Third Edition – 2025

GAS.ICB-02:2025

Accreditation Criteria for Inspection Bodies

Contents

0. FOREWORD

This document establishes **mandatory accreditation criteria** for inspection bodies (hereinafter referred to as **IBs**) that carry out inspection, verification, or conformity assessment of objects within a defined scope of activity.

The criteria are applied by the GAS Accreditation Agency during:

- initial accreditation;
- surveillance assessments;
- reaccreditation;
- extension or reduction of the scope of accreditation.

Accreditation is conducted in accordance with:

- ISO/IEC 17020;
- ISO/IEC 17011 (with respect to the requirements for GAS activities);
- applicable GAS policies and procedures.

1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF APPLICATION

1.1 Purpose

This document defines:

- criteria for the conformity of inspection bodies with the requirements of ISO/IEC 17020;
- minimum requirements for the management system, competence, and impartiality;
- requirements for inspection processes and outcomes;
- requirements for the management of information, risks, and ESG aspects.

1.2 Scope of Application

The criteria apply to inspection bodies:

- **of Type A, B, or C;**
- that perform inspections within voluntary, contractual, or sectoral schemes;
- in any sectors of the economy where inspection is used as a tool for conformity assessment.

2. NORMATIVE AND REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

This section lists international and internal documents whose provisions are applied during the accreditation of inspection bodies.

International Standards:

- **ISO/IEC 17020** — Requirements for the operation of various types of bodies performing inspection.
- **ISO/IEC 17011** — Conformity assessment — Requirements for accreditation bodies accrediting conformity assessment bodies.

Internal GAS Documents:

- **GAS.G-01** — Code of Ethics for GAS experts, assessors, and personnel.
- **GAS.G-02** — Policy on the use of marks and references to GAS accreditation.
- **GAS.G-03** — Policy on conflict of interest and impartiality.
- **GAS.G-04** — Appeals and complaints procedure.
- **GAS.G-05** — GAS Sustainability and Climate Responsibility Policy.
- **GAS.ICB-01** — Policy for the accreditation of inspection bodies.
- **GAS.ICB-03** — Agreement on the terms and conditions of accreditation of inspection bodies (after approval).

This list is not exhaustive. The GAS Accreditation Agency may apply additional standards, guidelines, or internal documents where necessary to ensure a complete assessment of the body's conformity with the requirements established within its scope of activity.

3. TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

The terms used in this document are defined in ISO/IEC 17020. For the purposes of the GAS accreditation criteria, the following definitions are additionally applied.

3.1 Accreditation

Formal recognition by the GAS Accreditation Agency of the competence of an inspection body to perform specified inspection activities within an approved scope of accreditation in accordance with the requirements of ISO/IEC 17020 and GAS criteria.

3.2 Inspection Body

An organization that performs inspection activities, including the conformity assessment of inspection objects against established requirements, standards, technical regulations, or specifications, and makes decisions based on the results of inspections.

3.3 Inspection Activity

The process of examining inspection objects through observation, measurement, testing, or professional judgment in order to determine conformity with established requirements.

3.4 Object of Inspection

A product, process, service, installation, equipment, system, activity, or other defined object to which inspection activities are applied.

3.5 Inspection Decision

A decision made by an inspection body, based on inspection results and verified evidence, regarding the conformity or nonconformity of the inspection object with established requirements.

Types of Inspection Bodies

3.6 Type A Inspection Body

An inspection body that is an independent third party and is not involved in the design, manufacture, supply, installation, operation, or maintenance of the inspection objects.

A Type A inspection body has no financial, commercial, or other relationships that could influence its impartiality and ensures the highest level of independence.

3.7 Type B Inspection Body

An inspection body that is a clearly identifiable part of an organization that also performs activities related to the inspection objects, but provides inspection services exclusively to its parent or related organization.

The activities of a Type B inspection body shall be organizationally and functionally separated from other functions of that organization.

3.8 Type C Inspection Body

An inspection body that may perform inspection activities for both related and unrelated clients, provided that effective impartiality risk management measures are implemented and maintained.

A Type C inspection body may be integrated into a larger organization but shall demonstrate independence in inspection decision-making.

3.9 Impartiality

The principle of ensuring objectivity in inspection activities without the influence of conflicts of interest, bias, or undue external pressure.

3.10 Independence

The absence of any financial, organizational, commercial, or personal interests that could affect the objectivity of inspection decisions.

3.11 Scope of Accreditation

The boundaries of inspection activities within which an inspection body is recognized as competent by the GAS Accreditation Agency, including types of inspections, objects, methods, standards, or regulatory documents.

3.12 Witness Assessment

A form of assessment conducted as part of accreditation or surveillance, during which GAS representatives observe the actual inspection activities performed by an inspection body in order to evaluate its competence and conformity with requirements.

3.13 Impartiality Risk Management

A systematic process of identifying, analyzing, evaluating, and controlling risks that may affect the impartiality of an inspection body and the reliability of its decisions.

4. REQUIREMENTS

4.1 General Requirements

4.1.1 Legal Status and Responsibility

The inspection body shall be a legal entity or a clearly identifiable part of a legal entity that has:

- the legal capacity to perform inspection activities;
- the authority to enter into contracts with clients;
- defined responsibility for inspection results and decisions taken.

The inspection body bears full responsibility for:

- the reliability of inspection conclusions;
- conformity of inspection activities with the requirements of ISO/IEC 17020 and GAS criteria;
- compliance with accreditation conditions throughout the entire period of validity.

4.1.2 Organizational Structure

The inspection body shall have a documented organizational structure that:

- ensures a clear allocation of roles, responsibilities, and authorities;
- guarantees the independence of inspection activities from commercial, administrative, or other influences;
- excludes conflicts of roles between:
  - inspection activities;
  - commercial functions;
  - consulting, design, manufacturing, or maintenance of inspection objects.

The structure shall be appropriate to the type of inspection body (A, B, or C) and the declared scope of accreditation.

4.1.3 Type of Inspection Body

The inspection body shall clearly define and document its type in accordance with ISO/IEC 17020:

- Type A;
- Type B;
- Type C.

The type of inspection body:

- is determined by the inspection body and declared during the accreditation process;
- is confirmed during conformity assessment against ISO/IEC 17020 requirements;
- is reflected in the scope of accreditation.

Any change in the type of inspection body shall be considered a significant change and shall be subject to mandatory approval by the GAS Accreditation Agency.

4.1.4 Management System

The inspection body shall implement and maintain a management system that ensures:

- stability of inspection processes;
- traceability of decisions;
- quality control of inspection activities;
- adherence to the principles of impartiality and independence.

The management system may be:

- a standalone system in accordance with ISO/IEC 17020, or
- part of an integrated management system of the organization,

provided that all requirements of the standard and GAS criteria are fully met.

4.1.5 Impartiality Policy

The inspection body shall:

- have a documented impartiality policy;
- publicly confirm its commitment to the principles of objectivity and independence;
- define mechanisms for managing impartiality risks.

The impartiality policy shall be:

- approved by top management;
- communicated to personnel and involved parties;
- reviewed on a regular basis.

4.1.6 Resources

The inspection body shall have sufficient and appropriate resources to perform inspection activities, including:

- competent personnel;
- suitable equipment, measuring devices, and access to technical resources;
- infrastructure for storage, processing, and protection of information;
- financial stability sufficient to maintain impartial activities.

Resources shall be appropriate to:

- the scope of accreditation;
- the volume of inspection activities;
- the level of risks associated with inspection objects.

4.1.7 Responsibility for Inspection Results

The inspection body shall ensure that:

- inspection reports, conclusions, and decisions are based on verified evidence;
- inspection results are clear, unambiguous, and not misleading;
- clients are not misled regarding:
- the scope of inspection;
- the limits of the inspection body’s responsibility;
- the accreditation status.

The inspection body shall not transfer responsibility for inspection decisions to third parties.

4.1.8 Compliance with GAS Requirements

The inspection body shall comply with:

- all applicable GAS documents;
- the conditions of the accreditation agreement;
- decisions of the GAS Accreditation Agency taken within the framework of surveillance, reassessment, or appeals.

Failure to comply with the general requirements of this section constitutes grounds for:

- restriction of the scope of accreditation;
- suspension;
- withdrawal of accreditation.

4.2 Impartiality and Independence

The inspection body shall:

- identify, analyze, and document impartiality risks related to its activities, organizational structure, management, personnel, or clients;
- ensure independence of inspection activities from any commercial, financial, or other interests that may influence inspection results;
- guarantee the absence of conflicts of interest among personnel and external experts involved in inspection with respect to inspection objects or clients;
- ensure documented transparency of decisions related to:
  - appointment of inspectors;
  - conformity assessment;
  - formulation and approval of inspection results;
- implement a recusal procedure applicable in cases of actual or potential conflicts of interest;
- regularly review the effectiveness of impartiality measures and implement corrective actions where necessary.

4.3 Personnel Competence

The inspection body shall ensure that all personnel involved in inspection activities are competent, qualified, and duly authorized to perform their assigned functions.

For this purpose, the inspection body shall:

- define the roles and functions of personnel involved in inspection, including:
  - inspectors;
  - technical experts;
  - persons responsible for review and approval of inspection results;
  - managerial and support personnel influencing inspection outcomes;
- establish documented competence requirements for each role, covering:
  - education;
  - professional training;
  - practical experience;
  - knowledge of applicable regulatory documents, standards, inspection methods, and procedures;
- ensure initial and ongoing competence assessment of personnel, including:
  - verification of knowledge and skills;
  - observation of practical work;
  - periodic reassessment;

- implement a competence maintenance and development program, which may include:
  - training and professional development;
  - mentoring;
  - analysis of inspection results;
  - consideration of complaints, appeals, and remarks;
- ensure that engagement of external inspectors or experts is based on verified competence and written agreements governing:
  - responsibility;
  - confidentiality;
  - impartiality;
- maintain and retain records confirming:
  - personnel competence;
  - assessment results;
  - training and reassessment

— for the duration of accreditation and for at least **five years** after completion of inspection activities.

Personnel competence shall correspond to the type of inspection, the scope of accreditation, and the level of risk associated with inspection results.

4.4 Inspection Processes

The inspection body shall define, implement, and maintain documented inspection processes that ensure consistency, objectivity, and reliability of inspection results within the approved scope of accreditation.

Inspection processes shall include at least the following stages:

4.4.1 Initiation of Inspection

Prior to inspection, the inspection body shall ensure that the following are clearly defined and documented:

- the inspection object;
- the purpose and scope of inspection;
- applicable regulatory, technical, or contractual requirements;
- inspection methods;
- criteria for evaluation of results.

All inspection requirements shall be clear to both the inspection body and the inspection client.

4.4.2 Process Planning

Inspection planning shall take into account:

- complexity of the inspection object;
- potential risks;
- required level of personnel competence;
- the need for technical experts;
- impartiality and independence requirements.

Planning shall ensure sufficient time, resources, and technical means for conducting the inspection.

4.4.3 Carrying out an inspection

Inspection shall be carried out in accordance with:

- established methods and procedures;
- applicable standards and regulatory documents;
- the approved inspection plan.

During inspection, the inspection body shall:

- collect objective and verifiable evidence;
- document all significant observations;
- ensure traceability of inspection results;
- prevent any influence that could compromise objectivity of results.

4.4.4 Review and Approval of Results

The inspection body shall ensure that inspection results are subject to:

- review for completeness and conformity with established requirements;
- verification of logical consistency and justification of conclusions.

Person(s) performing the review and approval must be:

- competent;
- independent from performing the inspection, to the extent possible.

4.4.5 Inspection Reporting

Inspection results shall be documented in a report (inspection certificate, conclusion, or other defined document) containing:

- identification of the inspection body;
- identification of the inspection object;
- applied requirements and methods;

- inspection results and conclusions;
- any limitations or reservations related to the results.

Reports shall be accurate, clear, and not misleading to users of inspection results.

4.4.6 Change Management

The inspection body shall have mechanisms to manage changes that may affect inspection processes, including:

- changes in regulatory requirements;
- changes in methods or technical solutions;
- changes in personnel composition.

Such changes shall be timely assessed and, where necessary, reflected in inspection processes.

4.5 Management of Documented Information

4.5.1 General Requirements

The inspection body shall establish, implement, and maintain a documented information management system that ensures:

- reliability, integrity, and traceability of information used in inspection processes;
- protection of documents and records against loss, unauthorized access, alteration, or destruction;
- compliance with confidentiality requirements established by contracts, ISO/IEC 17020, and GAS documents;
- control of document validity, versions, and status.

4.5.2 Control of Documented Information

The inspection body shall:

- define a list of internal and external documents necessary for inspection activities (procedures, instructions, methods, templates, regulatory documents);
- ensure that all documents:
  - are identified (title, version, date);
  - are approved by authorized personnel prior to use;
  - are reviewed and updated as necessary;
- prevent the use of obsolete or invalid documents.

4.5.3 Control of Records

The inspection body shall maintain and retain records, including those related to:

- inspection applications and contracts;

- inspection planning and execution;
- collected evidence, observations, and results;
- reports, certificates, or other inspection outputs;
- personnel competence and authorization;
- internal audits, complaints, appeals, and corrective actions.

Records shall:

- be retained in a form ensuring integrity, legibility, and accessibility;
- be protected against unauthorized access;
- be retained for periods defined by the inspection body, but not less than the validity period of inspection results or as required by ISO/IEC 17020.

4.5.4 Confidentiality and Information Protection

The inspection body shall:

- ensure confidentiality of information obtained from clients and other parties;
- establish rules for disclosure of information only in cases provided for by contract or legislation;
- implement information protection measures, including access control to documents and records.

4.5.5 Electronic Systems and Remote Interaction

Where electronic systems or remote information exchange tools are used, the inspection body shall ensure that:

- such systems guarantee preservation, traceability, and protection of information;
- results obtained remotely have the same evidential value as results obtained during physical inspection;
- appropriate information security measures are applied.

4.5.6 Provision of Information to GAS

The inspection body shall provide GAS with information necessary for:

- assessment of conformity with accreditation requirements;
- surveillance and reassessment activities;
- maintenance of up-to-date data in GAS registers.

Information shall be provided in forms and through channels defined by GAS, ensuring confidentiality and data integrity.

4.6 Ethical Principles and Prevention of Conflicts of Interest

4.6.1 General Provisions

The inspection body shall act in accordance with high standards of professional ethics, integrity, and impartiality.

Any activity that may call into question the objectivity or independence of the inspection body is unacceptable.

Ethical behavior of personnel forms the basis of trust in inspection results and their recognition by interested parties.

4.6.2 Prevention of Conflicts of Interest

The inspection body shall:

- identify, analyze, and document potential or actual conflicts of interest in accordance with GAS.G-03;
- ensure that inspections are not performed where the body or involved persons have had consulting, design, commercial, employment, or other relationships with the client or inspection object that may affect impartiality (including within the last 24 months, unless otherwise defined by the body's policy and agreed with GAS);
- ensure that persons involved in inspection have no personal or organizational interest in the results;
- apply a recusal procedure where a potential conflict of interest arises.

All identified conflicts of interest shall be recorded in the inspection body's register and, upon request or in defined cases, reported to the GAS Accreditation Agency.

4.6.3 Personnel Independence

Personnel of the inspection body (internal and external) shall be independent of the client, owner of the inspection object, suppliers, and affiliated entities where such dependence may affect impartiality.

Any professional, business, or family relationships that may create impartiality risks shall be declared in writing prior to commencement of work.

The inspection body shall ensure:

- separation of inspection, commercial, and administrative functions;
- absence of financial or organizational dependence between inspectors and parties interested in the results;
- independence of decision-making related to approval or issuance of inspection results.

4.6.4 Declaration of Impartiality

Each member of personnel involved in inspection shall sign a Declaration of Impartiality and Confidentiality confirming:

- absence of conflicts of interest;
- understanding of the requirements of this document and GAS documents;
- obligation to adhere to principles of integrity and professional conduct.

4.6.5 Responsibility and Disciplinary Measures

In the event of violations of ethical norms or involvement in activities creating conflicts of interest:

- inspection results shall be subject to review (and re-inspection where necessary);
- the individual responsible may be removed or excluded from the inspection team;
- information shall be submitted to the GAS Accreditation Agency for further action in accordance with GAS.G-03.

4.7 Management of Risks Related to Inspection Body Activities

4.7.1 General Provisions

The inspection body shall identify, assess, and manage risks that may affect objectivity, reliability, and confidence in inspection results.

The risk management system shall be documented, regularly reviewed, and cover operational, legal, and reputational risks.

The process shall comply with the principles defined in GAS.G-05 (or another applicable GAS risk management document, depending on nomenclature).

4.7.2 Risk Identification and Classification

The inspection body shall systematically identify risks related to:

- impartiality and independence of personnel;
- incorrect or incomplete inspection conclusions;
- use of inappropriate inspection methods/criteria or outdated regulatory documents;
- engagement of personnel without verified competence;
- inadequate management of documented information and confidential data;
- reputational consequences arising from significant errors in inspection results.

The body shall maintain a risk register indicating description, category, level, and response measures.

4.7.3 Risk Assessment and Prioritization

Risks shall be assessed based on likelihood and potential impact on:

- reliability of inspection results;
- reputation of the inspection body and GAS;
- safety, conformity, or other significant characteristics of the inspection object (depending on scope).

Risk assessment criteria shall be documented and reviewed at least annually or after significant changes.

4.7.4 Management of Impartiality Risks

Particular attention shall be given to risks affecting impartiality. The inspection body shall:

- regularly analyze potential sources of conflicts of interest;
- implement control measures (segregation of functions, inspector rotation, independent review);
- ensure independent verification of results where impartiality is questioned;
- inform GAS of cases or risks that may compromise objectivity.

4.7.5 Monitoring and Improvement

The inspection body shall:

- regularly review the effectiveness of risk management measures;
- analyze incidents, complaints, client feedback, and internal audit results;
- implement corrective actions to minimize recurrence of risks;
- provide consolidated information on risk status in reports defined by GAS interaction procedures (where required).

4.8 Management of Complaints, Appeals, and Feedback

4.8.1 General Provisions

The inspection body shall have a documented procedure for receipt, analysis, and response to complaints, appeals, and feedback, ensuring impartiality, transparency, and traceability.

The procedure shall be accessible to interested parties and communicated to personnel.

The body may accept both identified and anonymous submissions where sufficient facts are provided for preliminary analysis.

All submissions shall be recorded in a complaints and appeals log indicating date, subject, responsible person, and review deadline.

4.8.2 Complaints

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction with the actions of the inspection body or its personnel not directly related to challenging inspection results.

The inspection body shall:

- acknowledge the receipt of a complaint within five working days;
- analyze and respond within 30 calendar days (or 60 days where justified, providing explanation);
- ensure that review is conducted by a person not involved in the subject of the complaint.

4.8.3 Appeals

An appeal is a request to review an inspection body decision related to inspection results.

Appeals shall be reviewed by an independent appeals committee or procedure ensuring impartiality and excluding persons involved in the original decision.

4.8.4 Feedback and Suggestions

Feedback includes recommendations or suggestions for improving inspection processes or client communication.

Such feedback shall be analyzed within internal quality management processes and may initiate corrective actions.

4.8.5 Confidentiality and Impartiality

All information obtained during review is confidential.

Persons submitting complaints or appeals shall not be subject to discrimination or restrictions in future relations with the inspection body.

4.8.6 Monitoring and Improvement

The inspection body shall regularly analyze received submissions to identify systemic issues and improve performance.

Consolidated information on outcomes may be included in periodic reporting, without disclosure of personal data.

4.9 Climate Responsibility and Reporting

4.9.1 General Provisions

The inspection body shall conduct its activities in accordance with principles of environmental and climate responsibility aligned with ESG and sustainable development approaches, recognizing its environmental impact and committing to minimize it within the scope of its activities.

Relevant aspects shall be integrated into management practices (work planning, resource use, travel/logistics approaches, digitalization).

4.9.2 Resource Management

The inspection body shall efficiently manage the use of energy, water, fuel, and paper, prioritizing digital processes and remote interaction where this does not affect reliability of inspection results.

Where travel is required, lower-carbon options are encouraged.

4.9.3 Emissions and Climate Impact Management

Where feasible, the inspection body shall account for and periodically assess its activity-related emissions (including travel and energy consumption) and define measures for reduction or compensation (where relevant policies exist).

4.9.4 Environmental Competence of Personnel

Personnel involved in inspection shall have basic awareness of sustainable development and climate responsibility principles relevant to the body's activities, including:

- general climate and sustainability objectives;
- principles of responsible resource use and impact minimization.

Training may form part of the personnel competence maintenance program.

4.9.5 Reporting and Monitoring

The inspection body shall provide the GAS Accreditation Agency with information on compliance with climate responsibility requirements in the format defined by GAS (where required by surveillance procedures).

Such materials may be analyzed by GAS as part of the assessment of social and environmental responsibility of accredited bodies.

5. ACCREDITATION PROCEDURE FOR INSPECTION BODIES (IBs)

5.1 General Provisions

The accreditation procedure for inspection bodies defines the sequence of actions by which the GAS Accreditation Agency evaluates the competence, impartiality, and conformity of an inspection body's activities with the requirements of the international standard ISO/IEC 17020 and applicable GAS documents.

Accreditation is a voluntary procedure based on the principles of:

- objectivity;
- technical reliability;
- impartiality;
- transparency;
- international recognition of inspection results.

All stages of accreditation are documented, and decisions on granting, maintaining, limiting, suspending, or withdrawing accreditation are taken by the independent GAS Accreditation Committee.

5.2 Stages of Accreditation

5.2.1 Submission of Application

The inspection body submits to the GAS Accreditation Agency an official application for accreditation together with a package of documents confirming:

- legal status and organizational structure;
- conformity with the requirements of ISO/IEC 17020;
- the management system (including procedures for impartiality, risk management, and control of documented information);
- description of the inspection scope (objects, methods, regulatory requirements);
- information on personnel, their competence and experience;
- results of internal audits and measures to maintain competence.

5.2.2 Preliminary Review of Documents

The GAS Accreditation Agency conducts a preliminary review of the submitted materials in order to:

- verify their completeness;
- assess the readiness of the inspection body for accreditation assessment;
- identify potential nonconformities or aspects requiring clarification.

Based on the results of the preliminary review, the applicant may be requested to provide additional information or to revise the submitted documents.

5.2.3 Competence Assessment

The competence assessment of the inspection body is carried out by GAS assessors and includes verification of:

- organizational and functional independence;
- competence of management and personnel involved in inspection activities;
- correct application of inspection methods;
- management of impartiality risks;
- procedures for review and approval of inspection results;
- the management system for documented information and records.

The assessment is conducted in accordance with ISO/IEC 17020 and GAS criteria.

5.2.4 On-site Assessment

The GAS Accreditation Agency conducts on-site or remote assessments during which the following are verified:

- actual performance of inspection processes;
- conformity of practical activities with declared procedures;
- competence of personnel under real working conditions;
- application of inspection methods and documentation of inspection results.

The assessment may include a witness assessment—observation of the inspection process without interference.

5.2.5 Accreditation Decision

Based on the assessment results, a report is prepared containing:

- identified conformities and nonconformities;
- analysis of evidence;
- recommendations regarding granting, limiting, or refusing accreditation.

The decision is taken by the GAS Accreditation Committee, whose members did not participate in the assessment.

The applicant is notified in writing of the decision and, where applicable, receives requirements for corrective actions and deadlines for their implementation.

5.2.6 Issuance of the Accreditation Certificate

In the event of a positive decision, the Agency issues a GAS accreditation certificate indicating:

- the scope of accreditation (types of inspection, objects, methods);
- the validity period of accreditation;
- surveillance conditions.

Information on the accredited inspection body is entered into the public GAS registry.

5.3 Surveillance of Accredited Inspection Bodies

During the validity period of accreditation, the GAS Accreditation Agency conducts surveillance assessments to confirm continued conformity with ISO/IEC 17020 and GAS documents.

Surveillance may include:

- document review;
- on-site or remote assessments;
- witness assessments;
- verification of implementation of corrective actions.

5.4 Suspension, Renewal, and Withdrawal

Accreditation may be suspended or withdrawn in the event of:

- noncompliance with ISO/IEC 17020 or GAS documents;
- identification of threats to impartiality;
- submission of false or misleading information;
- failure to implement corrective actions within established deadlines.

The decision is taken by the GAS Accreditation Committee and published in the official register.

5.5 Change of Scope of Accreditation

An inspection body has the right to submit an application for expansion, reduction, or clarification of its scope of accreditation.

Changes to the scope are made on the basis of:

- document review;
- additional competence assessment (if necessary);
- a decision of the GAS Accreditation Committee.

5.6 Archiving of Assessment Results

The GAS Accreditation Agency retains documents related to accreditation and surveillance for at least five years.

The inspection body is required to retain records related to inspection activities for at least the period specified in ISO/IEC 17020 and GAS requirements.

6. RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF ACCREDITED INSPECTION BODIES

6.1 General Provisions

The rights and obligations of accredited inspection bodies are determined by:

- the requirements of ISO/IEC 17020;
- this GAS Policy and Criteria;
- the Agreement on Accreditation Conditions concluded between the inspection body and the GAS Accreditation Agency;
- other applicable GAS documents.

This section establishes the general framework of responsibilities and authorities of inspection bodies within the scope of valid accreditation.

6.2 Rights of Accredited Inspection Bodies

An accredited inspection body has the right to:

- carry out inspection activities within the approved scope of accreditation;
- use the GAS accreditation mark in accordance with the requirements of GAS.G-02;
- refer to its accreditation status in official documents, reports, and communications;
- receive information on changes to GAS policies, criteria, and procedures;
- request clarifications from the GAS Accreditation Agency regarding the application of requirements;
- submit appeals and complaints in accordance with GAS.G-04;
- initiate changes to the scope of accreditation in accordance with the established procedure.

6.3 Obligations of Accredited Inspection Bodies

An accredited inspection body shall:

- continuously comply with the requirements of ISO/IEC 17020, GAS criteria, and the terms of the Accreditation Agreement;
- maintain impartiality, independence, and technical competence in all inspection processes;
- ensure that inspection results are objective, reliable, and duly substantiated;
- inform the GAS Accreditation Agency of any significant changes that may affect accreditation (structure, personnel, methods, scope of activities);
- ensure access for GAS assessors to premises, documents, and records within the scope of surveillance procedures;
- implement GAS decisions resulting from assessments, surveillance activities, or the consideration of appeals;
- pay accreditation and surveillance fees in a timely manner.

6.4 Use of the Accreditation Mark

An inspection body is entitled to use the GAS accreditation mark only under the following conditions:

- the mark is used exclusively within the approved scope of accreditation;
- the use of the mark does not create a misleading impression regarding the scope or nature of inspection activities;
- the mark is not used on products or in a manner that could be interpreted as product certification;
- all requirements of GAS.G-02 “Policy on the Use of Marks and References to GAS Accreditation” are complied with.

Violation of the rules for use of the accreditation mark constitutes grounds for corrective actions or application of sanctions.

7. FINAL PROVISIONS

7.1 This document forms an integral part of the regulatory framework of the Global Accreditation System (GAS) and is mandatory for all inspection bodies seeking to obtain or maintain GAS accreditation.

7.2 Compliance with the requirements of this document is monitored by the GAS Accreditation Agency during initial, surveillance, and reaccreditation assessments.

7.3 This document shall be reviewed at least once every three years, or in the event of changes to international standards or GAS policies.

7.4 The GAS Accreditation Agency is responsible for the review, updating, approval, and publication of the current edition of this document.

7.5. The current version of this document is published on the official website: **gas.international**.