December 3, 2025
MEL Council (General Incorporated Association)

Policy on the Handling of Legal and Regulatory Non-Compliance by Certification Applicants

1. Purpose

This Policy establishes the handling of cases in which a violation of applicable laws or regulations is confirmed with respect to a certification applicant (including a certified organization) under the MEL Certification Scheme, and is intended to ensure a fair and consistent response based on ISO/IEC 17065.

2. Definition

For the purposes of this Policy, "violation of laws and regulations" means an act that contravenes domestic or foreign laws or regulations applicable to the operator subject to certification, or that is subject to an administrative disposition.

3. Period Subject to Verification

(1) At the Time of Application

Upon accepting a certification application, the certification body shall verify the eligibility of the applicant organization, referring to publicly available information, media reports, and the operator's own disclosure, among other sources, regarding the presence or absence of any violation of laws and regulations during the preceding one-year period.

(2) At the Initial Audit

In the on-site audit and the document review preceding it, the auditor shall verify, against the requirements of the Standard, whether any violation of laws and regulations occurred during the preceding one-year period. Such verification shall be based on the operator's own disclosure together with external information such as publicly available information and media reports.

(3) At the Annual Audit and the Renewal Audit

The auditor shall verify, against the requirements of the Standard, whether any violation of laws and regulations occurred during the period since the previous audit date. As with the initial audit, this shall be substantiated by cross-checking the operator's own disclosure against external information.

4. Period of Suspension of Eligibility to Apply

(1) Where, in the annual audit, an emergency audit, or the renewal audit, a non-conformity arising from a violation of laws and regulations is discovered and the certification is withdrawn, a period during which acceptance of a new application shall be withheld shall be established, in principle for one year from the date the certification was withdrawn. However, when a re-application is submitted and the effectiveness of the corrective action has been objectively confirmed and deemed appropriate by the Scheme Owner, this period may be shortened, subject to a minimum of 180 days.

(2) Where a violation of laws and regulations is confirmed at the time of an initial application, the certification body shall determine its response, such as rejection of the application or the presentation of conditions required for re-application. A period during which applications shall not be accepted shall be established in the same manner as in the preceding paragraph, with its starting point being the date on which guidance was given by an administrative agency or other authority.

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