

# Update to Validation/Verification Body Accreditation Recognition

## 1 ABSTRACT

The VCS Program has historically recognized multiple forms of auditor accreditation for its approved validation/verification bodies (VVBs). While this flexibility was important to spurring the early development of the market, it has also resulted in inconsistency with respect to levels of accreditation oversight of validation and verification services conducted under the VCS Program. In addition, Verra has not been able to directly participate and interact with different accreditation bodies in a consistent manner, leading to an imbalance in Verra's ability to provide performance feedback to accreditation bodies.

Accordingly, Verra is considering moving to a more consistent and standardized recognition of auditor accreditation, by revising the scope of recognized accreditation for the VCS Program to include only accreditation to *ISO 14065* by an accreditation body that is a member of the International Accreditation Forum (IAF).

## 2 BACKGROUND

In order to become an approved validation/verification body (VVB) under the VCS Program, validation/verification bodies must achieve accreditation through one of two pathways:

- 1) Accreditation under a VCS-approved GHG program (historically this has meant accreditation as a Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) Designed Operational Entity (DOE))
- 2) Accreditation to *ISO 14065* by an accreditation body that is a member of the International Accreditation Forum (IAF)

Over the years, Verra has become more engaged in VVB accreditation oversight, particularly through the sharing of VVB performance data with accreditation bodies and direct participation in accreditation processes. Verra has identified inconsistencies in accreditation body oversight of validation and verification services conducted with the VCS Program. In addition, Verra has found that its level of direct communication and ability to provide performance feedback to accreditation bodies is uneven. This has led to an imbalance in the level of VVB performance oversight Verra is able to maintain, depending on a particular VVB's accreditation type. This situation jeopardizes the integrity of the VCS Program.

Accordingly, Verra is considering revising the VCS Program rules, such that only auditing bodies accredited to *ISO 14065* by an accreditation body that is a member of the IAF will be eligible to become an approved VCS VVB. More specifically, Verra will sign MOUs with IAF member accreditation bodies, or work directly with IAF, to establish *ISO 14065* accreditation programs for VCS VVBs. The terms of the MOUs will be modeled on agreements Verra currently has with the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) and the Standards Council of Canada (SCC).

Those agreements specify that Verra will have the ability to communicate directly with, and submit VVB performance feedback to, the accreditation body.

Verra believes this proposal will bring consistency to VVB oversight, and will assure Verra's ability to communicate directly with, and submit VVB performance feedback to, accreditation bodies. In addition, Verra sees this as an opportunity to build local accreditation and auditing capacity in regions where accreditation programs have not yet been developed and where there are emerging carbon markets.

### **3 PROPOSAL**

Verra proposes to revise the VCS Program rules such that only validation/verification bodies (VVBs) accredited to *ISO 14065* by an accreditation body that is a member of the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) will be eligible to become an approved VCS VVB.

This proposal would go into effect on 1 January 2020, meaning that VVBs would only be eligible to provide validation and verification services under the VCS Program if they have signed the required agreement with Verra and are accredited to *ISO 14065* by an accreditation body that is a member of the IAF by such date.

Verra is seeking input on the proposal to revise the scope of eligible VVB accreditation programs.