RSB Rwanda Standards Board	**National Certification Division**	NCD/POL/13
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1.0 Introduction

1.1 In an increasingly digitized world, remote audits are growing as a means to help companies manage and audit their operations, products and supply chains to build stakeholder and consumer trust

1.2 With the ICT infrastructure and national internet coverage which stands at 96.6 per cent. RSB has embarked on digitalizing its services including the certification cervices.

1.3 Audits can be performed on-site, remotely or as a combination of on site; the use of these methods are suitably balanced, based on, among others, consideration of associated risks and opportunities.

1.4 The value of this ICT based audit method resides in its potential to provide flexibility to achieving the audit objectives.

1.5 Remote activities are performed at any place other than the location of the auditee, regardless of the distance RSB ensures that our remote audit delivery modes satisfy requirements of accreditation bodies, and other regulatory bodies. Our commitment is to develop auditing in ways that let auditee get the most out of every interaction, every time

2.0 Reference

2.1 IAF MD 5 - Determination of Audit Time of Quality and Environmental Management Systems

2.2 IAF ID 12 - Principles on Remote Assessment

2.3 ISO 19011 - Guidelines for auditing management systems

2.4 SO/IEC 17021-1 - Conformity assessment – Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems — Part 1: Requirements

2.5 ISO/IEC 17065 - Conformity assessment – Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services

3.0 Terms and Definition

3.1 Remote Assessment/audit

The facilitation of assessment of a Conformity Assessment Body from a location other than that being physically present

3.2 Certified Client

Organization whose Management System has been certified.
(Source: ISO/IEC 17021-1: 2015)
In the context of this Policy, this pertains to all bodies certified by RSB.

4. .Remote auditing

4.1 information and communication technologies (ICT) have made remote auditing more feasible. As access to ICT has increased, RSB is embarking on remote auditing

4.2 Remote audits refer to using technology to gather information, interview an auditee, etc. when "face-to-face" methods are not possible or desired.

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4.3 RSB has adequate information and communication technologies resources required in terms of competencies and Infrastructure set up a remote audit and support remote collaboration and ensure an effective audit outcome.

4.4 ICT open the opportunity to audit sites and people remotely, shortening distances, travel time and costs, reducing the environmental impact associated with audit travel, adapting audits to different organizational models.

4.5 ICT can help to increase the size or quality of sampling in the audit process, when prepared, validated and used properly.

4.6 the adoption of the methodology does not increase the cost of the certification process, on the contrary, the objective is to make the certification process more effective and efficient.

4.7 RSB has adopted remote assessments on voluntary basis, to complement traditional assessment techniques.

4.8 Critical to the use if ICT are confidentiality and security issues, as well as data protection. RSB has considered and put in place mitigation measure for the limitations and risks posed by ICT in the fulfilment of audit objectives

5.0 The objectives for the effective application of ICT for audit/assessment purposes are to;

5.1 provide a methodology for the use of ICT that is sufficiently flexible and non-prescriptive in nature to optimize the conventional audit/assessment process.

5.2 ensure that adequate controls are in place to avoid abuses that could compromise the integrity of the audit/assessment process.

5.3 support the principles of safety and sustainability

5.4 To establish the level of confidence in the Conformity Assessment Body's certification process by direct observations carried out through an electronic medium.

5.5 provide the opportunity for increased efficiency, increased safety, better timing, inclusion of CAB personnel that may not be easily accessible, and avoidance of travel delays and restrictions

5.6 Maintain business continuity under severe conditions and situations.

6.0 Remote assessments may be considered for use when:

i. Travel to a client site or specific location is not reasonable (i.e., for safety reasons, travel restrictions, etc.).

ii. There are unavoidable changes in scheduling for the Auditor or clients' (i.e., personal issues, change in business priorities, etc.).

iii. The number of sites to be assessed is difficult for RSB to completely fulfill within its timeframe.

iv. The Client Organization has systematic implementation of its management system where records, data, etc. can be reviewed at any site, despite where the work is being performed.

v. The audit is for a minor extension to scope of certification.

vi. The Client Organization has a proven track record of conformance at the location of the remote assessment.

vii. The risk level of the audit is of low concern to RSB.

viii. An activity or activities planned for the on-site audit could not be completed and extending the on-site audit is not the best resolution.

ix. The situation requires the audit team to come back for a follow up audit, but another visit is not easily achievable within a short time frame.

x. RSB has an auditor (or team of auditors) already familiar with the Management System and its practices and who have visited the client premises.

5.4 RSB will not conduct remote audits in the following scenarios:
i. When the client Organization has a history of nonconformance at the location being assessed.

ii. During initial audit activity of a new organization facility, scope, or significant change.

iii. When no on-site audit has taken place for an extended period of time.

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Measures shall also be taken to ensure that security and confidentiality is maintained throughout audit/assessment activities by use of technology platforms approved by regulatory authority.

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