

Circular No.: EIAC/IB/01/2026

Date: 07/04/2026

To: All EIAC-Accredited Inspection Bodies

**Subject: EIAC Transition Plan for the ISO/IEC 17020:2012 to the
ISO/IEC 17020:2026**

Following the publication of ISO/IEC 17020:2026 — Conformity assessment — Requirements for bodies performing inspection, the Emirates International Accreditation Centre hereby issues this policy to establish the requirements, approach, and timeline for the transition of all EIAC-accredited Inspection Bodies to the revised standard.

This transition is mandated to ensure continued compliance with international best practices, maintain the integrity and reliability of inspection activities, and uphold the confidence of regulators, stakeholders, and the public in accredited inspection services.

All EIAC-accredited Inspection Bodies are required to implement the transition in accordance with the provisions and timeline defined in the attached policy. The transition process has been structured to be completed within a defined three-year period and will be verified through EIAC's routine assessment activities.

1 PURPOSE

This policy defines the requirements and timelines for the transition of all inspection bodies (IBs) accredited by Emirates International Accreditation Centre from ISO/IEC 17020:2012 to ISO/IEC 17020:2026.

The objective is to ensure a structured, efficient, and risk-based transition without imposing unnecessary burden on accredited IBs.

2 SCOPE

This policy applies to:



- All EIAC-accredited Inspection Bodies
- All applicants seeking accreditation under ISO/IEC 17020
- All EIAC assessment activities related to ISO/IEC 17020

3 REFERENCES

- ISO/IEC 17020:2012
- ISO/IEC 17020:2026
- ILAC and IAF transition frameworks (where applicable)

4 POLICY STATEMENT

EIAC mandates that all accredited IBs shall transition to ISO/IEC 17020:2026 by 26/03/2029.

Verification of transition shall be integrated into planned surveillance and reassessment visits.

Failure to complete the transition within the defined timeline will result in suspension and withdrawal of accreditation.

5 TRANSITION TIMELINE

5.1 Phase 1: Awareness & Gap Analysis (3 Months: 31/03/2026 – 30/06/2026)

IBs shall:

- Obtain and review ISO/IEC 17020:2026
- Conduct a documented gap analysis (fill the GAP Analysis Checklist attached to this circular)
- Develop a transition implementation plan

EIAC Role:

- Raise awareness through trainings and official communications

5.2 Phase 2: Implementation (3 Months: 01/07/2026 – 30/09/2026)

IBs shall:

- Implement revised requirements



- Update documentation and procedures
- Train personnel
- Conduct internal audits
- Perform management review

EIAC Role:

- Assess implementation progress during planned visits

5.3 Phase 3: Verification & Closure (2 Years: 01/10/2026 – 26/03/2029)

IBs shall:

- Demonstrate full compliance with ISO/IEC 17020:2026
- Close all identified nonconformities

EIAC Role:

- Verify compliance during routine surveillance and reassessment visits
- Issue updated accreditation certificates upon successful transition

6 TRANSITION ASSESSMENT APPROACH

Transition verification shall be embedded within:

- Surveillance assessments
- Reassessment visits

No special visits shall be conducted solely for transition purposes. Also, no additional man-days shall be allocated specifically for transition verification. Nevertheless, EIAC reserves the right to increase the number of assessment man-days where deemed necessary based on the complexity, scope, or risk associated with the inspection body.

Assessment shall focus on:

- Updated management system
- Implementation effectiveness
- Personnel competence
- Alignment of inspection activities with ISO/IEC 17020:2026



7 NEW APPLICANTS DURING TRANSITION

- From 01 September 2026, all new applicants shall be assessed only against ISO/IEC 17020:2026
- Applications submitted prior to this date may be assessed against ISO/IEC 17020:2012, subject to completion of transition within the defined timeline

8 ACCREDITATION DECISIONS DURING TRANSITION

- Accreditation may continue to be granted and maintained against ISO/IEC 17020:2012 during the transition period
- All accreditations shall be fully transitioned to ISO/IEC 17020:2026 by 30 March 2029

9 CERTIFICATE TRANSITION

EIAC will update accreditation certificates to reference ISO/IEC 17020:2026 upon:

- Successful verification of compliance
- Closure of all transition-related nonconformities

10 RESPONSIBILITIES

Inspection Bodies (IBs):

- Ensure timely transition
- Maintain documented evidence
- Demonstrate compliance during assessments

EIAC:

- Ensure consistent implementation of this policy
- Integrate transition within routine assessments
- Monitor progress across all accredited IBs

11 FINAL PROVISIONS

- This policy is mandatory for all EIAC-accredited IBs



- Any deviation requires formal approval from EIAC
- EIAC reserves the right to amend this policy where necessary

All EIAC-accredited Inspection Bodies are expected to give this transition the necessary priority and ensure timely implementation in accordance with the specified requirements and timeline.

EIAC will monitor the progress of transition through its routine assessment activities and will take appropriate actions where necessary to ensure full compliance within the defined period.

For any clarification regarding this policy, please contact your Case/File Manager.

Yousef Aljasmi

**Director, Inspection Bodies Accreditation Department
Emirates International Accreditation Centre (EIAC)**