	SOG-IS Recognition Agreement Management Committee Policies and Procedures

Document ID: JIL Temp_Covid_Shadow_Procedure_Annex
Subject: JIL Temporary Covid19 pandemic annex to the VPA/Shadow Procedure regarding on-site visits

Introduction

1   As of 2020, the present COVID-19-crisis and related worldwide restrictions on travelling, rules on hygiene and social distancing have interfered with the established SOGIS practices of the operation in the evaluation and certification business.

2   To support continuity of business, the policy containing rules and certification principles has been approved and published, see https://www.sogis.eu/documents/mra/JIL-TempCertCoronaPolicy-v1.4.pdf

3   SOGIS-MRA members are aware that the provisions defined in this document gain a certain lower assurance than in place normally. Nevertheless, SOGIS-MRA members accept this as a temporary solution to support the parties involved in CC certification during the current COVID-19 crisis and to be able to continue the business.

Applying members

4   The temporary provisions defined in this document apply to the Certification Schemes of Consuming Member Participants of SOGIS-MRA as listed at https://www.sogis.eu/uk/status_participant_en.html that apply to change their status to Authorized Member Participants.

Expiry of use

5   The temporary provisions defined in this document may be used temporarily only, limited to the end of December 2022 or earlier, if travelling restrictions are lifted country by country. In the case of a longer-lasting pandemic, the rules will be revised and extended if necessary.

Scope of the Annex

6   In general, SOG-IS-shadow-VPA–v2.0, https://www.sogis.eu/documents/mra/SOG-IS-shadow-VPA-v2.0.pdf applies. The scope subject to temporary measures is illustrated in Fig.1.
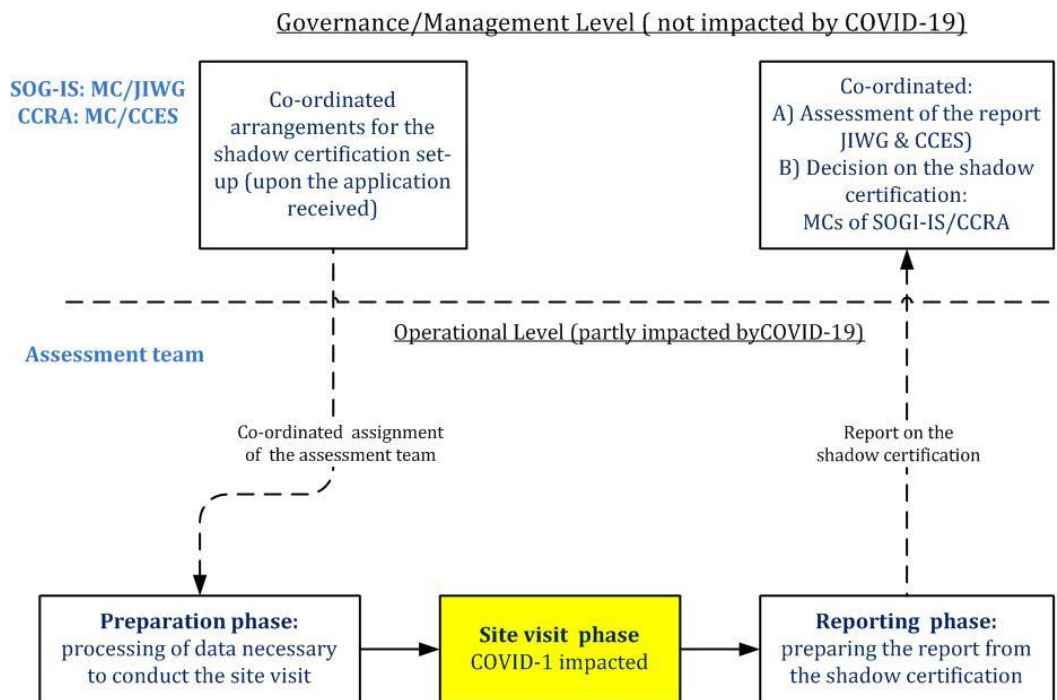

Fig. 1The scope of temporary measures

7   All steps of the process (see Fig. 1) not impacted by COVID-19 are not changed.

8   The site visit phase shall be organized as described in the temporary procedure adopted by SOG-IS, i.e. "JIL Temporary Covid19 pandemic operational SOGIS evaluation and certification policy and rules" regarding on-site audits in Development sites (ALC-related evaluators actions).

9   In particular, item 14 of the document mentioned above shall be followed for gathering "Alternative evidence" and the scope of confidentiality declarations.

10   "Alternative evidence" may   include when available accreditation certificates accompanied by relevant accreditation scopes, both for the CB and ITSEFs concerned, issued by the National Accreditation Body to be reviewed by the Assessment team before the on-site audit.

11   Confidentiality declarations specific for the Assessment team are covered in the Section "Additional Responsibilities of Assessment team Leader".

Virtual on-site audit

Additional Responsibilities of Scheme Being Assessed

12   The Scheme is responsible for providing a videoconference tool that can adequately protect the information shared for the purpose of conducting the audit and that is allowed to be used by all Assessment team members.

13   The video conferencing tool shall ensure audio and video transmission of good quality, with recording capabilities.

14   Each of the Assessment team members shall be properly authorized by the Scheme to use the videoconference tool.

15   The Scheme shall provide virtual room(s) (minimum 3) on the Leader of the Assessment team's request and during the audit for the exclusive use of the Assessment team.

16   In order to provide access to all evaluation and certification documentation that was used by the Scheme during its oversight process during the virtual on-site audit, the Scheme shall provide a separate workspace that allows the Scheme and the Assessment team to consult sensitive information.

Additional Responsibilities of Assessment team Leader

17   The Scheme Point of Contact is responsible for ensuring that all confidentiality declarations from the team are transferred to the Scheme. The Scheme shall accept confidentiality declarations signed with qualified electronic signature or scans with a handwritten signature. At the same time, originals shall be sent to the Schema via post before the date of virtual audit.

18   The Leader of the Assessment team is responsible for ensuring that every team member can securely transmit/receive (or upload/download) an enciphered file containing sensitive information.

19   The Scheme Point of Contact is responsible for ensuring that every team member can process sensitive information locally using secured processing facilities. In particular, all members of the team shall provide the Scheme with their pgp communication keys.

20   The Scheme Point of Contact is responsible for informing the team on the necessity of removing any material containing sensitive information in possession of the team gathered during the audit. All members of the team are solely responsible for removing such material from their processing facilities.

Conducting a virtual on-site audit

21   In general, relevant documents presented during the audit are available by using the videoconference tool based on the rule "you see what is presented".

22   Under exceptional circumstances, particularly in case the document containing evaluation evidence is long and hard to read and upon request of the Leader of Assessment team, the Scheme shall allow downloading the document from the workspace. The document shall be enciphered using the communication keys of members of the Assessment team.

23   All interviews with specific persons on-site responsible for certain aspects of certifications or evaluations shall be conducted by using the videoconference tool.

24   The audit session may be recorded on request of the Leader of the Assessment team, or the Scheme upon permission of the Leader of Assessment team. The recordings are a possession of the Scheme and may be used to resolve any dispute that might arise during and after a virtual on-site audit.

Validity and reuse

25   Based on evidence gathered during the virtual on-site audit, the Leader of the Assessment team shall prepare the report according to the standard procedure.

26   If the shadow procedure is successful for the Scheme, the report may specify specific findings/evidence procedures to be checked during the next physical VPA for the Scheme.