

Provision for JFS-C Certification Scheme Harmonization Meeting

1. Objectives

This document specifies the JFS-C Certification Scheme Harmonization Meeting (hereinafter referred to as “the Meeting”), which is to be held by the JFSM for harmonizing the levels of certification activities under the JFS-C Certification Scheme in accordance with 2.3.2 and 4.2.11 of the JFS-C Certification Scheme Document.

2. Responsibilities

- (1) The JFSM shall, as the owner of the Certification Program, have the responsibility for endeavoring to harmonize the certification activities and improve the competency of auditors.
- (2) The Secretary-General shall have responsibility for the efficient organization and operation of the Meeting. The scheme personnel in the Business Department of the Secretariat (hereinafter referred to as “the Secretariat”) shall provide the Secretary-General with assistance in his or her duties.
- (3) Accreditation bodies and certification bodies executing the Agreement with the JFSM (hereinafter referred to as “member bodies”) shall, as parties engaging in accreditation and certification activities respectively, have the duty of taking active part in the Meeting for the harmonization of certification activities and for improving the competency of auditors.

3. Application

3.1 Objectives of the Meeting

The items specified below shall be conducted at the Meetings in accordance with 2.3.2 of the JFS-C Certification Scheme Document Version 2.3. (hereafter referred to as the Scheme Document)

- 1) Consistency of audits and certification processes of the Scheme
- 2) Hearing of opinions on the Scheme Document and scheme management and discussion thereof
- 3) Exchange of opinions and technical information on the competence of auditors
- 4) Holding of a workshop for improving the competence of auditors

3.2 Composition of the Meeting

(1) Participants

The participants in the Meeting shall be as specified below.

- 1) Up to two representatives of each of the member bodies selected by accreditation bodies executing the Agreement with the JFSM
 - 2) Up to two representatives of each of the member bodies selected by certification bodies executing the Agreement with the JFSM
 - 3) A person in charge of auditors' training (hereafter referred to as a "trainer") in each of the above certification bodies
 - 4) The Chairperson of the Board of Directors, the Secretary-General and other necessary personnel of the JFSM
- The number of participants from accreditation bodies and certification bodies to the workshops as specified in 3.1 2) shall be determined in consultation with the member bodies.

(2) Moderator

The JFSM Secretary-General or the personnel named by the JFSM Secretary-General shall act as the moderator.

(3) Participation as Observer

Any party other than the participants defined in (1) above may participate in the Meeting as an observer if it is approved by a majority of the member bodies.

3.3 Organization of the Meeting

(1) The JFSM shall organize at least one Meeting per year, between January and August in principle.

(2) The Secretariat shall undertake prior coordination with and make known to the member bodies regarding the schedule of the Meeting in advance of six months or more.

(3) The Secretariat shall provide a notice of convocation to every member body (by either a conventional method or an electronic method; hereinafter the same shall apply) no later than one month before the date of the Meeting to check whether it will be present or absent. Member bodies shall, in principle, be under obligation to attend the Meeting. If their expected participants are unable to attend it, they may send a substitute to participate in the Meeting.

(4) The member bodies may propose a subject to be discussed at the Meeting to the Secretariat no later than two weeks before the date of the Meeting.

(5) The Secretariat shall send the proceedings to the participants of all the member bodies no later than one week before the date of the Meeting.

3.4 Principles of the Meeting

(1) The Meeting shall be an opportunity that allows all the participants to freely exchange opinions, make proposals on improvements in scheme operations and provide information for the harmonization of certifying activities and for improving auditors' competency.

(2) In the event of organizing a workshop, the JFSM shall define the topic in advance.

(3) The participants shall be under the obligation of the non-disclosure of any remarks made by other participants at the Meeting and any information in distributed materials that is specifically designated as confidential, if any.

3.5 Meeting Minutes

(1) The Secretariat shall prepare a draft of the meeting minutes no later than two weeks from the end of the Meeting and send it to the participants.

(2) If the draft of the meeting minutes requires any additions or modifications, the participants shall give notice to the Secretariat no later than two weeks from the day when the draft is sent. Participants who give no such notice shall be deemed to have approved the draft.

(3) On the basis of the notice mentioned in the preceding paragraph, the Secretariat shall make additions and modifications to complete the meeting minutes and send them as a notice document to all the member bodies.

3.6 Auditors' training

- (1) JFSM shall devote a part or all of the meeting to knowledge and skills prescribed in 4.4.5.3) (1) b) of the Scheme Document and provide materials used in the meeting to the certification bodies for training after the meeting.
- (2) A trainer shall provide the training as required to all the auditors within 9 months after the meeting in accordance with 4.4.5.3) (1) and (2) of the Scheme Document, and record the auditors' training history and assessment of achievement.