

- 1.0 TITLE:** Suspending, Withdrawing, Revoking or Reducing the Scope of Certification
- 2.0 PURPOSE:** To provide specific instructions and guidelines on Suspending, Withdrawing, or Reducing the Scope of Certification
- 3.0 RESPONSIBILITY:** The President, Certification Committee, and GMCS personnel are responsible for following this procedure.
- 4.0 SCOPE:** This Procedure applies to any GMCS client whose certification may be considered for suspension, withdrawal, or scope reduction.
- 5.0 QUALITY OBJECTIVE:** None.
- 6.0 REFERENCE DOCUMENTS:** ISO 17021
- 7.0 PROCEDURE:**

A. Suspension-GMCS may suspend a client's certification if any one or more of the following should occur:

- The client's certified management system has persistently or seriously failed to meet certification requirements, including requirements for the effectiveness of the management system;
- The client fails to adequately and timely address nonconformances issued by GMCS or a previous Certification Body.
- The certified client does not allow surveillance or recertification audits to be conducted at the required frequencies and/or deadlines;
- The client does not timely issuance a purchase order, contract, or fails to exercise an option year on a contract for a required audit or service.
- The certified client has voluntarily requested suspension.
- The certified client has failed to remit timely and complete payment for services to GMCS.
- The certified client or its personnel has engaged in any act during the course of conducting its business that would damage, harm, or threaten to damage or to harm GMCS and its reputation including, but not limited to, lies, fraud, theft, general criminal activity, negligence, and malfeasance.

Government and Military Certification Systems, Inc.

- The client redefines the scope of their management system ignoring statutory and regulatory requirements and laws and/or the requirements contained in a management system standard.
- GMCS receives multiple complaints about the client which GMCS at its sole discretion determines are legitimate.

The President of GMCS is responsible for deciding whether a certified client's certification will be suspended. If suspension is determined to be necessary, the President is responsible for notifying the certified client in writing of the suspension, the reason(s) for the suspension, and clearly indicating that while the client's certification is suspended their certification is temporarily invalid and that the invalid status will be made public on the GMCS web site's Directory of Clients and the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) CertSearch Directory. In addition, the notification will clearly indicate that the client cannot promote or advertise its certification.

GMCS will allow a certified client no more than six (6) months from the date of formal notification of suspension to effectively resolve all causes of suspension before formally withdrawing certification or reducing the scope of certification. The period of suspension shall be stated in the letter of suspension. If the certified client effectively corrects all of the causes of suspension, the suspension will be lifted, and the client will be notified in writing of the suspension being lifted. In the event of non-payment of services, the suspension will last no longer than sixty (60) days before the certificate is revoked.

Any GMCS certified client which is issued one or more MAJOR nonconformances (defined as a systemic failure or a repeat nonconformance which was not effectively corrected) has a certificate which is under the threat of suspension on the day the MAJOR nonconformance(s) is documented. The GMCS Audit Report shall clearly state that this threat of suspension will remain in effect until the client implements the corrective action plan effectively, conducts an internal audit with competent auditors to verify the effectiveness of the corrective action plan implementation, and allows GMCS to conduct a follow-up audit to verify the effectiveness of all of these activities. This entire process must be completed within six (6) months of the last day of the audit which cited the MAJOR nonconformance. The failure to effectively execute all of these activities shall result in a suspension of the client's certificate which shall be publicly posted. During any period when the client's certificate is under the threat of suspension

Government and Military Certification Systems, Inc.

or has been suspended, the client cannot transfer their certificate to another accredited Certification Body.

B. Withdrawal-GMCS may withdraw certification of a certified client if a suspension has not been adequately and/or effectively cured and resolved. A written notice of withdrawal of certification is sent by the GMCS President to the certified client. The Notice includes the reason for withdrawal and a demand to end all advertising, promotion, and reference to the certification issued by GMCS. The Certification Agreement (or equivalent) executed by the certified client and GMCS contains legally enforceable language in this regard. GMCS updates its Directory of Certified Clients and the IAF Certsearch Directory to reflect the withdrawal of certification.

C. Reduction in Scope of Certification-GMCS may reduce the scope of certification to exclude parts not meeting requirements when the certified client has persistently or seriously failed to meet the certification requirements for those parts of the scope of certification. Any such reduction is in line with the requirements of the Standard used for certification. The President will notify the certified client in writing of the reduction in scope of certification, the Directory of Certified Clients and the IAF Certsearch Directory will be updated to reflect the reduced scope, and, if appropriate, a new Certificate of Conformance will be issued reflecting the reduced scope in certification. In addition, a client may request a reduction in the scope of their management system provided that such a reduction complies with all statutory and regulatory requirements and the requirements of the management system standard.

In all cases of certification suspension, withdrawal, or scope reduction, GMCS shall ensure that it updates its Directory of Certified Clients and the IAF Certsearch Directory to reflect the current status of client certification. GMCS shall also provide to any requesting party an accurate and current certification status of any GMCS client.

D. Revocation-A Client's Certificate of Conformance may be revoked if one or more of the following occurs:

- The client's certified management system has persistently or seriously failed to meet certification requirements, including requirements for the effectiveness of the management system and the client has refused to address or has failed to effectively address these issues;

Government and Military Certification Systems, Inc.

- The client fails to adequately and timely address nonconformances issued by GMCS or a previous Certification Body.
- The certified client does not allow surveillance or recertification audits to be conducted at the required frequencies and/or deadlines;
- The certified client has failed to remit timely and complete payment for services to GMCS and ultimately refused to do so or ignored the financial obligation;
- The certified client or its personnel has engaged in any act during the course of conducting its business that would damage, harm, or threaten to damage or to harm GMCS and its reputation, including, but not limited to, lies, fraud, theft, general criminal activity, negligence, and malfeasance.
- The certified client will not respond adequately to GMCS corrective action requests and/or will not allow GMCS to verify the effectiveness of corrective actions taken.
- The client redefines the scope of their management system ignoring statutory and regulatory requirements and laws and/or the requirements contained in a management system standard.
- GMCS receives multiple complaints about the client which GMCS at its sole discretion determines are legitimate.

The President of GMCS is responsible for deciding whether a certified client's certification will be revoked. If revocation is determined to be necessary, the President is responsible for notifying the certified client in writing of the revocation the reason(s) for the revocation, and clearly indicating that after the client's certification is revoked their certification is no longer valid and that the invalid status will be made public in the GMCS Directory of Clients and the IAF Certsearch Directory. In addition, the notification will clearly indicate that the client cannot promote or advertise its certification any longer.

E. Appeals-The client has the right to appeal any decision to suspend or revoke its certificate(s). The suspension or revocation letter sent to the client by GMCS shall explicitly notify the client of its right to appeal such a decision.