAB-OCBS is entitled to control the right application of the remote auditing through a direct participation to these audits or any relevant assessment.

5.4 Minimum duties requested from BENOR, OCAB-OCBS and CE certified companies

This implies in any circumstances that a company faced with the application of provisional measures must provide appropriate visual means to let the auditor remotely:

- a. visualize the relevant documents object of the concerned certification
- b. visualize and identify the batches of steel object of the concerned certification
- c. visualize and identify the sampling of specimens concerned by the certification
- d. visualize and identify the complete testing of the specimens concerned by the certification
- e. Interruptions in those processes may lead to the cancellation of the remote audit.

In case items a to d should not be feasible, the auditor is committed to declare that the remote audit is not feasible and immediately warn OCAB-OCBS of that situation that will lead at least to the suspension of an existing certification. In case item e occurs in a repeated or systematic way, the auditor must inform OCAB-OCBS.

⁷ The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR): Regulation (EU) 2016/679 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data.

5.4.1 Requirements for BENOR, OCAB-OCBS and CE certified companies which temporarily stopped production or deliveries

In all circumstances, a company that⁸ is led either to stop production or to suspend deliveries of products certified by OCAB-OCBS, must emit a signed document clearly stating both the potential dates of:

- Effective interruption of production / Effective interruption of deliveries
- Expected restart of production / Expected restart of deliveries.

In such a situation, OCAB-OCBS shall publish that the company decided a voluntary temporary suspension of its certification and the physical audits will be suspended for the applicable period.

5.4.2 BENOR or OCAB-OCBS certified company

5.4.2.1 Duties of the company

1. Acceptance of remote audit by ICT according to the rules applicable to physical audits and at the requested periodicity.
2. On request of the auditor and when relevant to the type of certification
 - a. Monthly transmission to the auditor presently in charge
 - i. of the whole sets of the individual results of the internal controls (mechanical and geometrical) carried out on all certified products,
 - ii. of the statistical evaluation of those internal controls.
 - b. Immediate information, explanation and demand for authorization about the possible need to deliver BENOR products outside Belgium.
 - c. Weekly information of any delivery made towards Belgium. (Only for foreign companies)
 - d. Weekly information of any prior authorized delivery made outside Belgium.
 - e. Following the frequencies in the TRA and according to the indications of the auditor, sampling of duplicate specimens
 - i. The first one (referred to the unit of autocontrol) being tested in the internal laboratory of the company,
 - ii. The second one to be kept by the company and let to the disposal of the auditor for possible further testing (e.g., random testing during a next physical audit).
3. According to the indications of the auditor, sampling of triplicate specimens for yearly paired comparisons with a control laboratory with all relevant information (this is only considered in case of exceptional long duration of these safety provisional measures).
 - a. The first one being tested in the internal laboratory of the company,
 - b. The second one to be sent to a control laboratory listed in document 503a with the request that the results be sent to the auditor,

⁸ because of unexpected sudden events subject of the present document

- c. The third one to be kept by the company and let to the disposal of the auditor for possible further testing (e.g., random testing during a next physical audit or sending to a control laboratory).
4. Authorization by the company (foreign company only) to allow sampling on any delivery provided in Belgium at the time of their arrival on the Belgian territory. The choice of the control laboratory will be made by OCAB-OCBS, the cost of the samplings and tests will be charged to the company. If practically possible, the paired comparisons with a control laboratory should preferably take place in this way. The objective reasons of this sampling will be communicated to the company⁹.
5. If authorized for deliveries outside Belgium, confirmation by the company to her customer to perform (under request of OCAB-OCBS) sampling on any delivery provided outside Belgium at the time of their arrival on the concerned territory and sending of these specimens to the control laboratory designated by OCAB-OCBS, the cost of the tests will be charged to the company. If practically possible, the paired comparisons with a control laboratory should preferably take place in this way. The objective reasons of this sampling will be communicated to the company¹⁰.

5.4.2.2 Consequent duties of the auditor and of OCAB-OCBS

1. Obligation to perform remote audit by ICT according to the rules applicable to physical audits and at the requested periodicity
2. Applications of relevant items listed in the preceding chapter over the duties of the company.

5.4.3 CE certified company

5.4.3.1 Duties of the company

1. Acceptance of remote audit by ICT according to all the rules applicable to physical audits and at the requested periodicity and this according to document NB-CPR 20/852r3¹¹¹².

5.4.3.2 Consequent duties of the auditor and of OCAB-OCBS

1. Obligation to perform remote audit by ICT according to the rules applicable to physical audits and at the requested periodicity.

⁹ e.g., and non-exhaustively listed: lack of credibility of some aspects of remote control, doubts on deliveries, ...

¹⁰ e.g., and non-exhaustively listed: lack of credibility of remote control, impossibility to execute remote control, doubts on deliveries, ...

¹¹ Approved Guidance Position Paper: Maintaining CPR certificates under the COVID-19, issued: 10 December 2020 [www.ocabs.com/NBCPR852.pdf]

¹² As per page 5 of 8 of document NB-CPR 20/852r3:

A notified certification body with the capability of conducting remote auditing to IAF MD 4 may apply remote auditing techniques as (part of) the additional AVCP activities. However, physical on-site audit/inspection shall be carried out when it becomes possible.

6 Decision of application of provisional measures

The decision to apply provisional measures is analyzed and decided by OCAB-OCBS according to the criteria listed in chapter 2 (the occurrence of any eligible criterion must be confirmed either by the Belgian governmental Authorities or by any credible public information).

The decision is communicated to the concerned company who is invited to officially accept it, otherwise article 9 applies.

7 Initiation or extension of a certification

The possibility described hereunder is given.

A company faced with the application of provisional measures and wishing to initiate or extend a certification must first officially accept the application thereof as described above.

As far as remote audit might be proposed by OCAB-OCBS, the company must then provide appropriate visual means to let the auditor remotely:

1. visualize and identify the batches of steel requested to be presented for initial testing
2. visualize and identify the sampling of specimens out of those batches of steel requested to be submitted to initial testing
3. visualize and identify the complete testing of the specimens to be submitted to initial testing.
4. For BENOR certification, achieve the full steps requested for paired comparison on specimens sampled in triplicate including the sending to a control laboratory.
5. For CE certification, achieve the full steps requested by the AVCP¹³ system in force including the full visualization of documents, manufacturing and testing equipment, relevant personnel, relevant products. For AVCP systems 1 or 1+, provide specimens of the production to a Belgian location defined by OCAB-OCBS or the auditor where such specimens can be physically observed and possibly assessed.
6. For OCAB-OCBS certification, achieve the full steps requested by the certification system in force including the full visualization of documents, manufacturing and testing equipment, relevant personnel, relevant products.

In case item 3 should not be feasible and previously declared so, the option is given to the producer to proceed as follows:

- a) apply item 2 and **sample specimens in triplicate**,
- b) select specimen 1 of each triplicate for immediate testing in the premises of the company,
- c) select specimen 2 of each triplicate for immediately sending
 - I. either to a control laboratory listed in document 503a and request for testing by the control laboratory and directly sending the results to the auditor
 - II. or to a location in Belgium defined by the auditor where the specimens may be physically observed and assessed.

¹³ Assessment and Verification of Constancy of Performance

- d) select specimen 3 of each triplicate be to be kept by the company and let to the disposal of the auditor for possible further testing,
- e) send the results of the tests performed by the company to the auditor as soon as possible and **in all cases sooner than the date of receiving the test results from the control laboratory.**

When all the results are available, the auditor establishes his audit report with his recommendations:

- either to valorize the available results for a future final decision,
- or to propose a final decision.

The report is sent to the relevant Technical Bureau of OCAB-OCBS for advice and agreement for the report to be submitted to the further approval and decision of the Certification Committee of OCAB-OCBS.

8 Duration

The maximum duration of the application of provisional measures is fixed at 19 months unless exceptional circumstances forcing a longer duration.

9 Termination

In case of no application by refusal of the company or occurrence of maximum duration, the certification is suspended for a maximum duration of two years and then if not reactivated under normal circumstances withdrawn.

10 History of revisions

10.1 Revision -1, initial document [issued: 20200308]

10.2 Revision -0,9, precisions concerning the deadlines for conducting audits and the content of the reports [issued: 20200410]

10.3 Revision 0, rules for possibilities of extension of certification [issued: 20200612]

10.4 Revision 0,1, inclusion of reference to document IAF-ID3, increased highlight on risk assessment, inclusion of practical experience on remote auditing by ITC in applicable practices [issued: 20201026]

10.5 Revision 0,2, reference to document NB-CPR 20/852r3, extension of possible duration of provisional measures to 19 months, precision on some specific items, confirmation of confidentiality [issued 20210111]

11 Table of contents

Safety Provisional Measures	1
1 Object	1

2	Risks.....	1
2.1	Risks involving the personal integrity of an auditor	1
2.2	Risks involving the personal integrity of audited persons	2
2.3	Risks involving the validity of a certification	2
3	Responsibility of OCAB-OCBS	2
4	Consequences for the certified companies.....	3
4.1	Conceptual consequences	3
4.2	Practical consequences.....	3
5	Provisional measures	3
5.1	Basic principles underlying the application of provisional measures	3
5.2	Basic means for the application of provisional measures	3
5.3	Applicable dispositions	4
5.4	Minimum duties requested from BENOR, OCAB-OCBS and CE certified companies	4
5.4.1	Requirements for BENOR, OCAB-OCBS and CE certified companies which temporarily stopped production or deliveries	5
5.4.2	BENOR or OCAB-OCBS certified company.....	5
5.4.3	CE certified company	6
6	Decision of application of provisional measures	7
7	Initiation or extension of a certification	7
8	Duration.....	8
9	Termination	8
10	History of revisions	8
10.1	Revision -1, initial document [issued: 20200308].....	8
10.2	Revision -0,9, precisions concerning the deadlines for conducting audits and the content of the reports [issued: 20200410]	8
10.3	Revision 0, rules for possibilities of extension of certification [issued: 20200612].....	8
10.4	Revision 0,1, inclusion of reference to document IAF-ID3, increased highlight on risk assessment, inclusion of practical experience on remote auditing by ITC in applicable practices [issued: 20201026].....	8
10.5	Revision 0,2, reference to document NB-CPR 20/852r3, extension of possible duration of provisional measures to 19 months, precision on some specific items, confirmation of confidentiality [issued 20210111].....	8
11	Table of contents	8