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FUNCTION: CERTIFICATION UNIT	ISSUE No: 01 TITLE: INFORMATION EXCHANGE AND PUBLICITY

Botswana Bureau of Standards




BOBS/MS/01/POL9

Policy on Information Exchange and Publicity

Approved By: 

M. B. Marobela
 Deputy Managing Director

2008/08/29
 Date of Approval (YY/MM/DD)

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0.0 Introduction

This document defines how and what type of information can be made available to the Clients and other interested parties. It also describes how information can be exchanged between BOBS, the Client and the general public.


1.0 General information on the Certification Requirement and Process

- The BOBS Management Systems Certification Scheme [\[BOBS/MSC/02\]](#) has been formulated to provide general guidance to Clients on how to obtain Management Systems Certification. It describes the audit and certification process through procedure [MSC/PROC06](#) which details how each step of the audit is planned and scheduled in cooperation with the Client.
- The Scheme makes reference to the following Policies and Procedures which give detailed descriptions to both potential and existing Clients on matters related to the certification activity including: conditions for initial and continuing certification, requirements and process of certification, resolution of complaints, use of subcontractors, certification fees, and making reference to the certification:
 - a) Procedure for Management System Certification Process [\[MSC/PROC06\]](#)
 - b) Policy on Confidentiality [\[BOBS/MSC/01/POL2\]](#)
 - c) Policy on Surveillance, Re-Certification and Special Audits [\[BOBS/MSC/01/POL4\]](#)
 - d) Policy on Handling Nonconformities [\[BOBS/MSC/01/POL5\]](#)
 - e) Policy on Use of Certification Licence and Certification Logo [\[BOBS/MSC/01/POL6\]](#)
 - f) Policy on Suspension/Termination/Annulment of Certification [\[BOBS/MSC/01/POL7\]](#)
 - g) Policy on Handling Complaints/Appeals/Disputes [\[BOBS/MSC/01/POL8\]](#)
 - h) Policy on Certification Fees and Terms of Payment [\[BOBS/MSC/01/POL10\]](#)
 - i) Policy on Outsourcing of Audits [\[BOBS/MSC/01/POL11\]](#).
- All Procedures and Policies are easily accessible on the BOBS website, or shall be made available to the Client on request.

2.0 Notice of changes

- BOBS shall communicate the effective date of changes to a standard to all Clients to allow them adequate time to implement the changes. The source of change can relate to a new standard or new applications. BOBS shall verify that each Client has carried out the necessary adjustments to its procedures within such time as, in the opinion of BOBS, is reasonable.
- The Client is obliged to notify BOBS without delay of any changes that may influence the management system. This applies in particular to the purchase/sale of parts of the company, change in ownership, change in management, changes in the areas of operation including contact address and sites, or fundamental alterations in processes. The Client shall submit to BOBS records of any such changes/amendments. (BOBS reserves the right to make a special visit to assess changes to the system which, in the opinion of BOBS, could significantly affect conformity with the standard).

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3.0 Register of Certified Organizations

- BOBS shall maintain and make publicly accessible, or provide upon request, by any means it chooses, a register of Clients holding valid certification licences. The register shall contain as a minimum the name, location and scope of certification for each Client. BOBS shall make this register available to interested persons or organizations.
- BOBS shall also make publicly accessible information about certifications suspended or terminated.
- All information publicised by BOBS shall always be accurate and not misleading.
- Upon request by any party, BOBS shall provide the means to confirm the validity of a given certification.

4.0 Confidentiality and Data Protection:

- BOBS shall inform the Client, in advance, of the information it intends to place in the public domain.
- BOBS commits itself to confidentiality concerning all information available to it in the context of its activities on the Client's premises, whether this information relates to internal matters of the Client or to its business relations. This also applies to verbal or written results of the audit. BOBS shall not disclose the Client's confidential information, trade secrets or processing procedures to any third party (unless required to do so by Law).
- Where BOBS is required by Law to release confidential information to a third party, the Client shall be notified in advance.
- BOBS shall allow access to both its own documents and client-related data to Accreditation Authorities and Agreement group of a peer assessment scheme, as relevant. When confidential information is made available to such other bodies, BOBS shall inform the Client of this action.