Third Edition – 2025

GAS.MCB-03:2025

Additional GAS Accreditation Criteria for Management System Certification Bodies in the Aerospace and Defense Industry

Contents

0. FOREWORD

This document is a specialized supplement to GAS.MCB-01:2025 “Accreditation Criteria for Management System Certification Bodies” and is applied in conjunction with it. All basic GAS requirements related to the accreditation of management system certification bodies remain in force unless additional conditions or clarifications are specified in this document.

The document establishes industry-specific requirements for certification bodies that perform evaluation and certification of quality management systems at enterprises in the aerospace and defense industries, where quality management systems are associated with a high level of technical risk, flight safety requirements, configuration management, and the protection of state secrets.

The additional criteria are developed on the basis of the requirements of:

- international standards AS/EN 9100, AS/EN 9104-001;
- NATO guidelines and provisions (AQAP series: Allied Quality Assurance Publications);
- ISO 9001, ISO/IEC 17021-1;
- GAS policies and procedures.

This document constitutes an integral part of the regulatory framework of the Global Accreditation System (GAS) and is subject to application by bodies applying for accreditation or already accredited under aerospace and defense sector programs.

1. SCOPE OF APPLICATION

This document applies to certification bodies of quality management systems that:

- perform certification according to AS/EN 9100, AS/EN 9110, AS/EN 9120 standards;
- conduct certification in accordance with the requirements of AQAP 2110, AQAP 2210, AQAP 2310, and other defense standards;
- work with enterprises involved in NATO international programs, defense contracts, or aerospace industry supply chains.

The requirements of GAS.MCB-01:2025 apply to such bodies in full, unless otherwise specified in this document. This document supplements the basic criteria by establishing additional requirements for:

- personnel competence;
- information and access security;
- certification processes;
- configuration management and traceability;
- work with defense and aviation technologies.

The document is mandatory for bodies applying for accreditation or for the extension of the scope of GAS accreditation in the specified sectors.

2. NORMATIVE AND REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

This section lists the international, industry-specific, and internal GAS documents whose provisions are applied during the accreditation of quality management system certification bodies in the aerospace and defense industries.

The listed documents are valid as of the publication date of this document. In the event of their revision or replacement, the latest editions shall be used, including all amendments and supplements.

International Standards:

- **ISO/IEC 17021-1:2023** Conformity assessment — Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems — Part 1: Requirements;
- **ISO/IEC 17011:2017** Conformity assessment — Requirements for accreditation bodies accrediting conformity assessment bodies;
- **ISO 9001:2015** Quality management systems — Requirements;
- **AS/EN 9110** Requirements for Aviation Maintenance Organizations;
- **AS/EN 9120** Requirements for Aviation, Space and Defense Distributors;
- **AS/EN 9100** Quality Management Systems — Requirements for Aviation, Space and Defense Organizations;
- **AS/EN 9104-001** Requirements for Certification of Aviation, Space and Defense Organizations;
- **AQAP 2110** NATO Quality Assurance Requirements for Design, Development and Production;
- **AQAP 2310** NATO Quality Assurance Requirements for Aviation and Space Defense Supply Chain.

Internal GAS Documents

- **GAS.MCB-01:2025** — Accreditation Criteria for Management System Certification Bodies (baseline document applied together with this standard);
- **GAS.MCB-02:2025** — List of Mandatory GAS Documents for Management System Certification Bodies;
- **GAS.MCB-03:2025** — GAS Policy on Accreditation of Management System Certification Bodies;

- **GAS.G-01:2025** — Code of Ethics for GAS Experts, Assessors, and Personnel;
- **GAS.G-02:2025** — Policy on the Use of GAS Accreditation Marks and References;
- **GAS.G-03:2025** — Policy on Conflict of Interest and Impartiality;
- **GAS.G-04:2025** — Appeals and Complaints Procedure;
- **GAS.G-05:2025** — GAS Policy on Sustainable Development and Climate Responsibility.

This list is not exhaustive. The GAS Accreditation Agency may apply additional standards, guidelines, or internal documents if necessary to ensure the full verification of a body's conformity with the requirements established in its field of activity.

3. TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

3.1 General Provisions

The terms and definitions provided in GAS.MCB-01:2025 "Accreditation Criteria for Management System Certification Bodies" apply to this document.

This section provides additional terms specific to the aerospace and defense sectors.

3.2 Interpretation of Terms

If terms are not defined below, they shall be interpreted in accordance with ISO 9000, ISO/IEC 17021–1, AS/EN 9100, AQAP 2110, and ISO/IEC 17000.

Aerospace product — a product, part, component, or system intended for use in aviation, space, or defense equipment, which affects flight safety or the performance of defense functions.

Configuration management — a systematic approach to establishing, controlling, and maintaining product characteristics throughout its entire life cycle, ensuring conformity to technical requirements and the consistency of critical parameters.

Traceability — the ability to trace the history, application, or location of an element (product, materials, data, processes), which is a critical requirement for ensuring flight safety and the reliability of defense systems.

Special processes — processes whose results cannot be fully verified by inspection or testing and therefore require special approval, qualification, and continuous monitoring (for example: welding, soldering, heat treatment, non-destructive testing).

Defence contract — an agreement for the supply of products, works, or services of military purpose that requires the application of special requirements for quality management systems, confidentiality management, and information security.

Defence classified information — information whose access, processing, and storage are restricted by law or contractual obligations due to its significance for defense capability, national security, or international commitments.

4. REQUIREMENTS

This section establishes additional requirements that must be met by quality management system certification bodies operating in the aerospace and defense industries in order to obtain or maintain GAS accreditation.

The requirements supplement GAS.MCB-01:2025 and take into account the heightened standards of safety, confidentiality, and technical competence established by international and industry regulations (AS/EN 9100, AQAP 2110, IAQG, etc.).

The certification body shall:

- comply with industry requirements regarding configuration management, traceability, and the protection of critical technologies;
- demonstrate competence in the application of specialized standards and procedures;
- implement a management system that ensures compliance with defense and aviation safety requirements.

4.1 General Requirements

The certification body shall:

- have policies and procedures in place to ensure the protection of defense and technological information, including access restrictions, cryptographic protection, data transfer control, and information security;
- implement a risk assessment mechanism for national security, defense capability, critical infrastructure, and the supply chain;
- demonstrate the capability to conduct certification in accordance with industry standards (AS/EN 9100, AQAP 2110, AQAP 2310) and NATO regulations, including requirements for traceability, configuration management, and special processes;
- maintain established communication channels with the relevant governmental authorities in the event that critical nonconformities are identified which may affect defense security or flight safety;
- ensure that decision-making processes are based on an expanded assessment of risks and evidence of conformity.

4.2 Additional Requirements for the Evaluation of Client Processes

The certification body shall ensure that, during audits of management systems in the defense and aerospace sectors, particular attention is given to processes that have a critical impact on safety, technical reliability, and national interests.

The body shall:

- apply extended assessment criteria to processes that affect airworthiness, operational safety, and compliance with defense contracts;
- verify that the client has configuration and traceability management systems in place, including control over changes to design, materials, and components;
- evaluate special processes, the results of which cannot be fully verified after execution (for example, welding, heat treatment, non-destructive testing), to ensure their approval, qualification, and continuous monitoring;
- verify the client's compliance with information security and restricted access requirements when activities involve state secrets or sensitive technologies;
- confirm the presence of client procedures for risk assessment affecting defense capability, product safety, and the product life cycle.

4.3 Personnel Competence

A certification body that performs evaluation in the aerospace and defense industries shall, in addition to the requirements of GAS.MCB-01:2025, ensure the following:

4.3.1 Additional Qualification Requirements

Personnel (auditors, experts, and decision-makers) shall:

- have relevant technical education (mechanical engineering, aerospace technologies, weapons systems, or related fields);
- have confirmed experience participating in quality programs under AS/EN 9100, AQAP, or equivalent standards;
- possess knowledge of requirements for configuration management, traceability, special processes, and risk control related to flight safety/defense.

4.3.2 Access Security Requirements

- The body shall ensure that auditors possess the appropriate level of clearance, if required by the client or by government regulation.
- All audit participants shall sign confidentiality agreements regarding the non-disclosure of defense or classified information.

4.3.3 Maintenance of Competence

- The body is required to provide regular training for personnel on updates to AS/EN 9100, AQAP, and NATO requirements.
- All professional development programs shall include assessment of the ability to apply the requirements of the standards in high-risk sectors.

4.4 Certification Processes

A certification body operating in the aerospace and defense industries shall, in addition to GAS.MCB-01:2025, ensure the following:

- certification is carried out in accordance with the industry requirements of AS/EN 9104-001 and AQAP for defense contracts;
- the possibility for GAS to perform witness assessments of audits for clients with elevated risk levels or strategic importance;
- assessment of critical processes (configuration management, traceability, special processes) as a mandatory component of the certification audit;
- documented justification of certification decisions, taking into account industry requirements and the results of witness audits.

Audit reports shall:

- contain detailed information on the status of the client's critical processes and their conformity with industry requirements;
- include the results of risk assessments affecting product safety, defense capability, or airworthiness;
- be retained for no less than 10 years, or longer if required by the defense contract or NATO requirements;
- be processed in compliance with GAS requirements for confidentiality, information protection, and traceability.

4.5 Information Security and Confidentiality

In addition to the requirements of GAS.MCB-01:2025, a certification body operating in the aerospace and defense industries shall ensure:

- the protection of defense and technological information in accordance with NATO requirements, national legislation, export control regulations, and non-disclosure agreements;
- restricted access to the client's confidential data exclusively for individuals who possess a confirmed level of clearance or special authorization;
- the use of technical and organizational security measures, including encryption, control of information transfer, and data storage in a secure environment;

- mandatory signing of non-disclosure commitments by all auditors, experts, and involved personnel;
- prohibition of transferring materials containing elements of state or military secrecy without written authorization from the competent authority or the defense sector customer.

4.6 Risk Management

A certification body operating in the aerospace and defense industries shall implement a risk management system that takes into account the increased level of responsibility, technical requirements, and strategic importance of defense products.

The certification body shall:

- identify, classify, and document risks related to flight safety, national defense, leakage of confidential information, supply chain continuity, and legal compliance;
- apply a risk-based approach when planning audits, forming the audit team, and making certification decisions;
- implement response mechanisms for critical risks, including immediate notification of authorized bodies in the event nonconformities are identified that could affect defense capability or product safety;
- ensure periodic review of risks based on the analysis of audit results, complaints, witness assessments, and changes in regulatory documents;
- maintain records of risks, measures taken, and the results of their analysis, and provide them to the GAS Accreditation Agency upon request.

5. FINAL PROVISIONS

5.1. This document is a mandatory supplement to GAS.MCB-01:2025 and applies exclusively to quality management system certification bodies operating in the aerospace and defense industries.

5.2. The requirements of this document shall be fulfilled during initial accreditation, extension of the scope of accreditation, and surveillance assessments of certification bodies in the specified sectors.

5.3. Compliance with the requirements is monitored by the GAS Accreditation Agency through assessments, witness observations of audits, and analysis of reporting information.

5.4. The document shall be reviewed by the GAS Accreditation Agency in the event of changes to international industry standards (AS/EN 9100, AQAP), NATO requirements, or GAS policies, but not less than once every three years.

5.5. The current version of the document is published on the official GAS website (gas.international) and is applicable from the date of its approval.