**PSQCA INSPECTION AGENCY REGISTRATION SCHEME-2013**

0 INTRODUCTIONS

0.1 The PSQCA registration Scheme of Inspection Agencies mandated by the PSQCA Act VI, 1996 Government of Pakistan, Registration and Regulation of Inspection Agencies Rules, 1981(SRO 10 (1)/82.

0.2 Registration has been used for many years as a mean of deciding upon whom to admit to a particular group of equals or peers. PSQCA Inspection Agencies registration is available for all types of tests, calibrations, measurements, inspections and observations which are reproduceale and properly documented.

0.3 PSQCA registration the includes a variety of activities. Inspection includes the examination of materials, products, components, assemblies, cargoes and consignments, usually for compliance with specified criteria. It includes visual examination and associated work, and may be more directly focused on products. PSQCA staff can advise potential applicants of the appropriate field of inspection for the registration of their inspection activities. Inspection Agency which are engaged in testing, measurement or sampling work may apply for Registration for with application alongwith relevant documents required for registration for inspection agency.

**1. SCOPE**

1.1. This document lays down the guidelines for applicants to be registered with PSQCA as per law.

1.2. The registration of inspection agencies under the scheme shall be for each individual site/ branch/ centre/port within the territory of Pakistan.

**2. CRITERIA FOR REGISTRATION**

2.1. The Criteria for Registration under the Scheme has been revised to align it with the revised international standards for ‘Conformity Assessment - Requirements for the

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Operation of various types of Agencies performing inspection and reference to the clauses of the above standard has been given, wherever needed.

**2.2.** The inspection agency seeking registration under the scheme shall either be accredited or shall implement Quality management systems to meet the requirements of inspection agency.

**2.2.1** The inspection agency shall generally not sub-contract any part of its inspection work. In exceptional circumstances it may sub-contract part of its work, provided that the subcontractor meets the requirements as specified in ISO standard above and is recognized under this Scheme, The prior written permission of PSQCA-is required and information may be provided to the client in advance.

**2.2.2** The inspection agency maintain a laboratory within the concerned territory for the scope applied to support its inspection work.

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**3.0. The PSQCA Registration Process (summary)**

3.1. Checklist so the inspection Agencies can perform a self-assessment to verify compliance with all requirements.

3.2. The applicant inspection Agencies completes and returns this full application for registration with payment and all required supporting documentation outlined on Pages 1 to 15.

3.3. The assessor contacts the inspection Agencies to discuss the scheduling of the on-site assessment and request any additional quality documentation that may be needed. Once documentation is reviewed for completeness, the assessor can schedule the assessment*.*

3.4. The assessment or the pre-assessment is performed and includes: entry briefing; review of quality documentation; interviews with technicians; sample handling / demonstrations of inspections; examination of equipment and calibration records; written report of assessor's findings; and exit briefing.

3.5. The inspection Agencies responds to any deficiencies with a written corrective action response.

3.6. The corrective action is reviewed by the PSQCA and, once completes, is forwarded to the Inspection Agencies registration committee.

3.7. Registration is granted when affirmative votes are received, all concerns are resolved, and all fees are paid in full.

3.8. Final Decision will be made by Director General’ PSQCA.

NOTE: All documentation must be provided in English and the assessment conducted in English. An appropriate English translation of pertinent documentation must be provided as well as a translator, if needed, to facilitate the on-site assessment.

**3.1.** In case of any deficiencies, PSQCA may either call for supplementary information or reject the application giving reasons for the same in writing with a copy to concerned PSQCA. The reasons for rejection may be one or more of the following:

 i. The agency is seeking approval for a commodity under its scope, which is not of interest to

 PSQCA at that time,

 ii. The agency doesn’t have adequate technical capability for the scope applied.

 iii. Incomplete Application documents as necessary and non payment of fees,

 iv. Previous performance of agency not satisfactory, in case of renewal application.

 v. Any other reason as deemed fit by PSQCA.

**3.2 Adequacy Audit**

**3.2.1** After the application has been accepted by PSQCA, the application & Quality Manuals submitted by the applicant shall be examined by an Assessor or any suitable person chosen by PSQCA for verifying their adequacy and conformity to the Criteria for Registration.

**3.2.2** Any deficiencies observed during adequacy audit shall be duly communicated to the applicant for taking suitable corrective actions and for submission of appropriate amendments/ clarification/ within a period of 15 days for re-examination. PSQCA shall process the application further, only once the Manuals are adjudged to be adequate.

**3.3 On-site Audit**

**3.3.1** PSQCA shall organize an on-site audit by deputing auditors to assess and submit assessment report to PSQCA in prescribed formate about compliance or otherwise by the agency to the documented quality management systems as well as its technical competence vis- à-vis scope of registration applied.

**3.3.2** The audit will comprise the following:

a. Opening Meeting - This meeting will be conducted by the Lead Auditor in which the Head of organization or Head of Branch, management representative and heads of all the divisions being audited are expected to be present. During this meeting, auditors will explain the scope and extent of the audit as well as their plan for audit.

b. Conduct of Audit - The audit shall be conducted as per the audit plan agreed during the opening meeting, and shall cover all areas of the agency relevant to the scope of registration. Audit shall include verification of infrastructure and facilities, examination of management system documents, related inspection records, and assessment of competence of

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Personnel. The respective head, who is conversant with the activities of the division(s) being

audited, should accompany auditor. The non-conformities observed by the audit team shall be so recorded in the appropriate format prescribed by PSQCA and handed over to the agency at the end of each day for providing necessary corrective action within an agreed time frame not letter than 45 days.

c. Closing meeting - The on-site audit shouldconclude with a closing meeting during which the audit shall present its findings to the agency. All the members present in the opening meeting should preferably be present in the closing meeting. The nonconformity reports shall be signed by Management Representative or authorized signatory, as a token of acceptance indicating proposed corrective action and its time frame which in no case shall exceed 45 days for providing to the auditor(s) appropriate corrective action(s) along with evidence.

**3.3.3** Before this audit is undertaken, the applicant should have conducted at least one internal quality audit and one management review to ensure the implementation of the documented quality management systems and follow up on the necessary corrective actions carried out and evidence to this effect provided with application.

**3.4 Responsibilities of Applicant during Audit**

**3.4.1** The agency is expected to provide the following assistance to the audit team during the visit:

a) Arrangements for stay, local guidance and travel etc.

b) A suitable room where can meet and discuss exchange their notes and findings.

c) Secretarial and other office assistance like photocopying etc.

**3.5 Follow up on Initial Audit**

**3.5.1** In case the team reports non-conformities, the applicant agency shall take necessary corrective actions which may have to be verified by PSQCA and its auditor(s) for satisfactory closure, before grant of registration is considered. This may call for a follow up on-site verification audit, for full or partial assessment, as the case may be.

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**3.6 Registration**

**3.6.1** Based on the findings an audit team are and satisfactory report of their assessment of fitness to act as an inspection agency, the case for grant of registration shall be placed before Director, PSQCA for recommendation to the Director General’ PSQCA for registration.

**3.6.2** The registration shall be granted for an initial period of one year, renewable for maximum of two years at a time.

**3.7 Consideration for Registration**

**3.7.1** If the applicant agency already holds Registration based on ISO/IEC Standards standard or its lab is accredited by PNAC for the scope applied, due consideration would be given to the same.

**4. SURVEILLANCE**

**4.1** All recognized inspection agencies shall be subject to surveillance audits at least once a year by PSQCA in order to assess and verify the state of implementation and maintenance of their quality management system including its lab on any specified date. No postponement for this audit by any inspection agency shall be allowed. If necessary it may be an unannounced surprise audit based on inputs received by PSQCA.

**5. EXTENSION OF SCOPE**

**5.1** Any recognized inspection agency can request for extension of its scope of registration to cover additional areas by making a written request to PSQCA. In case changes are to be made to the Quality Manual, a copy of revised/ amended quality manual shall also be submitted. The request shall be examined by PSQCA to assess whether an on-site visit is required for verification or not.

**6. RENEWAL OF REGISTRATION**

**6.1** Any registration granted automatically expires at the end of the period of its validity as prescribed in the notification. A renewal notice will be issued to recognized inspection agency by PSQCA

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 about are months before expiry of their validity. However, the responsibility shall be that of

 the agency concerned to ensure that the application for renewal is received in time before its expiry.

**6.2** The agency shall submit the renewal application along with the prescribed application fee as at Annexure A of the scheme to the Directorate of System Certification Centre at least five months before the expiry of its current registration period with its copy to PSQCA, A renewal audit, similar to the initial on-site audit, shall be organized by PSQCA and carried out before considering further renewal.

**6.3** If any non-conformity is found during the renewal audit, the agency shall have to take necessary corrective actions for satisfactory closure of the non-conformity, which may need to be verified by PSQCA, before the registration is renewed for a further period of maximum of three years.

**6.4** The renewal shall be based on assessment of performance during the previous validity period and also on-site assessment report of renewal audit. Any complaints received during the period shall also be duly considered.

**6.5** In any event of delay in issue of fresh renewal notification the applicant agency shall desist from undertaking inspection based on previous registration, if its validity has expired and in the event otherwise, shall be liable for punitive legal action.

**7. SUSPENSION**

**7.1** PSQCA may, at its discretion, suspend registration of an agency, if a complaint or any other information is received which indicates that the agency is not maintaining the Criteria for Registration and/or its technical competence and / or integrity is not satisfactory. An order from PSQCA shall be issued to all concerned including Customs to this effect.

**7.2** An agency, aggrieved by the decision of PSQCA may prefer an appeal to the Director General’ PSQCA, along with all documents in support of their appeal which shall be considered. If desired, a personal hearing will be afforded by Director CA, PSQCA and the suspension order may be ratified or modified. Decision taken by the Director General, PSQCA in the matter shall be final.

**8. EXPIRY AND WITHDRAWAL OF REGISTRATION**

**8.1** The registration of an inspection agency shall automatically expire at the end of its validity as prescribed in the notification of registration.

**8.2** The registration of an agency shall also expire if the renewal is not agreed to by the Competent Authority i.e. Director General’ PSQCA.

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**8.3 The registration of an agency may also be withdrawn any time during the registration period with information to all concerned including customs for any of the following reasons:**

**8.3.1** If PSQCA feels that no useful purpose is being served by the continuation of the registration of the agency.

**8.3.2** If the agency is unable to maintain the Criteria for Registration.

**8.3.3** If the technical competence or integrity is not satisfactory based on any information or complaint.

**8.4** PSQCA with the approval of Director CA, shall issue a show cause notice in case it intends to withdraw registration of an agency as per PCA rules 2011 of section 12 clause (i) of PSQCA Act Vi of 1996 above, after due investigation, if required. The concerned agency shall be given an opportunity to explain to Director SCC, PSQCA, and its view point in a personal hearing, if so desired, before any action is taken against it.

**8.5** The inspection agency, whose approval has been withdrawn, may apply for fresh approval not earlier than one year from the date of withdrawal of approval.

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**9.10** Any agency may relinquish PSQCA registration by giving three months’ notice in writing to PSQCA. It shall however not be entitled to refund of any fee already paid and shall ensure to continue to comply with the terms & conditions of registration during the period.

**9.11** PSQCA may, at its discretion, reduce scope of registration. It may also arrange for an on -site reassessment due to changes in personnel, and / or if a complaint or any other information is received which indicates that the technical competence and integrity/ confidentiality of the agency is not satisfactory. An audit fee as at Annexure A in such a case shall be chargeable.

**9.12** The agency shall cease to issue inspection certificates for export consignments once its notified validity period is over or in the case of suspension/withdrawal of its registration by PSQCA, which if comes to the notice, shall make that agency liable for punitive legal action.