

## ACOT Procedure 101

Revision Letter: I

Revision Date: 16-Feb-2023



## ACOT Operating Policy / General Requirements

### Purpose/Summary:

This Americas Aerospace Quality Group (AAQG) Americas Certification Oversight Team (ACOT) operating procedure is established in accordance with ACOT Procedure 100 to manage ACOT operational activities and support effective operation of the Industry Controlled Other Party (ICOP) scheme; in accordance with the 9104 series of standards.

### Definitions:

“At Large” Member - A non-voting ACOT member with interest and experience in or related to ACOT activities; acting on the behalf of the AAQG. These members are appointed by the ACOT Chairman and approved by the Americas sector.

Resolution - A clarification of how the 9104 series of documents are applied to a sector management process

### Acronyms:

AA	Aerospace Auditor
AAB	Auditor Authentication Body
AAQG	Americas Aerospace Quality Group
AB	Accreditation Body
ACOT	Americas Certification Oversight Team (replaces “RMC”)
AEA	Aerospace Experience Auditor
AQMS	Aerospace Quality Management System
CB	Certification Body
COT	Certification Oversight Team
IAAR	Independent Association of Accredited Registrars
IAQG	International Aerospace Quality Group
ICOP	Industry Controlled Other Party
N/A	Not Applicable
OEM	Original Equipment Manufacturer
RMC	Registration Management Committee (replaced by “ACOT”)
SAE-ITC	SAE Industry Technologies Consortia
SMS	Sector Management Structure
TPAB	Training Provider Approval Body

### Process Flow:

N/A

### Requirements:

#### 1. The AAQG ACOT Charter

The AAQG ACOT is a committee established by and reporting to the AAQG, a sector of the IAQG, established to manage the application of the sector



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scheme. The ACOT is the oversight body by which the requirements for an approval, recognition, certification, or authentication of AB's, CB's, AAB's, TPAB's, and AQMS Auditors to AQMS standards are determined in accordance with the requirements of the 9104 series of standards. The ACOT is responsible for supporting the ICOP scheme in the Americas sector and ensuring conformity to the requirements of the 9104 series of standards.

### **2. ACOT Membership and Voting Structure**

#### **2.1. The ACOT membership and voting structure shall consist of:**

- 2.1.1. Aviation, Space, and Defense OEM companies operating in the Americas sector. Each OEM member company of the AAQG shall have a member on the ACOT. (Each OEM has only one membership vote but may have more than one representative) Only AAQG OEM member company representatives have voting rights.
- 2.1.2. One member from each recognized AB in the Americas sector (Each AB representative is a non-voting member).
- 2.1.3. One or more members from ACOT-recognized, AB-accredited CBs operating within the Americas sector. (Each CB member is a non-voting member).
  - 2.1.3.1 CBs may be represented on the ACOT by industry associations, such as the Independent Association of Accredited Registrars (IAAR).
- 2.1.4. One member representing SAE International and/or SAE-ITC. (The SAE member is a non-voting member).
- 2.1.5. Specialty members. Specialty members may be appointed by the Chairman but shall be approved by the ACOT. Specialty members are non-voting members. Specialty members are defined as:
  - 2.1.5.1 Representatives from Regulatory Authorities (e.g., NASA, FAA, DoD, MDA and/or Academia). It is expected that these members are regular attendees of the RMC meetings.
  - 2.1.5.2 At Large” Members. Persons who in the past have demonstrated significant commitment and influence with the ACOT (e.g., past chairpersons of the ACOT or COT).

### **3. The Functional Structure of the ACOT – Leadership Roles**

- 3.1. **The ACOT Chairperson** - The Chairperson of the ACOT shall be elected by the full ACOT and shall perform as a voting member. The ACOT Chairperson shall be subjected to an annual review by the full ACOT for term renewal.

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- 3.1.1. The Role of the Chairperson
  - 3.1.1.1. The Chairperson shall take full responsibility for all ACOT activities and act as a sponsor for ACOT sub-teams.
  - 3.1.1.2. The Chairperson shall represent the ACOT on the Americas Sector Leadership Team (AAQG).
  - 3.1.1.3. The Chairperson shall be responsible for scheduling meetings, setting meeting agendas, and coordinating meeting activities.
  - 3.1.1.4. The Chairperson shall communicate meeting results and coordinate actions as necessary.
  - 3.1.1.5. It is recommended that the ACOT Chairperson participate as one of the three Americas Sector voting members of the COT.
- 3.2. **The ACOT Vice-Chairperson** - The Vice-Chairperson of the ACOT shall be selected by the full ACOT and shall perform as a voting member. The ACOT Vice Chairperson shall also be subjected to an annual review by the full ACOT for term renewal.
  - 3.2.1. The Role of the Vice-Chairperson
    - 3.2.1.1 The ACOT Vice-Chairperson shall fulfill the duties and responsibilities of the Chairperson in the absence of the Chairperson.
- 3.3. **The ACOT Secretary** - The ACOT Secretary shall be responsible for recording ACOT meeting minutes and publishing them to the ACOT repository. Additional duties may be assigned as necessary by the ACOT Chairperson and/or Vice Chairperson.
- 3.4. **The ACOT Representatives on the IAQG Certification Oversight Team (COT)** - The ACOT shall appoint three persons and alternates from its membership to serve as AAQG representatives (with voting rights) on the IAQG COT. When the designated members are unable to support an IAQG COT activity, the ACOT must identify and notify the COT of the alternate, prior to the activity. One person shall serve as the team leader for the Americas sector. However, since attendance at the international meetings is required the ACOT shall also select two candidates to serve as suitable alternates.
- 3.5. **The ACOT Administrator** - The ACOT may contract with or assign an individual to perform administrative services in support of ACOT activities. The duties of the administrator shall include, but not be limited to:

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- 3.5.1. Providing support for the ICOP process harmonization and improvement projects through the development and co-ordination of ACOT projects and resources and liaison with the ACOT.
- 3.5.2. Acting as the project administrator for specific improvement and development projects within the ICOP process and when requested by the ACOT Chair.
- 3.5.3. Participating as a technical resource on ACOT ICOP improvement projects to support the development and implementation of specific projects.
- 3.5.4. Coordinating processes and organizing resources to support the effective operation of the ACOT and ICOP process.
- 3.5.5. Supporting the ACOT ICOP oversight process to deliver and coordinate schedules, complaints, and an effective oversight process throughout the Americas sector.
- 3.6. **The ACOT Auditor/AB/CB/AAB/TPAB Review Committee** - The ACOT Auditor/AB/CB/AAB/TPAB Review Committee shall consist of OEM representatives or voting members of the ACOT.
  - 3.6.1. The Role of the ACOT Auditor/AB/CB/AAB/TPAB Review Committee.
    - 3.6.1.1. The ACOT Auditor/AB/CB/AAB/TPAB Review Committee is tasked with the AB, CB, AAB, TPAB, and Aerospace Auditor approval and appeal process defined in ACOT Procedure 103.
- 3.7. **The ACOT Surveillance Team** – The ACOT Surveillance Team consists of OEM representatives or voting members of the ACOT.
  - 3.7.1. The Role of the ACOT Surveillance Team.
    - 3.7.1.1. The ACOT Surveillance Team is responsible for the oversight of the AB's, CB's, AAB's, TPAB's, and Aerospace Auditors within the sector scheme in accordance with ACOT Procedure 102.
- 3.8. **The ACOT Communication Team** - The ACOT Communication Team consists of OEM representatives or voting members of the ACOT.
  - 3.8.1. The Role of the ACOT Communication Team
    - 3.8.1.1. The ACOT Communication Team is responsible to promote effective, sector-specific communication to interested parties.
- 3.9. **The ACOT Documentation Team** - The ACOT Documentation Team consists of OEM representatives or voting members of the ACOT.

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#### 3.9.1. The Role of the ACOT Documentation Team

3.9.1.1. The ACOT Documentation Team shall develop, revise and maintain ACOT Operating Procedures in accordance with ACOT Procedure 100.

#### 3.10. **The ACOT Database Team** – The ACOT Database Team consists of OEM representatives or voting members of the ACOT.

##### 3.10.1. The Role of the ACOT Database Team

3.10.1.1. The ACOT Database Team is responsible for producing a report annually (typically January) for the purpose of overseeing performance of CB. In addition, the team shall issue a CB Report Card to each CB in the Americas scheme in accordance with ACOT Procedure 104.

## 4. ACOT Membership Review

4.1. The ACOT reserves the right to determine membership eligibility via periodic assessments of its member's attendance and participation in ACOT meetings, sub-teams, sub-committees, projects and workshops.

4.1.1. In order to retain active committee member status each member shall:

4.1.1.1. Attend four of the previous six ACOT meetings. Members are encouraged to attend every meeting.

4.1.1.2. Maintain voting responsibility and committee involvement by sending an authorized representative as a proxy if an absence cannot be avoided.

4.1.1.2.1. Proxy delegations shall be made in writing and presented to the Chairperson prior to the meeting.

4.1.1.2.2. Proxy delegations shall be made to a member of the same company, parent organization, or subsidiary.

4.1.1.2.3. Proxy delegations shall be recognized with full voting rights but will NOT be recognized as attendance by the member.

4.1.1.3. Actively participate on ACOT working teams, sub-committees or with projects.

4.1.2. The ACOT Chairperson shall have the authority to determine voting eligibility, and meeting attendance eligibility of its members.

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The ACOT shall notify the AAQG chair in the event a voting member is not meeting this requirement.

#### 5. ACOT Responsibilities

- 5.1. The ACOT shall govern the requirements for, and recognition of ABs, CBs, AABs, TPABs, and Auditors of Aerospace Quality Management Systems in compliance with the 9104 series of standards.
  - 5.1.1. The ACOT shall have at least one face-to-face meeting per calendar year.
    - 5.1.1.1. It is recommended that ACOT meetings take place in conjunction with AAQG meetings to promote networking and reduced travel costs.
    - 5.1.1.2. Virtual meetings are an alternative when unforeseen circumstances exist.
  - 5.1.2. A quorum for an official ACOT meeting shall be two thirds of the total ACOT OEM voting membership. Attendance by at least one AB and one CB member is highly encouraged. (Attendance by ABs and CBs is not required during closed meetings.)
  - 5.1.3. Proxy delegation to another ACOT member to serve as an AAQG representative shall be acceptable from OEMs, when presented to the ACOT Chairperson in writing. However, proxies giving one individual the general vote of another entity shall not be accepted.
  - 5.1.4. ACOT meeting attendance by non-members shall be by general invitation or at the request of one of the members with the concurrence of the ACOT Chairperson.
  - 5.1.5. Non-OEM members and guests may be asked to leave the meeting during discussion involving sensitive / proprietary matters of the ACOT or individual ABs, CBs, or auditors.
  - 5.1.6. The ACOT Secretary shall post meeting minutes on the ACOT repository.
    - 5.1.6.1. The ACOT reserves the right to separate information into public and private sections of its repository to maintain confidentiality of issues and actions.

#### 6. Reporting of Essential Data

- 6.1. The ACOT shall report essential data that describes the development activities to the IAQG COT, as required by the COT. Essential data includes information on the auditor population (i.e., approvals, disapprovals, number of AAs and AEAs), the CB population (i.e., approvals, disapprovals), auditor



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training and authentication organizations, the number of AQMS standard certifications issued, and oversight by the ACOT and AAQG OEMs.

*Note: AB, CB, AAB, and TPAB approval documents and procedures may be reviewed by the IAQG COT.*

The ACOT shall report to the IAQG COT annually for the IAQG COT to report the status and results of the global ICOP structure to the IAQG council in accordance with 9104/2. The annual report should include:

- 6.1.1. Overall status and effectiveness of the ICOP scheme in the Americas sector.
- 6.1.2. Demographics (i.e., number of ABs, CBs, AEAs, AABs, TPABs, Certified Suppliers).
- 6.1.3. ACOT oversight activities.
- 6.1.4. Scheduled versus completed assessments.
- 6.1.5. AAQG member participation.
- 6.1.6. Summary of oversight results.
- 6.1.7. Details of resolutions taken.
- 6.1.8. References of scheme documents, issue status, and any recent/proposed changes.
- 6.1.9. ACOT initiatives, including sub-team activities and opportunities for improvement.
- 6.1.10. Status of the OASIS Database.

## 7. ACOT Resolution Process

### 7.1. Complaints

- 7.1.1. Any complaints received by the ACOT shall be forwarded in writing to the ACOT Chair for resolution.
  - 7.1.1.1. If the complaint is regarding an AB, CB, AAB, or TPAB the ACOT Chair shall determine if the complaint has been addressed by the applicable stakeholders' complaint process. If the applicable stakeholder was not allowed to attempt to resolve the complaint in accordance with their complaint process, the ACOT Chair shall direct the complainant to utilize the applicable stakeholders' complaint process. A complainant may escalate a complaint after utilizing the applicable stakeholders' complaint process.
- 7.1.2. The ACOT shall assign a properly coordinated complaint to an ACOT member to investigate the complaint. COT voting members

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should not investigate a complaint if their organization is the subject of the complaint or they have been directly involved in activities towards the organization (e.g., Accreditation Body (AB), Certification Body (CB), CB Advisory Committee, or any other party involved in the complaint) within the last two years.

- 7.1.3. The ACOT member assigned to investigate the complaint shall conduct the investigation and report to the ACOT Chair.

*Note: The complaint should be responded to within 30 days.*

- 7.1.4. The ACOT Chair shall provide a response to the complainant. The complaint is considered closed once submitted to the complainant.

- 7.1.5. If the complainant is not satisfied with the response to the complaint, the appeal process may be utilized by the complainant.

### 7.2. Appeals

- 7.2.1. Decisions of the ACOT can be appealed by writing to the ACOT Chair.

7.2.1.1. All appeals shall be initiated through the OASIS Feedback process.

- 7.2.2. The ACOT Chair will investigate the appeal and respond in writing.

- 7.2.3. A person / organization can appeal an ACOT decision by escalating the issue to the IAQG COT Chair in writing.

- 7.2.4. The IAQG COT Chair will address the appeal in accordance with IAQG COT Procedure 201, Appendix B.

- 7.2.5. Finally, if a person / organization is not satisfied with the result of the IAQG COT Chairperson's response, the IAQG COT Chair shall facilitate escalation to the IAQG Executive Committee for review and action.

7.2.5.1. Decisions of the IAQG Executive Committee are final.

### 7.3. Resolutions

- 7.3.1. Resolutions shall be clarifications of how the 9104 series of documents are applied to a sector management process. Like the IAQG COT, ACOT voting members may propose new resolutions, or propose an amendment to an existing resolution. However, for a resolution to successfully pass, the ACOT Chairperson must first gain concurrence from the COT.

- 7.3.2. Proposed resolutions (or changes to existing resolutions) shall be drafted by interested parties (restricted to the ACOT voting membership) using the COT request form and presented to the



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ACOT Chairperson with sufficient justification to support the need for a resolution.

7.3.3. The ACOT Chairperson shall perform an initial review of the proposal for clarity and content.

7.3.3.1. If concerns are noted during the ACOT Chairperson's initial review, the proposal shall be returned to the author(s) for clarification and re-submittal.

7.3.3.2. The ACOT Chairperson shall present the resolution to the voting members of the ACOT for review and comment.

*Note: This presentation can be during a face-to-face meeting, via teleconference or via email.*

*Note: To promote efficiency, it is permissible to begin communication with the other two sectors and the IAQG COT at this point.*

7.3.3.3. ACOT voting members shall have a minimum of two weeks to review and comment on the proposed resolution.

7.3.3.4. ACOT voting members reserve the right to waive the 2-week review period.

7.3.3.5. The ACOT Chairperson shall serve as the administrator during the ACOT voting member review process to ensure that all reviewer comments are appropriately addressed.

7.3.4. Once the proposed resolution has been reviewed and all comments appropriately addressed, the ACOT Chairperson shall submit to the ACOT voting members for ballot.

*Note: This ballot can take place during a face-to-face meeting, via teleconference or via email.*

7.3.5. The ACOT Chairperson shall serve as the administrator during the ballot process.

7.3.6. The voting period shall not exceed two weeks.

7.3.7. A positive vote shall result from a majority (>50%).

7.3.8. The voting activity must be documented by the ACOT Chairperson and results communicated to all ACOT voting members (in writing).

*Note: Electronic correspondence via email is permissible.*

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- 7.3.9. The ACOT Chairperson shall submit AAQG-approved resolutions to the IAQG COT and the other two sectors to gain concurrence.
- 7.3.10. The ACOT Chairperson shall monitor the IAQG Resolution Log.
  - 7.3.10.1. The IAQG may elect to adopt the ACOT resolution, but not as originally written. If significant changes are required to better align the IAQG-adopted resolution (created from, but different than, the ACOT original submittal) with the original ACOT-submitted resolution, the ACOT Chairperson shall re-initiate the resolution voting process within the ACOT voting member community.

## 8. Records

8.1. The records associated with this procedure are as follows:

Record Description	Location	Responsible Holder	Retention Period
ACOT Meeting Minutes	ACOT Private Repository	ACOT Secretary	10 years
Annual Report	ACOT Private Repository	ACOT Chairperson	10 years
Appeals	ACOT Private Repository	ACOT Chairperson	10 years
Complaints	ACOT Private Repository	ACOT Chairperson	10 years
COT Resolution Request Form	ACOT Private Repository	ACOT Chairperson	10 years
Results of ACOT voting	ACOT Private Repository	ACOT Chairperson	10 years

## 9. Revision History

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Revision	Date	Comments
A	10-Sep-2008	Original Release
B	19-Jan-2012	
C	04-May-2012	
D	10-Jun-2016	
E	05-Mar-2018	
F	15-Feb-2020	
G	06-Nov-2020	Revised to allow OEM representation on surveillance team
H	06-Jun-2022	Revised to address requirements of AS9104-001:2022
I	16-Feb-2023	Removed "RMC" and replaced with "ACOT" throughout and added 5.1.1.2