



GENERAL RULES FOR THE VALIDATION AND VERIFICATION OF INFORMATION DECLARED IN CLAIMS

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CHAPTER 1 – GENERAL

1.1

These Rules describe the procedures applied by RINA for validation and verification activities and how Organisations can apply for obtain, retain and use this validation/verification.

Validation and verification as conformity assessment are understood to be a confirmation of reliability of information declared in claims. Other terms in use for the object of assessment by validation and verification are "statement", "declaration", "assertion", "prediction" or "report". For uniformity and simplicity we will always use the term "claim" in the remainder of this document to indicate the information declared subject to validation/verification.

Both activities are distinguished according to the timeline of the assessed claim. Validation is applied to claims regarding an intended future use or projected outcome (confirmation of plausibility), while verification is applied to claims regarding events that have already occurred or results that have already been obtained (confirmation of truthfulness).

The list of schemes/programmes for which RINA is accredited is available on the website www.rina.org.

1.2

Access to validation / verification is open to all Applicants and is not conditioned by whether or not they belong to any association.

For the validation / verification activity, RINA applies its current tariffs, guaranteeing their fairness and uniformity of application.

RINA may legitimately refuse to accept validation / verification requests concerning an applicant subjected, or whose activity is subjected, to restrictive, suspensive or disqualifying measures by a public authority.

In the event that RINA does not accept a validation / verification request, it will communicate the reasons to the applicant.

1.3

The validation and verification activities described in this Rules are carried out in accordance with the requirements of the ISO / IEC 17029: 2019 Standard "Conformity assessment — General principles and requirements for validation and verification bodies".

1.4

The Applicant undertakes to ensure that RINA personnel can carry out their activities in compliance with workplace safety regulations.

The Applicant shall fulfil, towards RINA personnel, the information and coordination obligations pursuant local requirements on Health and Safety.

As a rule, during the activity, RINA personnel must be constantly accompanied by the Applicant.

Where provided for the specific validation and / or verification activity, the participation of observers during the evaluation activity is previously agreed between RINA and the Applicant.



For the validation and verification activities issued under Accreditation, the Body responsible for RINA activities (Accreditation Body) may request the participation of its observers during the evaluation activity carried out by RINA itself, in order to ascertain that the evaluation methods adopted by RINA comply with the standards applicable.

If the Applicant does not grant his approval to the participation of observers of the Accreditation Bodies, the evaluation activity cannot be carried out.

The auditing modalities adopted by Accreditation Bodies are written in specific rules and/or communications/circulars available on their websites.

The Organisation shall make the documentation taken as reference by RINA during the previous audits available to the Accreditation Body.

1.5

RINA recognises the fundamental guiding principles of the validation and verification processes and conducts all activities ensuring accuracy, prudence, relevance, credibility, reliability, completeness, consistency, transparency, impartiality, competence, independence and safeguarding from conflicts of interest and confidentiality.

The client and non-RINA is responsible for the claim and its compliance with the specified applicable requirements.

RINA is responsible for basing a validation / verification statement on sufficient and appropriate objective evidence.

1.6

The terminology used in this Rule complies with ISO / IEC 17029: 2019 standard.

CHAPTER 2 – REFERENCE SCHEME/PROGRAM / REQUIREMENTS FOR VALIDATION/VERIFICATION

2.1

To obtain validation / verification by RINA, a claim must meet the requirements of the scheme/program and those indicated in the following points of this Chapter, in addition to any additional elements required by the Accreditation Bodies.

In the context of accreditation, in fact, RINA must comply with certain reference documents issued by the Accreditation Bodies themselves.

These documents are available by contacting RINA or directly by the Accreditation Bodies (for example by consulting the related websites).

2.2

The compliance of the claim with the reference scheme/program is verified through an activity program that includes.

- Contractual phase (Pre-engagement and engagement);



- Planning;
- Validation / verification execution;
- Review;
- Decision and issue of the validation / verification statement.

2.3

In particular, to obtain the validation / verification of the claim, the Organisation must:

- Having defined, implemented and maintained active procedures to meet all the requirements specified in the schemes an/or programs related to the claim;
- Have documented information:
 - requested by the scheme and/or program of reference,
 - deemed necessary by the Organisation to ensure that the claim is plausible for future intentional use, in the event of a validation request, or truthfully declared in the event of a verification request.

Any information received from the Organisation is kept confidential.

CHAPTER 3 - CONTRACT

3.1

Organisations wishing to obtain the validation / verification of their claim must provide RINA with the essential data of their Organisation and related activities and the location of the Site/s, by sending the appropriate "Informative Questionnaire" form filled in in all its parts available on the website www.rina.org, on the basis of which an economic offer is made by RINA.

In particular, the Informative Questionnaire requires that information is provided on:

- customer name and proposed claim to be validated/verified;
- location where the client's activities are carried out;
- the validation/verification scheme/program and the associated specific requirements for validation/verification;
- the objectives and purpose of validation/verification;
- reports, data and any other relevant information;
- materiality and level of assurance;
- any other specific information that may be required by the validation/verification scheme/program.

This information must be received by an authorised representative of the applicant Organisation.

Based on this information, RINA prepares an adequate economic offer.

3.2

In case of acceptance of the economic offer, the Organisations formalise the validation/verification request by sending the specific form attached to the offer to RINA, indicating the scheme/program, according to which validation/verification is required.

Upon receipt of the validation/verification request and its annexes, and after their preliminary examination to verify its completeness, RINA sends the Organisation in writing confirmation of acceptance of the request.



The request of the Organisation, in which this Rule is expressly referred to, and the relative acceptance by RINA contractually formalise the relationship between RINA and the Organisation and the applicability of these Rules and of any specific additions applicable to the scheme/program for which validation/verification is required, included in the specific annex to these Rules.

The contract stipulated between RINA and the Organisation includes:

- examination of the Organisation's documents;
- the collection of sufficient objective evidence on original data/information, ensuring traceability through the data/information management process, further analyses and calculations;
- identification of errors and consideration of their materiality;
- the assessment of compliance with the specific requirements, taking into account the validation/verification scheme/program which may include on-site verification;
- any additional services specified in the offer, including pre-audit, if requested by the Organisation.

CHAPTER 4 – PLANNING

4.1

Together with the validation/verification request, or subsequently to the same, the Organisation must make the following documentation available to RINA:

- the documented information required by the reference scheme/program and/or deemed necessary by the Organisation to ensure the absence of significant errors relating to the claim;
- copy of the Chamber of Commerce registration certificate or equivalent document, as evidence of the existence of the Organisation and the activity carried out.

RINA may request at its discretion, for examination, also other documents than those indicated above, deemed important for the validation/verification of the claim.

The above documentation is assessed by RINA for compliance with the reference scheme/program and the requirements of these Rules.

RINA takes into account the associated risks so that competence, consistency and impartiality are guaranteed during the validation/verification process.

The risks that RINA assesses include:

- a) the susceptibility of any parameter included in the claim that may generate a significant error, even if a control system has been implemented;
- b) the level of assurance to be achieved;
- c) the perception of interested parties;
- d) any misleading claims or misuse of marks by the customer;
- e) risk control and improvement opportunities.

4.2

RINA selects the team that performs the validation/verification activities and the staff who will carry out the activity of Review of the results, based on the knowledge, skills and competences necessary, taking into account the criteria/requirements of the agreed scheme/program and any additional



elements indicated by the oversight body of the scheme/program, by the accreditation body/Competent Authority.

The team is completely independent from all aspects of the claim and has not participated in any way in the design of any part of it or of the related information system, in accordance with the procedures approved by the Committee for the Safeguarding of Impartiality.

4.3

For each validation/verification activity, a "Validation/Verification Plan" is prepared in accordance with the provisions of the ISO/IEC 17029: 2019 standard, which is sent to the Organisation in advance.

RINA, through the Validation/Verification Plan, communicates the names of the team members and any technical experts in charge of carrying out the validation/verification, observers, interpreters or translators chosen on the basis of the skills necessary for carrying out the activities.

The Organisation can object to these appointments, within 5 working days of notification, justifying the reasons.

RINA reconstitutes the team following valid objections.

In the Validation/Verification Plan, the assigned tasks are indicated for each team member. In particular, it is required that for each Organisation:

- a) the structure, processes, registrations and related documents, relevant to the claim, are examined and verified;
- b) it is established that they meet the requirements applicable to the scope of application envisaged by the validation/verification;
- c) it is established that the defined documented processes and information are prepared, implemented and effectively kept active, in order to form the basis for trust in the Organisation's claim.

CHAPTER 5 – VALIDATION/VERIFICATION EXECUTION

5.1

After the initial examination of the documentation, the team identifies further topics and aspects (objective evidence) that must be investigated with the Organisation.

The process may also require an on-site visits when it is a requirement of the reference scheme/program and in other cases, at RINA's discretion, depending on the nature of the claim.

The date (s) of the site visit (s) is/are agreed with the Organisation sufficiently in advance and will be/will be officially confirmed at least one week before through the Validation/Verification Plan.

If, during the examination of the documentation, doubts or problems arise that cannot be resolved without a visit to the Organisation, the team will still have to make this on-site visit to resolve any necessary clarification.

Validation/verification is carried out on the basis of sufficient sampling to verify the reliability of data and information.

During the validation/verification activity, team members may also collect information through:

- a) interviews;



- b) observations of processes and activities;
- c) review of documentation and records.

5.2

During the execution of the validation/verification activities on site, each team member must be accompanied by a guide designated by the Organisation to facilitate the execution of the validation/verification and who may have the following responsibilities:

- a) establish contacts and times for interviews;
- b) organise visits to specific parts of the site or Organisation;
- c) ensure that the rules regarding site security and safety procedures are known and respected by members of the validation/verification team;
- d) assisting on site validation/verification on behalf of the customer;
- e) provide clarification or information at the request of a team member.

5.3

For each validation/verification, a written report can be prepared, in which any findings are indicated.

The Organisation may indicate any reservations or comments it may have regarding the findings made by RINA technicians.

If evidence comes to RINA's attention that leads it to believe that there is an intentional inaccuracy or non-compliance of the party responsible for the claim with laws and regulations, RINA reserves the right to inform the appropriate parties as soon as possible.

5.3.1

After analysing the causes of any findings, and on the basis of their classification, the Organisation must propose to RINA, by the date and the methods established by the reference scheme/program, the necessary treatments as well as the corrective actions and the times required for their implementation.

RINA will review the corrective action proposals of the Organisation and communicate their acceptance and if necessary plan an additional time aimed at verifying the effectiveness of the corrections and proposed corrective actions.

The additional time can be spent on site at the Organisation or on a documentary basis based on the type of corrective actions to be verified in the judgment of the validation/verification team.

All expenses relating to any additional time deemed necessary for the management of the findings are agreed and to be considered borne by the Organisation.

5.3.2

RINA reserves the possibility to suspend the validation/verification process in case of particular critical issues, which may be findings that the Organisation is unable to manage and/or other requirements envisaged by the individual scheme/program that the Organisation is unable to comply with.

5.4

The conclusion on the outcome of the activities, a draft validation/verification statement and the final report prepared by the team (if applicable) are subject to a review to confirm that:



- a) all validation/verification activities have been completed in accordance with the contract and the reference scheme/program;
- b) there is sufficient and adequate evidence to support the decision;
- c) the significant findings have been identified, resolved and documented.

CHAPTER 6 – DECISION AND ISSUE OF THE VALIDATION/VERIFICATION STATEMENT

6.1

At the end of the validation/verification process, RINA decides whether or not to confirm the claim.

Based on this decision, a validation/verification statement is issued or not based on the requirements of the scheme/program.

The validation/verification statement:

- a) indicates the customer's name;
- b) identifies whether it is a validation statement or a verification statement;
- c) refers to the claim, including the date or period covered by the claim;
- d) describes the objectives and scope of validation/verification;
- e) describes whether the data and information supporting the claim were hypothetical, projected and/or historical in nature;
- f) includes a reference to the validation/verification scheme/program and associated specific requirements;
- g) includes the decision made regarding the claim, including the fulfilment of all the requirements relating to the scheme/program (e.g. materiality or level of assurance);
- h) indicates the date and univocal identification of the statement;
- i) includes any findings that were not closed before the issue of the validation/verification statement, if required by the scheme/program;
- j) includes any other information/references to technical specifications, if required by the scheme/program.

6.2

When on the basis of the decision, the validation/verification statement is not issued, RINA informs the Organisation.

CHAPTER 7 – MODIFICATION AND WITHDRAWAL OF THE STATEMENT

7.1

The Organisation holding of the validation/verification statement can request a modification or extension by submitting a new validation/verification request, accompanied by the documentation referred to in point 3.1 duly updated.

RINA reserves the right to examine the requests on a case-by-case basis and to decide how to evaluate for issuing a new validation/verification statement, in accordance with the provisions of the



"GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR THE CERTIFICATION OF SYSTEMS, PRODUCTS AND PERSONNEL" and to the scheme/program of reference for the claim.

7.2

For the entire duration of the contractual relationship, the Organisation must promptly notify RINA of any changes that have occurred on aspects that may affect the ability of the claim to continue meeting the requirements of the scheme/program used for validation/verification.

If new facts or information that could materially affect the validation/verification statement are discovered after the issue date, RINA will:

- a) communicate the matter as soon as practicable to the Organisation and, if required, the scheme/programme owner;
- b) take appropriate action, including the following:
 - 1) discuss the matter with the Organisation;
 - 2) consider if the validation/verification statement requires revision or withdrawal.

If the validation/verification statement requires a revision, RINA implements the processes to issue a new version of the statement which includes the specification of the reasons for the revision. These may include repeating the relevant stages of the validation/verification process.

In the event of a revision of the statement, RINA can also communicate to other interested parties that the use of the original statement can now be compromised given the new facts or information that has emerged.

7.3

RINA promptly notifies the Organisation of any change in the reference schemes/programs or in the RINA regulations for validation/verification.

7.4

RINA reserves the right to conduct further insights on a documentary basis and/or with an on-site visit to the Organisation at short notice or without notice, should any complaints be received.

CHAPTER 8 - COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS MANAGEMENT

8.1

The Organisation can appeal against the decisions of RINA, setting out the reasons for the dissent, within 30 days from the date of notification of the decision.

RINA will keep the Organisation informed of the progress in evaluating the complaint or appeal, will investigate the matter and specify its proposed actions in response to the complaint or appeal within 3 months of its receipt.

If justified complaints are received by RINA against a validated/verified claim, RINA reserves the right to carry out a verification on the validated/verified claim itself, aimed at checking the correct handling of the complaint. If the complaint proves to be well founded and of high gravity, RINA reserves the right to suspend, withdrawal or modify the validation/verification statement.



The cost of the verification that RINA carries out on the basis of the complaint, if justified, is borne by the Organisation owning the validated/verified claim.

CHAPTER 9 - CONTRACTUAL CONDITIONS

9.1

For the contractual conditions and for anything not provided for in these Rules, the provisions contained in the RINA document "GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR THE CERTIFICATION OF SYSTEMS, PRODUCTS AND PERSONNEL", available on the website www.rina.org, apply.



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Technical rules