



Maritime &  
Coastguard  
Agency

# Technical Specification for the provision of ISO 9001 audit and certification services for the Agency's Quality Management System

October 2021

# Foreword

The Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) is an executive agency of the Department of Transport.

Our vision is to be a world-class organisation that is committed to preventing loss of life, continuously improving maritime safety and protecting the marine environment:

*Safer lives, safer ships, cleaner seas*

The MCA can provide a full range of Coastguard functions, counter pollution, survey, inspection and enforcement activities and has 13 major business activities:

- Survey
- Inspection
- Enforcement
- Seafarer Services
- Ship Registration
- Navigation Services
- Strategic Prevention Design/Development
- Training for Technical Staff
- Coastguard Services
- Pollution Response and Salvage
- Stakeholder Communication
- Ministerial Services
- Regulatory Process



These activities are supported by support services responsible for providing a range of administrative functions including infrastructure, MCA people, financial management, health & safety, information assurance and building security, procurement and corporate assurance & risk.

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, in our capacity as a public body we have a statutory duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and promote good race relations between people of different groups.

Contractors will be expected to ensure that the service they provide promotes good relations between the MCA and its customers and does not directly or indirectly discriminate on the grounds of race in accordance with both the Act and the Duty.

The MCA's Quality Management System (QMS) has been certified to the ISO 9001 Standard since March 2001. Certification to the new ISO 9001 Standard was achieved in February 2018 and the current certificate expires in July 2024.

The MCA are looking for a partnership with an ISO9001:2015 certification body that not only provides assurance on compliance, but also majors on continual improvement, the sharing of industry best practice and provides advice in keeping with the Agency's drive to reduce unnecessary bureaucracy. Our business goal is to streamline our processes and documentation system to make them more effective and user friendly.

You are invited to submit a tender for the following contract:

**TO PROVIDE ISO 9001 STANDARD AUDIT AND CERTIFICATION SERVICES FOR THE  
MARITIME AND COASTGUARD AGENCY'S QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

# 1. Background

The current contract to provide audit and certification services expires on 28<sup>th</sup> Feb 2022.

The Agency is responsible throughout the UK for implementing key elements of the Government's maritime safety policy by delivering UK and international Coastguard requirements; certification of ships and seafarers in accordance with UK and international safety regulations; working to prevent the loss of lives around the UK coast and at sea and; working to prevent coastal pollution.

The Agency has a total of 1237 permanent staff who fulfil both administrative and operational functions.

The Agency's national and international Coastguard functions are discharged through HM Coastguard which currently has a network of one UK Joint Rescue Coordination Centre (JRCC UK), 9 Maritime Rescue Coordination Centres (MRCCs) and one Maritime Rescue Sub Centre (MRSC), staffed by uniformed Coastguards, providing a 24-hour response capability around the seas and coast of the UK. There are approximately 3,500 Volunteer Coastguard Rescue Officers, forming 329 Coastguard Rescue Teams (CRTs) who assist in this role and have their own management structure.

The Agency's ship survey, inspection and certification responsibilities are discharged through its network of 13 Marine Offices (MO).

The Agency's headquarters in Southampton is where more than half the permanent work force is based, undertaking the writing of legislation, policy and procedures. All of the support functions are based in HQ, which is managed across a number of Directorates. The Office of the Chief Executive is also in HQ. There is additionally the Registry of Shipping and Seamen in Cardiff, a Training Centre at Lee on the Solent, Hampshire and business support offices at Beverley, Aberdeen and Swansea. The Agency's current scope of QMS certification encompasses all activities carried out by the Agency including evaluating, selecting and monitoring the performance of external providers that conduct activities on behalf of the Agency.

A document detailing current locations of the main MCA offices is enclosed at Annex A for your information. Further details of the Agency's roles and responsibilities, including the Agency's Annual Plan and Accounts are available on the Agency's website [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/maritime-and-coastguard-agency](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/maritime-and-coastguard-agency). Once on this home page, click on:

1. 'Read more about what we do' then
2. 'Corporate information'

## 2. Management of the Agency's Quality Management System

The MCA's Quality Management System is the responsibility of all staff, but the policy and day to day governance is managed by the Head of Internal Audit & Assurance (IAA), overseen by the Director of Finance and Audit. IAA comprises of Lead Auditors and administrative support for the Internal Assurance Audit Programme. The successful Bidder will be expected to work closely with the IAA team

## 3. Duration of the Contract

The contract will commence with an initial setting-up period of approximately 8 weeks from 4<sup>th</sup> January 2022 to 28<sup>th</sup> February 2022. The general management period will run for a period of 36 months from 1<sup>st</sup> March 2022 to 28<sup>th</sup> February 2025.

**Briefing** - The successful Bidder will be expected to attend initial briefings with MCA personnel. The purpose of these meetings will be to give the Bidder the opportunity to meet MCA personnel, to provide a greater insight into MCA management and organisational structure, and to form a closer understanding of MCA Audit activities, procedures and objectives.

The briefing will be used to establish a plan for the exchange of information and implementation of key events during the setting up period.

**Collation and Analysis** – The successful Bidder will be provided with an overview of the MCA's locations, activities undertaken and copies of MCA's recent internal audits and findings database. The successful Bidder will be expected to analyse the information and make further enquiries as necessary to ensure a comprehensive audit plan is achieved.

**Liaise with MCA on Policies and Procedures** - During the setting up period, the successful Bidder and the MCA will agree the finer details of the policies and procedures. The Bidders should provide their indicative policies and procedures. In particular, this will include the format of standard reports to be provided by the Bidder.

It is anticipated that these procedures and documents will form the basis of a performance report where quality will be measured through Key Performance Indicators during the period of the contract. The performance report needs to have been completed by the end of the setting up period.

**Contract Cover** - The successful Bidder will be required to ensure that the contract is effective from 1<sup>st</sup> March 2022.

## 4. Requirements

### 4.1 External Surveillance Audit

Bidders must have the resource, capability and structure to conduct surveillance audits to a high standard at all MCA locations taking account of the 24-hour widely dispersed nature of the MCA's operations. Surveillance audits may also include witnessing on board ship inspections, coastal rescue exercises or other similar activities which allow service delivery to be monitored and assessed. The number, duration and organisation of surveillance audits are for the Bidder to determine, but they must meet UKAS requirements and consider the Agency's programme of internal assurance and other audits. An implementation plan and a specimen surveillance audit programme should be provided to demonstrate how the Bidder will meet the above requirements. In addition, Bidders will have to demonstrate they can provide IRCA registered auditors with the appropriate skills and sector knowledge to effectively deliver audits across the full range of MCA activities.

High quality and constructive audit reports will be required which contain sufficient detail to both provide assurance to the MCA on compliance and enable the MCA to continually improve its performance, including through the sharing of industry best practice and providing advice on reducing unnecessary bureaucracy. Bidders should explain how they would meet this requirement and provide an example of an audit report and a copy of the organisation's Code of Practice and complaints policy as part of the tender documents.

## 5. Service Level Agreement

The Head of IAA will identify and agree key performance indicators (KPIs) which will be used to monitor the success of the contract. The following KPIs are to be interpreted as indicative only at this stage, and firm KPIs will be negotiated and agreed by the Head of IAA following the award of the contract. If the Bidder has alternative KPIs which achieve an equivalent or improved result, details should be provided within the tender documents.

- Notification and fulfilment of planned audit programme: An annual audit programme will be required to be submitted by 31 October each year, in order to allow IAA to build external audit activities into its planning and budget profiling in advance of the commencement of the forthcoming financial year.
- Promptness and accuracy of report writing: Audit reports to be submitted to the MCA within 10 working days following completion of audit activity.
- Feedback from audit questionnaires: Feedback forms will be issued to monitor the quality of the services provided and identify opportunities for improvement.

- Submission of documents: Invoices to cover the costs of surveillance visits / audit activities must be submitted to MCA for payment within one month of the activity taking place.
- Certificates: Following successful recertification to the ISO 9001 standard, certificates, (including electronic copies) are to be issued within one month of successful recertification.
- Compliance with contract review requirements: Contract review meetings with the Head of Internal Assurance and/or ISO compliance manager to take place at least every 6 months, or as and when required.

KPIs will be reviewed and revised on a regular basis to ensure continual improvement.

## **6. Presentations**

The Department may hold interviews/require presentations from some or all bidders.

## Annex A:

### MCA Main Locations:

Location	Comments
Colchester Marine Office (MO)	Includes a Coastal Operations Base (COB)
Large Yacht Services & Tyne MO (South Shields)	
Humber MRCC (Bridlington)	includes a COB
Hull MO & Business Unit (BU) (Beverley)	
Dover MRCC & MO	Includes a COB
London Coastguard MRSC (Woolwich)	
HMCG Coastal Training Centre (Daedalus, Lee on the Solent)	
Joint Rescue Coordination Centre (JRCC) (Fareham)	Includes the Air Rescue Coordination Centre (ARCC)
MCA Headquarters & Southampton MO	
Plymouth MO	
Falmouth MRCC & MO	
Cardiff MO & Register of Shipping and Seamen	
Swansea BU	Includes a COB
Milford Haven MRCC & MO	
Holyhead MRCC	Includes a COB
Liverpool MO (Crosby, Liverpool)	Includes a COB
Belfast MRCC & MO (Bangor, Northern Ireland)	Includes a COB
Glasgow MO	
Stornoway MRCC	Includes a COB
Shetland MRCC (Lerwick)	Includes a COB
Aberdeen MRCC & MO	Includes a COB

**Note:** In addition to the main sites listed above, there are currently a further 18 COBs occupied by full time HMCG staff, namely Coastguard Operations Area Commanders (COACs) and Senior Coastal Operations Officers (SCOOs), and over 300 Coastguard Rescue Stations (not permanently manned) where rescue equipment is stored and training for volunteer Coastguard Rescue Officers takes place. These are located around the coast of the United Kingdom, including Northern Ireland, the Scottish Islands, Isles of Scilly and the Isle of Wight.



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