



الوكالة الوطنية للأمن السيبراني
National Cyber Security Agency

National Information Security Compliance Framework (NISCF) – Standard for National Accreditation

[NCSA-NISCF-ACCR-SNA]

Standard

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Abstract	<p>This document is the Standard for National Accreditation developed by the National Cyber Security Agency (NCSA) with the intended usage in the operation of the National Information Security Compliance Framework (NISCF) Accreditation Services. This document provides the requirements for NISCF Accreditation Services. This Standard shall be read along other relevant NISCF's Accreditation Standards that are specific for each service.</p>



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National Cyber Security Agency

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National Cyber Security Agency (NCSA) has designed and created this publication, titled "National Information Security Compliance Framework (NISCF) – Standard for National Accreditation" - V1.0 - Public, in order to provide the requirements for the requirements for NISCF Accreditation Services. This Standard shall be read along other relevant NISCF's Accreditation Standards that are specific for each service.

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LEGAL MANDATE(S)

Based on Emiri Decree No 1 of year 2021, National Cyber Security Agency (NCSA) – National Cyber Governance and Cyber Assurance Affairs (NCGAA) is the entity responsible for issuing certificates for Technology and Information Security service providers and Certificates of Compliance with National Information Security standards and policies.

This Standard has been prepared to take into consideration the current applicable laws of the State of Qatar. If a conflict arises between this document and the laws of Qatar, the latter shall take precedence. Any such term shall, to that extent be omitted from this Document, and the rest of the document shall stand without affecting the remaining provisions. Amendments, in that case, shall then be required to ensure conformance with the relevant applicable laws of the State of Qatar.



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1. Introduction

National Cyber Security Agency (NCSA) created its Accreditation Services to provide assurance that Service Providers have the capability and capacity to deliver cyber security related services in a specified subject or areas of expertise.

In effort to improve the Accreditation Services, NCSA developed this document, titled "National Information Security Compliance Framework (NISCF) – Standard for National Accreditation" - V1.0 - Public, to provide the cyber space with clearer requirements for Accreditation Services.



2. Purpose and Scope

2.1. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide Service Providers with the requirements for NISCF Accreditation Services.

This document provides the necessary information and requirements for the NISCF Accreditation Services and the assessment process required to apply for the NISCF Accreditation Services, the obligations of the Applicant, and NISCF requirements for the NISCF Accreditation Services lifecycle for Accredited Service Providers.

2.2. Scope

This document applies to all NISCF Accreditation Services that are offered by NCSA under the NISCF.

NCSA defines which NISCF's Services this document applies to.



3. Key Definitions

The terminologies used in this standard are consistent with the definitions provided in the NCSA-NISCF-ACCR-GTXD (General Taxonomy Document for National Accreditation - Public).



4. Standard Requirements

4.1. General

4.1.1. Accreditation Body

4.1.1.1. Authority

4.1.1.1.1. National Cyber Governance and Assurance Affairs (NCGAA) - National Cyber Security Agency (NCSA) shall be the Accreditation Body for NISCF Accreditation Services.

4.1.1.1.2. NCGAA may delegate the authority of the Accreditation Body. The delegation shall be formally approved, by NCSA's adequate authoritative power, to a specific part of its organization structure or purposely established organ (e.g., committee, board, assembly...).

4.1.1.1.3. The Accreditation Body shall have full authority, responsibility and accountability on decisions related to NISCF's Accreditation Services, including the types of decisions it can take.

4.1.1.2. Impartiality and Objectivity

4.1.1.2.1. The Accreditation Body will not provide the following services:

- ❑ The services for which it provides Accreditation, in a commercial or for-profit manner; and
- ❑ Assistance, preparation or production of policies, processes, procedures and tools for Service Provider or potential Service Provider to NISCF's Accreditation Services or participating in their operation or management.

4.1.2. NISCF's Accreditation Services Lifecycle

4.1.2.1. Application Cycle

4.1.2.1.1. NISCF's Accreditation Services application cycle shall only be initiated through a formal request to the Accreditation Body's as per pre-determined requirements.

4.1.2.1.2. NISCF's Accreditation Services application cycle ends with either:



- The end NISCF's Accreditation Services request validity as per the Accreditation Body terms and conditions and NISCF's Accreditation Services policies, standards and procedures;
- Rejection of a request; or
- Issuance or Denial of NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation.

4.1.2.2. Accreditation Cycle

4.1.2.2.1. NISCF's Accreditation cycle shall start only following the issuance of NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation in conformance with NISCF's Accreditation Services application process.

4.1.2.2.2. NISCF's Accreditation cycle ends with the end of the period of validity of a NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation through either:

- Expiry;
- Withdraw; or
- Termination.

4.1.2.2.3. The period of validity of a Certificate of Accreditation for NISCF's Accreditation Services is three (3) years, subject to conformance to requirements defined in any of the NISCF's Accreditation Services normative publications.

4.1.2.2.4. The period of validity shall be extended by the Accreditation Body, through Re-Accreditation, as long as the Accredited Service Provider conforms to Re-Accreditation requirements of the NISCF's Accreditation Services normative publications.

4.1.2.2.5. The Accreditation Body shall specify in the NISCF's Accreditation Services normative publications, if the Certificate of Accreditation period of validity is different than three (3) years, for a NISCF's Accreditation Services, in order to align and / or conform with best practices and standards in the cyber security area of expertise.



4.1.3. NISCF's Accreditation Services Agreement

- 4.1.3.1.1. The NISCF's Accreditation Services Agreement shall be signed and communicated to the Accreditation Body by the applicant as part of the request for NISCF's Accreditation Services.
- 4.1.3.1.2. The NISCF's Accreditation Services Agreement shall be effective and enforced from the date of the formal request made by the applicant for NISCF's Accreditation Services until the end of NISCF's Accreditation Services cycles as specified in requirements [4.1.2.1.2](#) or [4.1.2.2.2](#).
- 4.1.3.1.3. The NISCF's Accreditation Services Agreement shall be signed only by an authorized representative of the Service Provider who has the capacity to legally sign contractual documents on behalf of it.

4.1.4. Use of Accreditation Symbols, Claims and Other demarcation

- 4.1.4.1.1. The Service Provider shall refrain from any unauthorized use of NISCF's Accreditation Symbols, Claims and Other demarcation otherwise it will be considered in violation of intellectual property rights and may be subject to legal action.
- 4.1.4.1.2. The Service Provider shall use the NISCF's Accreditation Symbols, Claims and Other demarcation in conformance with the terms of usage detailed in the Accreditation Body's Policies, Standards and Terms and Conditions.
- 4.1.4.1.3. The Accredited Service Provider shall refrain from any incorrect or unauthorized claims to Accreditation shall be considered otherwise it will be considered in violation of the NISCF's Accreditation Services Agreement and may result in suspension or withdrawal of the NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation or legal action.

4.1.5. Regulatory compliance

- 4.1.5.1.1. The Service Provider shall comply with the relevant laws, regulations, and NISCF's Accreditation requirements. Any failure to comply with the above-mentioned references may result in suspension or withdrawal of NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation.



4.2. Accreditation Operation

4.2.1. Application

4.2.1.1. Request for Accreditation

- 4.2.1.1.1. The applicant to NISCF's Accreditation Services shall submit a request to the Accreditation Body, in conformance with the Accreditation Body terms and conditions and NISCF's Accreditation Services policies, standards and procedures.
- 4.2.1.1.2. The Service Provider shall apply for the NISCF's Accreditation Services only after it has implemented all necessary requirements specified in the applicable NISCF's Accreditation Standard and ensured it comply with them.
- 4.2.1.1.3. The request for NISCF's Accreditation Services shall be submitted by an authorized representative of the applicant.
- 4.2.1.1.4. The request for NISCF's Accreditation Services shall only cover one of the available NISCF's Accreditation Service, in a mutually exclusive manner.
- 4.2.1.1.5. The request for NISCF's Accreditation Services shall include all the information required by the Accreditation Body in conformance with relevant NISCF's Accreditation Service normative publications, including the supporting information/documentation as required in the NISCF's Accreditation Service requirements, which must include information demonstrating that the requirements of the relevant NISCF's Accreditation Service Standard have been met.
- 4.2.1.1.6. The request for NISCF's Accreditation Services shall include the signed NISCF's Accreditation Services Agreement by an authorized representative of the applicant as per requirement [4.1.3.1.1](#).
- 4.2.1.1.7. The request for NISCF's Accreditation Services shall be valid for a period that shall not exceed six (6) months from the date of the request.

4.2.1.2. Request Review

- 4.2.1.2.1. Only valid NISCF's Accreditation Services requests, in conformance with the Accreditation Body terms and conditions and NISCF's Accreditation Services policies, standards and procedures, from an eligible applicant, at the time of the request will be accepted by the Accreditation Body.



- 4.2.1.2.2. The Accreditation Body will send back to the applicant of a valid NISCF's Accreditation Services request, the signed the NISCF's Accreditation Services Agreement (see requirement [4.2.1.1.6](#)).
- 4.2.1.2.3. The Accreditation Body will conduct a review of the NISCF's Accreditation Services request and all information submitted.
- 4.2.1.2.4. Failure to complete and submit all the required supporting information and documentation may result in the rejection of the NISCF's Accreditation Services request.
- 4.2.1.2.5. After a review of the NISCF's Accreditation Services request, the applicant shall complete all necessary administrative procedures, including due fees settlement, in conformance with the Accreditation Body terms and conditions in order for the Accreditation to initiate the NISCF's Accreditation Services request assessment.

4.2.1.3. Request Assessment

- 4.2.1.3.1. The Accreditation Body will assess the conformance of the applicant to the NISCF's Accreditation Service requirements.
- 4.2.1.3.2. The Accreditation Body decides if the assessment will be conducted remotely, on-site (physical visits to the Service Provider to the NISCF's Accreditation Services facilities) or a combination of both, and if interviews with personnel of the Service Provider or inspections tools and systems is required.
- 4.2.1.3.3. The applicant to NISCF's Accreditation Services may receive a request to provide a Corrective Actions Plan (CAP), if during the assessment non-conformities have been identified.
- 4.2.1.3.4. The applicant to NISCF's Accreditation Services shall respond to the Accreditation Body's request to provide a Corrective Actions Plan (CAP), if any, within ten (10) working days¹ from the communication of the non-conformities by the Accreditation Body.
- 4.2.1.3.5. The applicant to NISCF's Accreditation Services shall include in the Corrective Actions Plan (CAP) detailed corrective activities to resolve non-conformities, a root-cause analysis for the non-conformities, a detailed

¹ Excluding National Holidays as declared by Emiri Diwan



implementation timeline and preventive controls aimed to prevent the re-occurrence of the non-conformities.

4.2.2. Accreditation Decision

4.2.2.1. Responsibility of Accreditation Decision

4.2.2.1.1. The Accreditation Body will be responsible for Accreditation decisions and will keep a record of each NISCF's Accreditation Services decision made.

4.2.2.2. Initial Accreditation Decision

4.2.2.2.1. The Accreditation Body will take the initial Accreditation Decision after performing the request assessment.

4.2.2.2.2. In conformance with the Accreditation Body terms and conditions and NISCF's Accreditation Services policies, standards and procedures, and when the Accreditation Body decides, after review, that the information provided in the NISCF's Accreditation Services request are complete, clear and evidence conformance of the applicant to the relevant NISCF's Accreditation Service requirements or when the defined timeline for submitting the unclear or missing information, as per requirement [4.2.1.3.4](#), as a response to the Accreditation Body's Clarification and Evidence Request elapses, the applicant to NISCF's Accreditation Services will receive from the Accreditation Body a formal decision regarding its NISCF's Accreditation Services request along with justification.

4.2.2.3. Initial Accreditation Award

4.2.2.3.1. When the Accreditation Body decides to grant NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation, the NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation will be awarded, after that the NISCF's Accreditation Services applicant have to complete all necessary administrative procedures in conformance with the Accreditation Body terms and conditions and NISCF's Accreditation Services policies, standards and procedures.

4.2.2.3.2. The Accreditation Body will provide the Accredited Service Provider with a NISCF Certificate of Accreditation.



4.2.3. Maintenance, Suspension, Reinstatement, Special Audits, Changes affecting the Scope, Scope reduction, Scope expansion, Termination, Withdrawal and Expiry

4.2.3.1. Maintenance

- 4.2.3.1.1. The NISCF's Accreditation Services shall be subject to maintenance.
- 4.2.3.1.2. The maintenance of NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation shall be performed at least every year for the period of validity of a Certificate of Accreditation for NISCF's Accreditation Services (based on anniversary date), except for Re-Accreditation years.
- 4.2.3.1.3. The First Surveillance Assessment (FSA) shall commence after the first year of Accreditation (coinciding with the Accreditation anniversary).
- 4.2.3.1.4. The Second Surveillance Assessment (SSA) shall commence, in the subsequent year from the completion of the First Surveillance Assessment (FSA).
- 4.2.3.1.5. The Accreditation Body reserves the right to cancel or reschedule a planned scheduled maintenance, where deemed necessary.
- 4.2.3.1.6. The Accreditation Body reserves the right to change the frequency and the extend of the maintenance depending on factors such as the type and scope of the NISCF's Accreditation Service, the risks associated with the activities, and the requirements of the relevant NISCF's Accreditation Service Standard(s).
- 4.2.3.1.7. The Accredited Service Provider shall provide access to all the information requested by the Accreditation Body for maintenance purpose and thus as per the requirements defined in the Accreditation Body terms and conditions, NISCF's Accreditation Services policies, standards and procedures and the NISCF's Accreditation Services Agreement.
- 4.2.3.1.8. An active NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation will be maintained by the Accreditation Body following the decision to maintain the NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation and after that the Accredited Service Provider have completed all necessary administrative procedures in conformance with the Accreditation Body terms and conditions and NISCF's Accreditation Services policies, standards and procedures.



4.2.3.1.9. The period of validity of the NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation will not be changed following maintenance.

4.2.3.2. *Suspension*

4.2.3.2.1. An active NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation can be suspended by the Accreditation Body, if one of the following situations is met:

- ❉ Non-conformity that affects Accredited Service Provider's capability to achieve the intended results;
- ❉ Number of non-conformities associated with the same issue that could demonstrate a systemic failure;
- ❉ Misuse of NISCF Accreditation Symbols and failure to abide by the signed NISCF's Accreditation Services Agreement;
- ❉ Failure to resolve the non-conformities within defined time period;
- ❉ Significant changes without prior notification to the Accreditation body;
- ❉ Negative outcome of a complaint investigation;
- ❉ Refusal or not responding to maintenance or unscheduled assessment without reasonable justification;
- ❉ Identified non-conformities with the requirements where immediate withdrawal is not necessary during maintenance or unscheduled assessment;
- ❉ A breach of NISCF's Accreditation Service requirements or breach of NISCF's Accreditation Services Agreement;
- ❉ The Accredited Service Provider has requested suspension; or
- ❉ Situations that in the Accreditation Body opinion, jeopardizes the status of Accreditation.

4.2.3.2.2. The Accredited Service Provider shall provide the Accreditation Body, the Corrective Actions Plan (CAP), in conformance with the NISCF's Accreditation Services policies, standards and procedures, to resolve the non-conformities and / or situations that led to the suspension within ten (10)



working days² from the communication of the suspension decision by the Accreditation Body.

- 4.2.3.2.3. The Accredited Service Provider shall include in the Corrective Actions Plan (CAP) detailed corrective activities to resolve non-conformities and / or situations that led to the suspension, a root-cause analysis and a detailed implementation timeline.
- 4.2.3.2.4. The Accredited Service Provider shall include in the Corrective Actions Plan (CAP), if it is not practically or chronologically feasible to implement corrective activities, activities to build preventive controls aimed to prevent the re-occurrence of the non-conformities and / or situations that led to the suspension in the first place.
- 4.2.3.2.5. The Accredited Service Provider shall complete the implementation of the Corrective Actions Plan (CAP) and share the evidence of such implementation with the Accreditation Body, within a timeline that shall not exceed sixty (60) days³ from the date of the communication of the suspension.
- 4.2.3.2.6. If the period separating the suspension date from the expiry date of a Certificate of Accreditation for NISCF's Accreditation Services (e.g., Re-Accreditation) is shorter than six (6) months, the NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation will be suspended until the end of the period of validity and no unscheduled assessment shall be conducted.
- 4.2.3.2.7. The Accredited Service Provider shall provide access to all the information requested by the Accreditation Body for purpose of assessing the implementation of the Corrective Actions Plan (CAP) to resolve the non-conformities that led to the suspension and thus as per the requirements defined in the Accreditation Body terms and conditions, NISCF's Accreditation Services policies, standards and procedures and the NISCF's Accreditation Services Agreement.
- 4.2.3.2.8. The Accreditation Body will perform an assessment of the implementation of the Corrective Actions Plan (CAP) to resolve non-conformities that led to the suspension for a suspended NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation in conformance with the relevant requirements defined in section [4.2.1.3](#).

² Excluding National Holidays as declared by Emiri Diwan

³ Excluding National Holidays as declared by Emiri Diwan



4.2.3.2.9. The Accredited Service Provider shall complete all necessary administrative procedures in conformance with the Accreditation Body terms and conditions and NISCF's Accreditation Services policies, standards and procedures related to suspension, if any.

4.2.3.2.10. The period of validity of the NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation will not be changed following suspension.

4.2.3.3. *Reinstatement*

4.2.3.3.1. NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation can be reinstated only after the completion of assessment of the implementation of the Corrective Actions Plan (CAP) as defined in the requirement [4.2.3.2.8](#).

4.2.3.3.2. The reinstatement of a suspended NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation by the Accreditation Body shall be effective only following the decision to reinstate the NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation and that the Accredited Service Provider have completed of all necessary administrative procedures in conformance with the Accreditation Body terms and conditions and NISCF's Accreditation Services policies, standards and procedures.

4.2.3.3.3. The period of validity of the NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation will not be changed following reinstatement.

4.2.3.4. *Unscheduled Assessments*

4.2.3.4.1. The Accreditation Body have the right to perform unscheduled assessment(s) for a NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation to:

- 🕒 Investigate a complaint;
- 🕒 Respond to a request to expand the scope of an active NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation;
- 🕒 Verify conformance of NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation to changes introduced by the Accreditation Body (new or updated requirements) to existing NISCF's Accreditation Services; and
- 🕒 Any other situations that requires the Accreditation Body to perform an assessment that is not covered by the defined assessment(s) (i.e., initial Accreditation application assessment, maintenance and Re-Accreditation).



4.2.3.4.2. The Accredited Service Provider shall provide access to all the information requested by the Accreditation Body for purpose of unscheduled assessment(s) and thus as per the requirements defined in the Accreditation Body terms and conditions, NISCF's Accreditation Services policies, standards and procedures and the NISCF's Accreditation Services Agreement.

4.2.3.4.3. The Accredited Service Provider shall complete all the necessary administrative procedures in conformance with the Accreditation Body terms and conditions and NISCF's Accreditation Services policies, standards and procedures related to unscheduled assessment(s), if any.

4.2.3.5. *Changes affecting the Accreditation*

4.2.3.5.1. The Accredited Service Provider shall communicate to the Accreditation Body without undue delay, any changes that may impact its Accreditation status. Change notifications include situations where, but not limited to:

- 🔄 Changes in key personnel or competent staff members;
- 🔄 Restructuring or changes that affects the organization's ability to produce reliable results including change to its policies, process; or
- 🔄 Any other circumstances that Accreditation Body may deem appropriate warranting the suspension of an organization.

4.2.3.5.2. Based on the changes referred to in requirement [4.2.3.5.1](#) or when changes are introduced (new or updated requirements) by the Accreditation Body to existing NISCF's Accreditation Services, the Accredited Service Provider impacted by the change shall,

- 🔄 Assess the impact of the change on existing (active or suspended) NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation and on-going NISCF's Accreditation Services requests (Scope change or Re-Accreditation) and communicate it to the Accreditation Body; and



- Provide the Accreditation Body with the actions to be taken by the Accredited Service Provider in order to conform to the new or updated requirements⁴ and the associated timeline.

4.2.3.5.3. The Accreditation Body will communicate to the Accredited Service Provider impacted by the change the means by which conformance to the new or updated requirements will be verified (e.g., maintenance, Re-Accreditation, unscheduled assessment(s)...).

4.2.3.5.4. If the Accreditation Body decides following the change review to not withdraw the NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation, the later shall continue to be valid as if the change did not occur, taking into consideration the Accreditation Body terms and conditions and NISCF's Accreditation Services policies, standards and procedures.

4.2.3.6. *Scope reduction*

4.2.3.6.1. The Accreditation Body can decide to reduce the scope of a suspended NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation, if the non-conformities that led to the suspension of the NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation have not been resolved as per the Corrective Actions Plan (CAP) in terms of effectiveness and / or timing and the non-conformities are isolated in a limited part of the scope in a manner that the non-conformities do not impact the remaining scope after reduction.

4.2.3.6.2. The Accredited Service Provider shall complete all necessary administrative procedures in conformance with the Accreditation Body terms and conditions and NISCF's Accreditation Services policies, standards and procedures, for the scope of a NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation to be reduced by the Accreditation Body, otherwise the Accreditation Body can proceed with the suspension or withdrawal.

4.2.3.6.3. The period of validity of the NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation will not be changed following scope reduction.

4.2.3.6.4. The NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation shall be updated following scope reduction to reflect the changes.

⁴ The requirement terminology is used in its broader sense that includes also policy statements, general rules, processes activities, procedures tasks, terms and conditions and any other rules or conditions that the stakeholders to the NISCF's Accreditation Services shall or should adhere, conform and comply to.



4.2.3.7. Scope expansion

- 4.2.3.7.1. The Accredited Service Provider can request for a scope expansion for an active NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation.
- 4.2.3.7.2. The Accredited Service Provider requesting for scope expansion of an active NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation shall submit the request in conformance with requirements [4.2.1.1.1](#), [4.2.1.1.2](#), [4.2.1.1.3](#), [4.2.1.1.4](#) and [4.2.1.1.5](#).
- 4.2.3.7.3. The requests for scope expansion of an active NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation shall not be submitted by the Accredited Service Provider:
- 🕒 When maintenance or unscheduled assessment(s) started or are planned to start within one (1) month; or
 - 🕒 Within six (6) months prior to the expiry date of the NISCF Certificate of Accreditation.
- 4.2.3.7.4. The Accreditation Body will review the request for scope expansion of an active NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation as per the relevant requirements defined in section [4.2.1.2](#).
- 4.2.3.7.5. When the Accreditation Body accepts the request for scope expansion of an active NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation, it will inform the Accredited Service Provider, if the assessment for the additional scope shall be performed as part of the first upcoming maintenance or as part of an unscheduled assessment.
- 4.2.3.7.6. The Accredited Service Provider shall provide access to all the information requested by the Accreditation Body for purpose of the assessment related to the scope expansion request for an active NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation and thus as per the requirements defined in the Accreditation Body terms and conditions, NISCF's Accreditation Services policies, standards and procedures and the NISCF's Accreditation Services Agreement.
- 4.2.3.7.7. The Accreditation Body will perform the assessment related to the scope expansion request for an active NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation in conformance with the relevant requirements defined in section [4.2.1.3](#).
- 4.2.3.7.8. The scope of an active NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation will be expanded following the decision to expand the scope of the NISCF's



Certificate of Accreditation and that the Accredited Service Provider have completed all necessary administrative procedures in conformance with the Accreditation Body terms and conditions and NISCF's Accreditation Services policies, standards and procedures.

- 4.2.3.7.9. The period of validity of the NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation will not be changed following scope expansion.
- 4.2.3.7.10. The NISCF's Accreditation Services Agreement, referred to in section [4.1.3](#), shall be amended to consider the scope expansion.
- 4.2.3.7.11. The NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation shall be updated following scope expansion.

4.2.3.8. Termination

- 4.2.3.8.1. Only the Accredited Service Provider can request the termination of an active or suspended NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation by the Accreditation Body.
- 4.2.3.8.2. The Accredited Service Provider requesting for termination of an active or suspended NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation shall provide the Accreditation Body with justification for the termination.
- 4.2.3.8.3. An active or suspended NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation will be terminated by the Accreditation Body as per the Accredited Service Provider's termination request after completion of all necessary administrative procedures in conformance with the Accreditation Body terms and conditions and NISCF's Accreditation Services policies, standards and procedures.
- 4.2.3.8.4. The period of validity of the NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation shall end as per the notice period defined in the NISCF's Accreditation Services Agreement.
- 4.2.3.8.5. The Accredited Service Provider shall provide the Accreditation Body the actions it will take to ensure that it will no longer refer to itself as "Accredited" and no longer use the NISCF's Accreditation Services symbols for the scope of the terminated NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation, that shall be acted within ten (10) working days⁵ from the request of termination.

⁵ Excluding National Holidays as declared by Emiri Diwan



4.2.3.8.6. The Accredited Service Provider shall complete all the necessary administrative procedures in conformance with the Accreditation Body terms and conditions and NISCF's Accreditation Services policies, standards and procedures related to termination, if any.

4.2.3.9. *Withdrawal*

4.2.3.9.1. A suspended NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation will be withdrawn by the Accreditation body, if one of the following situations is met:

- ❉ The non-conformities that led to the suspension of the NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation have not been resolved as per the Corrective Actions Plan (CAP) in terms of effectiveness and / or timing;
- ❉ Lack of cooperation with the Accreditation Body and objection to provide information;
- ❉ A breach of NISCF's Accreditation Service requirements or breach of NISCF's Accreditation Services Agreement; or
- ❉ Inability of the Accredited Service Provider to ensure conformance to new rules and or requirements.

4.2.3.9.2. The period of validity of the NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation shall end from the date of the decision to withdraw the NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation.

4.2.3.9.3. The Accredited Service Provider shall provide the Accreditation Body the actions it will take to ensure that it will no longer refer to itself as "Accredited" and no longer use the NISCF's Accreditation Services symbols for the scope of the withdrawn NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation, that shall be acted within ten (10) working days⁶ from the communication of the withdrawal decision by the Accreditation Body.

4.2.3.9.4. The Accredited Service Provider shall complete all the necessary administrative procedures in conformance with the Accreditation Body terms and conditions and NISCF's Accreditation Services policies, standards and procedures related to withdrawal, if any.

⁶ Excluding National Holidays as declared by Emiri Diwan



4.2.3.10. Expiry

4.2.3.10.1. The NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation shall expire when:

- The period of validity of a Certificate of Accreditation for NISCF's Accreditation Services ends and the Accredited Service Provider has not applied for Re-Accreditation; or
- The period of validity of a Certificate of Accreditation for NISCF's Accreditation Services ends, the Accredited Service Provider has applied for Re-Accreditation but activities defined in requirements [4.2.5.1.6](#) and [4.2.5.1.7](#), have not been completed as per requirement [4.2.5.1.8](#) and the Accreditation Body decided to not grant an extension to complete the unfinished activities as per requirement [4.2.5.1.12](#).

4.2.3.10.2. The Accredited Service Provider shall provide the Accreditation Body the actions it will take to ensure that it will no longer refer to itself as "Accredited Service Provider" and no longer use the NISCF's Accreditation Services symbols for the expired NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation, that shall be acted within ten (10) working days⁷ from the expiry date of the NISCF Certificate of Accreditation.

4.2.4. Re-Accreditation

4.2.4.1.1. The Accredited Service Provider can request for extending the period of validity of a NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation, through Re-Accreditation request.

4.2.4.1.2. The Accredited Service Provider is required to apply for Re-Accreditation at least three (3) months prior to the expiry date of the NISCF Certificate of Accreditation.

4.2.4.1.3. The Accredited Service Provider requesting for Re-Accreditation of a NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation shall submit the request in conformance with requirements [4.2.1.1.1](#), [4.2.1.1.2](#), [4.2.1.1.3](#), [4.2.1.1.4](#) and [4.2.1.1.5](#).

4.2.4.1.4. The Accredited Service Provider shall submit a request to the Accreditation Body for Re-Accreditation of a NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation only during the Re-Accreditation years and only after completion (i.e., decision issued by the Accreditation Body) of the last

⁷ Excluding National Holidays as declared by Emiri Diwan



planned maintenance, or unscheduled assessment(s) at the moment of the request, for the period of validity.

- 4.2.4.1.5. The Accreditation Body will review the request for Re-Accreditation of a NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation as per the relevant requirements defined in section [4.2.1.2](#).
- 4.2.4.1.6. The Accredited Service Provider shall provide access to all the information requested by the Accreditation Body for purpose Re-Accreditation and thus as per the requirements defined in the Accreditation Body terms and conditions, NISCF's Accreditation Services policies, standards and procedures and the NISCF's Accreditation Services Agreement.
- 4.2.4.1.7. The Accreditation Body will perform an assessment during Re-Accreditation in conformance with the relevant requirements defined in section [4.2.1.3](#).
- 4.2.4.1.8. The assessment for purpose Re-Accreditation and the Re-Accreditation decision shall be completed before the expiry date of the NISCF Certificate of Accreditation.
- 4.2.4.1.9. If the conditions set in requirement [4.2.4.1.8](#) are not fulfilled, the Accreditation Body can grant up to six (6) months extension to complete the unfinished activities on the expiry date of the NISCF Certificate of Accreditation.
- 4.2.4.1.10. The Re-Accreditation of a NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation will be awarded by the Accreditation Body following the decision to Re-Accredit the NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation and after that the Accredited Service Provider have completed of all necessary administrative procedures in conformance with the Accreditation Body terms and conditions and NISCF's Accreditation Services policies, standards and procedures.
- 4.2.4.1.11. The period of validity of the NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation shall be updated following Re-Accreditation in conformance with relevant requirements from section [4.1.2](#).
- 4.2.4.1.12. The NISCF's Accreditation Services Agreement, referred to in section [4.1.3](#), shall be amended to consider the Re-Accreditation.
- 4.2.4.1.13. The NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation shall be updated following Re-Accreditation.



- 4.2.4.1.14. When the Re-Accreditation is completed before the expected end of the period of validity of the NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation as per requirement [4.2.4.1.10](#), or when the conditions set in requirement [4.2.4.1.9](#) are fulfilled but the Re-Accreditation is completed after the expected end of the period of validity of the NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation, the effective date of the updated NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation shall be the Re-Accreditation decision date, and the end of the period of validity of the updated NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation, shall be the date end of the period of validity of the NISCF's Certificate of Accreditation prior to update complemented by the period of validity for the NISCF's Accreditation Services as defined in requirement [4.1.2.2.3](#).
- 4.2.4.1.15. An Accredited Service Provider that did not request for Re-Accreditation, or failed to complete the Re-Accreditation process, can apply to the same NISCF's Accreditation Service by submitting a request to the Accreditation Body, in conformance with requirements defined in section [4.2.1](#).



4.3. Complaint and Appeal

4.3.1. Complaint

4.3.1.1.1. Complaints related to NISCF's Accreditation Services shall be received and handled by the Accreditation Body as per the NISCF's Complaints Policy and procedures.

4.3.2. Appeal

4.3.2.1.1. Appeals related to NISCF's Accreditation Services decision shall be received and handled by the Accreditation Body, in collaboration with the individuals and bodies trusted with the appeal duties within the National Cyber Security Agency (NCSA), as per the NISCF's Appeals Policy and procedures.



5. Compliance and Enforcement

5.1. Compliance Process

All stakeholders to the NISCF Accreditation Services shall conform with the requirements defined in this standard.

5.2. Roles and Responsibilities

National Cyber Governance and Assurance Affairs (NCGAA) is responsible for ensuring conformance to this standard.

5.3. Transitioning and effective date

5.3.1. Effective date

This standard is effective from January 1, 2024.

5.3.2. Transition period

NISCF's Accreditation Services requests made and NISCF's Certificates of Accreditation issued before the effective date of this standard are not subject to this standard until the re-Accreditation stage.

Applicants and holders of NISCF's Accreditation Services requests and NISCF's Certificates of Accreditation described in the previous paragraph can voluntarily conform with the requirements defined in this standard before the re-Accreditation stage.

5.4. Exceptions and deviations

5.4.1. Exceptions to Standard Requirements

Exceptions to this standard shall only be defined by the National Cyber Security Agency (NCSA) through another policy or standard and / or any NCSA's organizational structure that has been given the authority over the NISCF or the Accreditation Services.

5.4.2. Deviation process from Standard Requirements

Deviation from standard requirement shall be formally authorized in writing by the National Cyber Security Agency (NCSA).

5.4.3. Sanctions

National Cyber Security Agency (NCSA) reserves the right to not accept NISCF Accreditation Services requests and / or suspend or withdraw Certificates of



Accreditation or any other Certificates, Credentials or Licenses provided by NCSA from NISCF Accreditation Services stakeholders that do not conform with the requirements defined in this Standard.

National Cyber Security Agency (NCSA) may impose appropriate procedural sanctions on Accredited Service Provider that do not conform with the requirements defined in this Standard, in virtue of the authority that has been granted to NCSA, through laws and regulations. Sanctions can also be imposed on non-Accredited Service Providers that misuse the Accreditation Symbols, Claims and Other demarcation.



6. Annexes

6.1. Acronyms

CAP	Corrective Actions Plan
NCGAA	National Cyber Governance and Assurance Affairs
NCSA	National Cyber Security Agency
NISCF	National Information Security Compliance Framework
FSA	First Surveillance Assessment
SSA	Second Surveillance Assessment

6.2. Reference

Emiri Decree No 1 of year 2021

President of National Cyber Security Agency (NCSA) Decision No 3 of year 2022

NCSA-NISCF-ACCR-GTXD (General Taxonomy Document for National Accreditation - Public)

NCSA-NISCF-ACCR-GPNA (General Policy for National Accreditation - Public)



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National Cyber Security Agency

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