



Joint IAF-ISO Communiqué

Transition to ISO/IEC 17021:2011

The International Accreditation Forum (IAF), in consultation with the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), has set the date for implementation of ISO/IEC 17021:2011 as 1 February 2013. This is a two year transition from the date of publication.

ISO/IEC 17021 was revised and published on 1 February 2011. It incorporates new requirements for third-party certification auditing of management systems and the competence of personnel involved in the certification process. It also provides a framework for the further development of competence criteria as deemed appropriate by the relevant ISO Technical Committees.

ISO/IEC 17021:2011 includes the existing text of ISO/IEC 17021:2006 virtually unchanged and contains additional requirements for competence and the audit process and is applicable to the certification of all types of management systems and to the bodies providing these activities.

In setting this transition period of two years from the publication date of ISO/IEC 17021, IAF and ISO have taken into account the following:

- Transition to ISO/IEC 17021 may require translations, changes to procedures, setting up new or amended training regimes, revision of software systems and the implementation of systems to demonstrate competence.
- The identification by certification bodies of differences and the preparation of a transition plan to determine both the changes to their own QMS and the time frame required to execute them.

After publication, any new application for accreditation by certification bodies is expected to be to ISO/IEC 17021:2011. Any statement of conformity to ISO/IEC 17021:2006 after the transition period will no longer be valid.