



GUIDANCE NOTE FOR COMPANIES AFFECTED BY TERMINATION OF LETIS AS A GOTS APPROVED CERTIFICATION BODY (CB)

1 BACKGROUND:

The GOTS' contract with LETIS SA, Argentina was terminated on 11th September 2020 due to lapses in their certification activities, leading to breach of GOTS contract conditions. Therefore, LETIS cannot issue any Transaction Certificates to their former GOTS clients. Nor can they provide design approval for GOTS labels or renew existing Scope Certificates. This guidance note is meant to provide clarity on the current situation and current steps to the affected parties.

2 VALIDITY OF SCOPE CERTIFICATES ISSUED BY LETIS:

The Scope Certificates issued by LETIS remain valid till the date stated on the SC. The companies that have a valid SC are visible on GOTS Public Database on GOTS website. They may continue to use the GOTS logo on their website, etc. For transaction certificates, please refer to Section 4 of this document.

3 MIGRATION TO A GOTS APPROVED CB:

Following guidelines in this section, LETIS has already written to all its GOTS clients on 22 September 2020, explaining the situation and next steps that they should take. All companies that were certified to GOTS by LETIS, should migrate to a GOTS Approved CB at the earliest, if not already done so. GOTS Licence Fee (150 Euro) shall not be collected for current calendar year, if already paid to LETIS. The new CB shall collect the GOTS Licence Fee for next calendar year(s).

Currently, there are 16 GOTS Approved CBs. The list is available on [GOTS website](#). LETIS clients may select any CB of their choice to migrate to. The document '[Policy for change or migration of certifier](#), version 1.1' is the normative reference for the migration process. Section 4 covers the conditions of migration in case of withdrawal of accreditation.

All documentation for the certified entity shall be transferred by LETIS (which includes audit reports, open or closed NCs, details corrective actions and other such documents which directly affects recertification) to the new CB within 15 days of request by the new CB. Confidentiality obligations between CBs and clients shall be kept in mind when requesting and sharing documentation. New CBs shall take decisions based on their own assessments and not based on older documentation. GOTS encourages the new CBs to accelerate the process for the affected companies.

4 TRANSACTION CERTIFICATES:

All transaction certificates issued by LETIS before 10th September 2020 remain valid, unless explicitly withdrawn. Because LETIS cannot issue TCs anymore, Certified Entities, which were former LETIS clients, shall apply for TCs to their new CB, post migration. As per Section 4.6 of 'Policy for change or migration of certifier, version 1.1', the new CB shall issue TCs for material produced earlier but despatched after the closure of the old CBs business.

Besides, sellers may also apply for TCs to new CB for the shipments sent before 10th September 2020. The goods produced before receiving new Licence number from the new CB may still carry the earlier licence number, which refers to LETIS as the certification body. Therefore, it is possible to produce and dispatch GOTS goods while the company is under recertification process with a new CB.

In all cases, the new CB shall issue the TCs based on its own assessment of the offered goods, considering adequately the volume reconciliation. New CBs will be responsible for all the TCs issued by them even if they relate to the period of the old CB. Therefore, the new CB retains the right to reject the request for a TC if the seller fails to provide convincing evidence of organic status of the goods sold.

5 TIMELINE FOR TRANSACTION CERTIFICATES:

As per '[Policy for Transaction Certificates, version 2.1](#)', a certifier is not mandated to issue a GOTS TC, if the date of shipment is more than six months before the date of application. As a one-time relaxation, for companies affected by termination of LETIS, this period shall be nine months (instead of six months). This includes the former clients of LETIS as well as their buyers, who depend on incoming TCs from their suppliers.

6 SALE OF GOTS GOODS WITH LABELLING:

GOTS goods with correct and complete labelling may be sold in B2B and B2C markets. It is a common practice already that the TC is received some time after the shipment. GOTS recognises the possible delays in receiving TCs in current cases when a seller's supply chain might have been directly affected. The buyers should cooperate and coordinate with their respective suppliers to ensure all requirements are fulfilled at the earliest. Buyers' due diligence on purchase and receipt of GOTS Goods shall not be waived.

7 STATUS OF GOTS ADDITIVES

Inputs and accessories approved by LETIS remain valid till their stated validity period. GOTS Additives approved to GOTS version 5.0 shall remain valid until implementation date of version 6.0 (1st March 2021) or the validity date stated on the respective Letter of Approval, whichever is earlier. GOTS Additives approved to version 6.0, if any, shall remain valid till GOTS version 6.0 is in force. Formulators shall undergo an onsite audit as per Section 2.3.5 of GOTS Version 6.0, before 1st July 2022 and therefore, shall have to migrate to another GOTS Approved CB.

8 CONTACT:

Further specific questions may be addressed to the undersigned

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