

ICV CERTIFICATIONS PVT. LTD.	
Document name	SOP for Safeguarding Impartiality
Document no	ICV /Impartiality/SOP/05
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STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

FOR

Safeguarding Impartiality

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1.0 Purpose of the procedure:

To lay down guidelines for establishment and operation of Committee for Safeguarding Impartiality (CSI), commonly called The Impartiality committee, in accordance with requirements of ISO 17021:2015 standard.

2.0 Scope:

This procedure is applicable to all activities performed by the ICV, in matters related to assessment and certification of client's management system.

3.0 Responsibility:

CEO of ICV and members of the CSI are responsible for effective implementation of this procedure.

4.0 Authority:

This procedure is authorized by the CEO and can be amended only by him.

5.0 Procedure:

5.1 **Objective of the committee:** To ensure complete impartiality in audit and certification related activities performed by ICV .

5.2 **Formation:** To achieve the above objective ICV has established a 5 member "Committee for safeguarding Impartiality". Members of Impartiality committee, are selected from the civil society and are not employee of the ICV . The CEO who is the Secretary/ convener of the committee and a non voting member, implements the decisions of the committee. Presently the members of the Impartiality committee represent following interests.

- a. clients of the certification body
- b. customers of organizations whose management system has been certified
- c. representative of Association of Industries
- d. Representatives of governmental/ Non Governmental organization.
- e. Consumer

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5.3 The members are appointed by the CEO at least for one year. Their tenure may be extended for one or more years as per decision of the CEO. The CEO selects those candidates who have received endorsement (for representing their interest) from their respective organizations.

5.4 The Impartiality Committee meets at least once every 6 months and reviews assessment and certification processes. Those cases where bias is suspected, are investigated in detail. Appropriate action is taken to correct the situation and further management system improvement is done to prevent occurrence of such cases.

Minutes of the meeting is documented and maintained for at least 3 years. The Impartiality committee performs ombudsmen job, and credibility and reputation of the certification body depends on its performance.

Appointment record of members of the impartiality committee is maintained by the ICV .

Ref: Record of appointment of Impartiality committee members and its Head
Record of Meeting Schedule
Record of Minutes of meeting

5.5 Decision making process and authority: For any decision to become effective at least three out of 5 members should support the decision in writing. The CEO of ICV (Non Voting Member) acts as Secretary / convener of the committee and implements decisions taken by the committee. The Impartiality committee members have full authority to ask for any record which might provide information about audit and certification process.

Ref: Record of MOM and decisions taken during the meeting

6.0 Benefits & Compensation: The Chairperson and members of the impartiality committee are not employees of ICV and as such are

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not paid any salary. However they are paid conveyance facility and food & refreshments whenever they come to attend meeting of the Impartiality committee.

7.0 Responsibilities:

- i. To advise and help in development of policies and procedures in order to improve credibility and impartiality of the auditing and certification process.
- ii. To investigate complaints/ appeal related to actual or suspected impartiality and to take appropriate corrective or preventive action.
- iii. In case of suspected breach of impartiality the committee to order in writing to suspend the validity of the issued certificate, pending full investigation. The Impartiality committee to ensure full or partial re audit by some other auditor, and to ensure appropriate evidence based decision by the Technical committee about continuation, withdrawal, or reduction in scope of certificate is taken.
- iv. To gather information from both internal and external sources to reveal any situation known to them that may present them or the certification body with a conflict of interests. To ensure that The certification body use this information as input for identifying threats to impartiality raised by the activities of such personnel or by the organizations that employ them.
- v. To ensure that the certification body does not use personnel, either internal or external, whose background and professional activities cannot demonstrate that there is no conflict of interests.

8.0 Ref: ISO 17021:2015 standard requirements

RECORDS TO BE MAINTAINED
RECORD OF CSI MEMBERS
SCHEDULE OF MEETING

FORM NO **RETENTION PERIOD**
- 3 YEARS
- DO

RECORD OF MOM

-

DO

Verified & approved by CEO

Issued by Technical Director./ M R