



## **IAF Policy Document**

# **GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR THE USE OF THE IAF CERTSEARCH MARK**

**Issue 1, Version 2**

**(IAF PL 9:2023)**

The International Accreditation Forum, Inc. (IAF) facilitates trade and supports industry and regulators by operating a worldwide mutual recognition arrangement among Accreditation Bodies (ABs) in order that the results issued by Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs) accredited by IAF members can be accepted globally.

Accreditation reduces risk for business and its customers by assuring them that accredited CABs are competent to carry out the work they undertake within their scope of accreditation. ABs that are members of IAF and their accredited CABs are required to comply with appropriate international standards and IAF mandatory documents for the consistent application of those standards.

ABs that are signatories to the IAF Multilateral Recognition Arrangement (MLA) are evaluated regularly by an appointed team of peers to provide confidence in the operation of their accreditation programs. The structure of the IAF MLA is detailed in IAF PL 3 - Policies and Procedures on the IAF MLA Structure and for Expansion of the Scope of the IAF MLA. The scope of the IAF MLA is detailed in the IAF MLA Status document.

The IAF MLA is structured in five levels: Level 1 specifies mandatory criteria that apply to all ABs, ISO/IEC 17011. The combination of a Level 2 activity(ies) and the corresponding Level 3 normative document(s) is called the main scope of the MLA, and the combination of Level 4 (if applicable) and Level 5 relevant normative documents is called a sub-scope of the MLA.

- The main scope of the MLA includes activities e.g. product certification and associated mandated standards e.g. ISO/IEC 17065. The attestations made by CABs at the main scope level are considered to be equally reliable.
- The sub scope of the MLA includes conformity assessment requirements e.g. ISO 9001 and scheme specific requirements, where applicable, e.g. ISO 22003-1. The attestations made by CABs at the sub scope level are considered to be equivalent.

The IAF MLA delivers the confidence needed for market acceptance of conformity assessment outcomes. An attestation issued, within the scope of the IAF MLA, by a body that is accredited by an IAF MLA signatory AB can be recognized worldwide, thereby facilitating international trade.

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

1. SCOPE ..... 4

2. COPYRIGHT AND DIGITAL MARK ..... 4

3. CONDITIONS OF USE OF THE IAF CERTSEARCH MARK..... 5

    3.1 General..... 5

    3.2 Use of the IAF CERTSEARCH Mark by the Certified Entities ..... 5

    3.3 Use of the IAF CERTSEARCH Mark by the Accredited Certification Bodies. 6

    3.4 Use of the IAF CERTSEARCH Mark by IAF MLA Signatory Accreditation  
    Bodies ..... 8

    3.5 Use of the Generic IAF CERTSEARCH Mark ..... 9

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## **GENERAL PRINCIPLES ON THE USE OF THE IAF CERTSEARCH MARK**

### **1. SCOPE**

1.1 This document describes principles on the use of the IAF CERTSEARCH Mark by:

- a) IAF MLA Signatory Accreditation Bodies under main scope ISO/IEC 17021-1 (IAF MLA Signatory ABs).
- b) CBs accredited by IAF MLA Signatory ABs.
- c) Entities certified by CBs accredited by IAF MLA Signatory ABs.

1.2 This procedure is therefore only applicable to those three groups of organisations identified in 1.1 above and that have agreed to be included in the IAF CERTSEARCH database.

### **2. COPYRIGHT AND DIGITAL MARK**

2.1 The ownership of the IAF CERTSEARCH Mark belongs to the International Accreditation Forum, Inc. (IAF), and IAF is responsible for the worldwide protection of the IAF CERTSEARCH Mark. The IAF CERTSEARCH Mark is a variation of the IAF logo and included under the protection of the IAF logo.

#### **2.2 The “IAF CERTSEARCH MARK”.**



The intent is that the Mark can be presented on the website of:

- a) the Certified Entities which have an active accredited certification from a CB accredited by an IAF MLA Signatory AB on the IAF CERTSEARCH database.
- b) The Certification Body which has an active accreditation for certification of management systems from an IAF MLA Signatory AB on the IAF CERTSEARCH database.
- c) The IAF MLA Signatory ABs which have an active profile on the IAF CERTSEARCH database.

The Mark will respectively digitally link to:

- (i) The status of the certification(s) of the Certified Entity in the IAF CERTSEARCH Database. If the status of the certification is not active the Mark will not display.
- (ii) The status of the accreditation(s) of the Certification Body in the IAF CERTSEARCH database. If the status of the accreditation is not active the Mark will not display.
- (iii) The status of the Accreditation Body in the IAF CERTSEARCH database. If the status is not active the Mark will not display.

### **3. CONDITIONS OF USE OF THE IAF CERTSEARCH MARK**

#### **3.1 General**

3.1.1 The rights derived to use the IAF CERTSEARCH Mark are non-transferrable under any circumstance.

3.1.2 The IAF CERTSEARCH Mark is a digital dynamic mark which can only be used as a digital mark that connects digitally to the IAF CERTSEARCH database.

#### **3.2 Use of the IAF CERTSEARCH Mark by the Certified Entities**

3.2.1 Certified Entities can only use the IAF CERTSEARCH Mark if they have an active accredited certification from a CB who is in the IAF CERTSEARCH database and is accredited by an IAF MLA Signatory AB in the IAF CERTSEARCH database. The Certified Entities must first activate their profile in the IAF CERTSEARCH database and have agreed to the Terms and Conditions of IAF CERTSEARCH and the terms of use of the IAF CERTSEARCH Mark.

3.2.2 The Certified Entity can obtain the web code for their dynamic IAF CERTSEARCH Mark in their personalised dashboard area and insert the web code into their own website. The code will connect to their certification status in the IAF CERTSEARCH database. If the status is active the IAF CERTSEARCH Mark will appear on the Certified Entity website.

3.2.3 The IAF CERTSEARCH Mark shall only appear on the website domain(s), relevant to the certified entity which has been uploaded into the IAF CERTSEARCH database. 'Relevant' means only where the organisation holds an accredited certificate for a specified management system for the services specifically described / promoted and the mark shall not be used in a way which is misleading or may be misinterpreted about the scope of certification.

3.2.4 If the IAF CERTSEARCH Mark is clicked it will direct the user to the validation page of the Certified Entity on IAF CERTSEARCH database where details of the certification(s) will be displayed.

3.2.5 Certified Entities cannot use the IAF CERTSEARCH Mark in isolation from its dynamic code which links to the IAF CERTSEARCH database in real time.

3.2.6 The IAF CERTSEARCH Mark can only be used as a digital mark on the Certified Entity website. It cannot be used as a physical mark on materials such as letter heads, business cards or advertisements.

3.2.7 IAF reserves the right to object to and withdraw the use of the IAF CERTSEARCH Mark.

3.2.8 The Certified Entity acknowledges and agrees that they have no proprietary right, title or interest in the IAF CERTSEARCH Mark.

3.2.9 Any misuse of the IAF CERTSEARCH Mark will be managed by the applicable Certification Body.

### **3.3 Use of the IAF CERTSEARCH Mark by the Accredited Certification Bodies**

3.3.1 The Certification Bodies must first activate their profile in the IAF CERTSEARCH database.

3.3.2 Certification Bodies can only use the IAF CERTSEARCH Mark if they have an active accreditation for certification of management system from an IAF MLA Signatory AB as detailed in the IAF CERTSEARCH database and have agreed to the Terms and Conditions of IAF CERTSEARCH and the terms of use of the IAF CERTSEARCH Mark. The IAF CERTSEARCH Mark will disappear from the CB's website in case of withdrawal of accreditation.

3.3.3 Certification Bodies can obtain the web code for their dynamic IAF CERTSEARCH Mark in their personalised dashboard area and insert the web code into their own website. The code will connect to their Accreditation status in the IAF CERTSEARCH database. If the status is active the IAF CERTSEARCH Mark will appear on the Certification Body's website.

3.3.4 The IAF CERTSEARCH Mark shall only appear on the website domain(s), relevant to the Certification Body accredited by IAF MLA Signatory ABs, which has been uploaded into the IAF CERTSEARCH database. 'Relevant' means only where accredited services are specifically described / promoted and the mark shall not be used in a way which is misleading or may be misinterpreted about the scope of accreditation.

3.3.5 If the IAF CERTSEARCH Mark is clicked it will direct the user to the validation page of the Certification Body on IAF CERTSEARCH where details of their Accreditation(s) will be displayed.

3.3.6 Certification Bodies cannot use the IAF CERTSEARCH Mark in isolation from its dynamic code which links to the IAF CERTSEARCH database in real time.

3.3.7 The IAF CERTSEARCH Mark can only be used as a digital mark on the Certification Body website. It cannot be used as a physical mark on materials such as letter heads, business cards, advertisements or products.

3.3.8 IAF reserves the right to object to and withdraw the use of the IAF CERTSEARCH Mark.

3.3.9 Certification Bodies acknowledge and agree that they have no proprietary right, title or interest in the IAF CERTSEARCH Mark.

3.3.9.1 Certification Bodies shall incorporate to the contractual arrangements with their clients' relevant provisions in 3.2 to assure proper use of IAF CERTSEARCH Mark by them. These provisions shall include that the misuse of IAF CERTSEARCH Mark will initiate suspension of certification.

3.3.9.2 Any misuse of the IAF CERTSEARCH Mark will be managed by the applicable Accreditation Body.

### **3.4 Use of the IAF CERTSEARCH Mark by IAF MLA Signatory Accreditation Bodies**

3.4.1 Accreditation Bodies must first activate their profile in the IAF CERTSEARCH database.

3.4.2 Accreditation Bodies can only use the IAF CERTSEARCH Mark if they are an IAF MLA signatory accreditation body under main scope ISO/IEC 17021-1 as detailed in the IAF CERTSEARCH database and have agreed to the Terms and Conditions of IAF CERTSEARCH and the terms of use of the IAF CERTSEARCH Mark.

3.4.3 The Accreditation Body can obtain the web code for their dynamic IAF CERTSEARCH Mark in their personalised dashboard area and insert the web code into their own website. The code will connect to their IAF MLA Signatory AB status in the IAF CERTSEARCH database. If the status is active the IAF CERTSEARCH Mark will appear on the Accreditation Body website.

3.4.4 The IAF CERTSEARCH Mark shall only appear on the website domain(s), relevant to the Accreditation Body, which has been uploaded into the IAF CERTSEARCH database. 'Relevant' means only where accredited / certified services are specifically described / promoted and the mark shall not be used in a way which is misleading or may be misinterpreted about the scope of accreditation / certification.

3.4.5 If the IAF CERTSEARCH Mark is clicked it will direct the user to the validation page of the Accreditation Body on IAF CERTSEARCH database where details of their IAF MLA Signatory AB status will be displayed.

3.4.6 Accreditation Bodies cannot use the IAF CERTSEARCH Mark in isolation from its dynamic code which links to the IAF CERTSEARCH database in real time.

3.4.7 The IAF CERTSEARCH Mark can only be used as a digital mark on the Accreditation Body website. It cannot be used as a physical mark on materials such as letter heads, business cards, advertisements or products.

3.4.8 IAF reserves the right to object to and withdraw the use of the IAF CERTSEARCH Mark.

3.4.9 The Accreditation Bodies acknowledge and agree that they have no proprietary right, title or interest in the IAF CERTSEARCH Mark.



### **3.5 Use of the Generic IAF CERTSEARCH Mark**



3.5.1 The Generic IAF CERTSEARCH Mark is to be presented on a website which is identifying and informing users about the IAF CERTSEARCH and its purpose: The official IAF CERTSEARCH database where the status of accredited certifications can be validated.

3.5.2 It is to include a hyperlink which links to the home page of the IAF CERTSEARCH website.

3.5.3 The link to be used with the Generic IAF CERTSEARCH Mark is [www.iafcertsearch.org](http://www.iafcertsearch.org).

3.5.4 IAF reserves the right to object to and withdraw the use of the Generic IAF CERTSEARCH Mark.

3.5.5 The users of the Generic IAF CERTSEARCH Mark acknowledge and agree that they have no proprietary right, title or interest in the Generic IAF CERTSEARCH Mark.

3.5.6 For organizations not listed in 1.1 e.g. MoU partners, The Generic IAF CERTSEARCH Mark can only be used if permission has been specifically granted by the IAF Secretary following a submission in writing that includes the details of the intended use.

End of IAF Policy Document on General Principles for the Use of the IAF CERTSEARCH Mark

**Further Information:**

For further Information on this document or other IAF documents, contact any member of IAF or the IAF Secretariat.

For contact details of Members of IAF see the IAF website: <http://www.iaf.nu>

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