



IMPARTIALITY POLICY	CODE	VERSION	DATE OF EFFECT
	QMS.VV.PY.02	1	01/08/2023

Impartiality Policy

COSMOCERT, the verification body (VB), strongly adheres to the requirement of ISO/IEC 17029 "Conformity assessment — General principles and requirements for validation and verification bodies" that verification activities shall be impartial and maintaining impartiality is a key priority at all levels within COSMOCERT.

The Verification Body (VB) is responsible for the impartiality of its verification activities and is not allow commercial, financial or other pressures to compromise impartiality.

The VB is monitoring its activities and its relationships to identify threats to its impartiality, through the Declaration of Impartiality and Confidentiality, at least annually and whenever is necessary. This monitoring includes the relationships of its personnel.

The VB require all personnel involved in verification activities to enter into a legally enforceable agreement by which the personnel commit themselves to the following:

- a) to comply with the processes and instructions of the verification body, including those relating to impartiality and confidentiality;
- b) to declare any prior and/or present association on their own part, or on the part of another person or organization with which they have a relationship (e.g. a family member or their employer), with a client of the verification body;
- c) to reveal any situation known to them that can present them or the verification body with a perceived or actual conflict of interest.

The VB assesses potential risks to its impartiality on an ongoing basis using a range of mechanisms including internal audit and the operation of the Impartiality Committee. Where such risks are identified, the VB takes appropriate action to eliminate or minimize them. These measures will be monitored for effectiveness.

If a contracted personnel (internal or external) of the VB, declares a consulting activity for a client to be verified by the VB, then a period of at least 2 years is required not to perform the verification activity for that specific client. The period of 2 years is considered long enough to ensure that the threats to impartiality are minimized or eliminated.

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Threats to impartiality can include but are not limited to the following:

- a) Self-interest: threats that arise from a person or body acting in their own interest. A concern related to verification, as a threat to impartiality, is financial self-interest.
- b) Self-review: threats that arise from a person or body reviewing the work done by themselves.
- c) Familiarity (or trust): threats that arise from a person or body being too familiar with or trusting of another person instead of seeking evidence for verification.
- d) Intimidation: threats that arise from a person or body having a perception of being coerced openly or secretly, such as a threat to be replaced or reported to a supervisor.

The impartiality and objectivity of the verification services provided by COSMOCERT are strictly controlled. All COSMOCERT verification staff (internal) and external contract verifiers, as well as members of VB's committees and members of the management board, are required to declare any potential conflicts of interest. The VB takes full account of this information to ensure the objectivity of the services it provides. Verification reviews and decisions are made by competent persons who are independent of the verification activity under review. Decisions are based on objective evidence obtained through the verification process and are not influenced by other interests or parties

The VB does not engage in any activity that might compromise its impartiality; it does not provide consultancy services for verification activities, nor does it have any links with organisations that provide consultancy services to the verification sector, nor does it promote the verification services of any such organisation.

In the event that customers or other stakeholders have concerns regarding the impartiality or objectivity of COSMOCERT, COSMOCERT has non-discriminatory procedures in place for handling complaints and appeals.

COSMOCERT does not provide both validation and verification to the same client. Also, does not offer or provide both consultancy and validation/verification for the same claim from the same client. The VB body does not offer its services to a client if the client has already received consultancy related to the same claim being validated/verified.

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The VB shall take action when it is made aware of (e.g. via a complaint) inappropriate links with or announcements by any consultancy organization stating or implying that verification would be simpler, easier, faster or less expensive if the verification body were used. The VB never states or implies that verification would be simpler, easier, faster or less expensive if a specified consultancy organization were used.

The VB takes action to respond to any threats to its impartiality arising from the actions of other persons, bodies or organizations. This includes the actions of those bodies to which verification activities have been outsourced, if an outsourced VB is used.

COSMOCERT applies its policies and procedures in a non-discriminatory way, and its services are available to all organizations whose verification applications fall within its defined scope of activities. Eligibility is not dependent on size of the applicant, number of clients already verified or membership of any association or group.

CEO of COSMOCERT

Konstantinos Diamantopoulos

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