Policy for the management of extraordinary event

1 Purpose

Provide guidelines for an appropriate course of action when dealing with extraordinary events that can halt or negatively impact the certification activities of GCA, affects the certification status of its certified clients as well as new clients, and activities of the certified clients.

2 Scope

This procedure can be applied in situation of unforeseen extraordinary events such as pandemic spreads, geographical destabilization, political unrests, wars, liquidation or bankruptcy, disasters such as floods, earthquakes, fires, further refer to 3.1 below. Application of this procedure helps GCA & its client for effective maintenance of accreditation.

3 Definition

3.1 Extraordinary event (EE):

An occurrence beyond the control of the organization, commonly referred to as an "act of God" or "Force Majeure". Examples are earthquakes, tsunami, hurricane, flooding, volcanic eruption, war, strike, riot, political instability, geopolitical tension, terrorism, crime, pandemic, malicious computer hacking, other natural or man-made disasters.

4 Procedures

4.1 Extraordinary events are beyond the control of GCA and its clients; however it is important for GCA as well as for its client(s) to determine the appropriate course of action when responding to the extraordinary event. Note the decision and instruction of the scheme owner shall always be followed, if any.

4.2 An extraordinary event can affect GCA in ways such as:

- Inability to properly communicate with its client, auditors, or any other parties,
- Inability to operate from the offices
- Inability to arrange for audit(s) in timely manner for certified clients as well as those new clients.

4.3 Given the nature of the event and taking risk into account, GCA can prepare an action plan in relation to the activities affected (Type 3 and Type 5 scheme), the action plan could be developed depending case by case at the time of the event to be managed, such as an event of pandemic that could prevent GCA from conducting the planned and due audits for which course of action would depend case by case for each client situation where certain possibilities in the action plan can be considered to ensure certification status of the clients i.e. remote audit, postponement of audit to lateral dates (Note: the decision and instruction of the scheme owner shall be always followed, if any). Where needed a policy statement or notification or advisory as appropriate to the situation at that time can be developed and communicated to the affected clients.

4.4 In case of system down, internet failures, IT issues or the likes, GCA can opt alternate measure to manage the process as adequate, these measures could include offline or manual proceedings or soft/hard applications to ensure managing all the below given situations.

4.5 GCA operations and staff

While it is important for GCA to continue its operations during there is an extraordinary event which halts its operation GCA will review the event and its expected length, develop an action plan accordingly after considering the risk and consequences. GCA staff are vital asset and their wellbeing is always at utmost priority of GCA, to ensure continuation of operations GCA may allow its staff to work remotely from their homes for which an adequate setup and facilitation is arranged, other possibilities could include setting up of temporary office in country.

4.6 GCA's certified clients

4.6.1 GCA notifies its affected clients in relation to the extraordinary event similarly the clients facing any such event are also required to inform GCA on how they plan to carry out its activities that fall under the scope of certification with GCA so appropriate course of action can be determined mutually to ensure integrity of accreditation is maintained.

4.6.2 GCA at all times, ensures safety and wellbeing of its clients, staff, and auditors, the situation of each certified client will be decided case by case considering the nature of EE and its impact (nationally, regionally or globally). In all the cases GCA will follow the travel advisories, local government policies, regional and global measures and those set restriction.

4.6.3 GCA may decide however case by case, the conduct of audit by following means:

- Option A

To conduct the audit: If certified client ensures that the audit team faces no travel or health related restrictions, and that a safe travel route was arranged.

- Option B

To conduct the audits remotely: If the certified client can accommodate to have a remote audit however a remote witness may not be practicable the witness activity may be postponed to later date or next audits as decided by GCA. (For further information please refer to the policy of ICT, GCA/P 02).

- Option C

Postpone the audit: If it is not possible or technically practicable to have a remote audit (e.g. for IT issues or if the employees cannot access their offices), the audit will be postponed for period determined by GCA and the situation revisited before the end of the decided period.

4.7 New applications

GCA can continue to accept new application(s) considering the risk and sighting the expected situation in future thereafter, the steps like application review, appointment audit team, conductance of document review could take reasonable time by which EE might have been resolved to conduct the audit, for those new applications for which the planned audit is affected then the options given under 4.6.3 can be followed case by case. GCA in situation of EE will notify the affected client the possible delays and request him to determine the course of action, if needed.

4.8 GCA's auditors

Our auditors are most valuable resource for GCA, we will make sure that their health and wellbeing are preserved for the audit they would conduct for GCA, as mentioned in 4.6 above, we will try to cover affected audit remotely, and the technical manager will take necessary measures to facilitate your tasks by providing the online meeting platform(s), the coordination with the client to facilitate access to documents and information, the necessary audit time to conduct your audit in the best condition and any other guidance you may need for your mission. Also, auditors are encouraged to inform GCA about any help that GCA can provide them.

5 Identified risk

The following risk matrix is considered

			Probability		
			Low	Medium	High
			1	2	3
Severity	Low	1	1	2	3
	Medium	2	2	4	6
	High	3	3	6	9

Risk Level = Probability x Severity

5.1 Risk affecting the remote audit effectiveness

N	Risk assessment					
	Risk identification		Risk analysis			
	Risk	Description	Existing controls	Level of risk		
				P	S	R.L
1	Remote Audit	Taking sample from the production line will be conducted by the client which can alter the audit objectivity.	"Checklist for determination of remote audit "	1	2	2
2		Veracity and quality of the objective evidence collected may be insufficient. This can alter the audit objectivity.		1	2	2

5.2 Risk affecting the security and confidentiality

N	Risk assessment					
	Risk identification		Risk analysis			
	Risk	Description	Existing controls	Level of risk		
				P	S	R.L
1	Remote Audit	Logging of non-invited personnel to the meeting rooms. Hacking the ICT tool. This can alter the information security, data protection and confidentiality.	GCA will use well reputed and secured program (Google meet). The program setting will be set by GCA to ensure no access for non-invited personnel	1	2	2

5.3 Risk level evaluation

The risk level is low according to the matrix, and it shall be maintained in this level. This evaluation is updated on-going basis.

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ORIGINAL