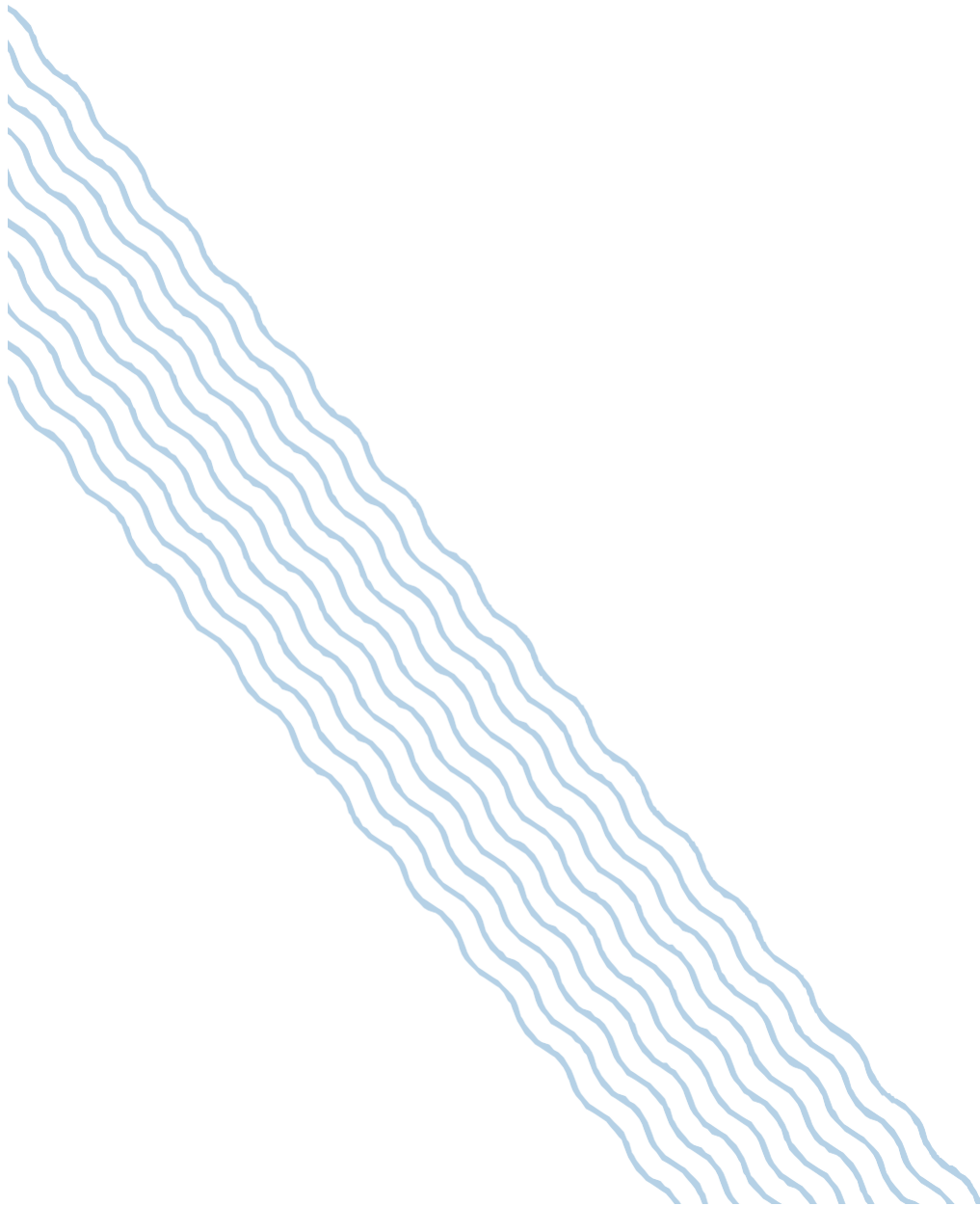


# Annual Report 2023

Assessment of the EU  
Recognised Organisations  
Quality Management Systems



Quality Assessment  
and Certification Entity



QACE Quality Assessment and Certification Entity

---

# Annual Report 2023

---

Assessment of The EU Recognised Organisations Quality Management Systems



**© QACE 2023**

Copying from this document  
can be done provided source  
is referenced

---

**QACE**

3 Shortlands  
London W6 8DA UK  
[www.qace.co](http://www.qace.co)

---

Company number 7455733  
Registered in England and Wales  
Community interest company  
limited by guarantee.

---

# Table of Contents

I. Executive Summary .....	06
II. Scope of Activities .....	09
III. The 2023 Activities .....	11
IV. 2023 Assessment Activities.....	13
V. Assessment Results .....	19
VI. Recommendations .....	20
VII. Working with Interested Parties .....	22
VIII. Concluding Remarks.....	24
IX. Acknowledgements .....	25
Glossary .....	27
Annex A.....	29
Annex B	
Members of QACE - EU Recognised Organisations .....	30
Annex C	
2024 Collective Recommendations.....	31

# I

## Executive Summary

QACE completed, in 2023, another successful year of assessment and certification. Only four assessments were held in remote mode. The experience of remote assessments continued to be satisfactory.

The Board under the Chairmanship of, Mr. Ashok Mahapatra, successfully managed the operations of QACE. One of the Directors, Mr. Lars Lange, who was elected for a first term of three years in December 2022, resigned from the Board effective 15<sup>th</sup> November 2023.

At the AGM held on the 6<sup>th</sup> December 2023, the Members decided to reduce the number of Directors on the Board of QACE to three. Consequently, the resolution to re-elect Dr. Nikos Mikelis, on completion of his second term as Director at the end of 2023 was not approved. Thus, the number of Directors on QACE's Board is reduced to three, effective 1st January 2024.

As on 31st December 2023, QACE had eight assessors contracted to carry out assessments. In Q4 2023, one additional assessor with significant experience in statutory matters and RO affairs, was contracted. His mentoring will commence in 2024 before taking up assessments independently in 2024. With the aforesaid change, the assessor strength has grown to nine, distributed in America, Asia, Australia and Europe.

The QACE Assessors are strategically located to deliver the Assessment Programme in the most cost-effective manner possible.

## Assessors' location around the world



Türk Loydu (TL), a classification society headquartered in Istanbul, Turkey, received their Certificate of Compliance in Q1 2023, consequent to their completing all the required assessments satisfactorily towards initial certification of their quality management system. TL continues to remain a non-EU RO and therefore not yet a member of QACE.

A major development in 2023 was the significant reduction in the involvement of the QACE Board of Directors in the merger of the International Quality Assessment Review Board (IQARB) with QACE. The Members took up on themselves the complete responsibility of this merger, keeping the QACE Board of Directors informed of the developments towards the merger. However, the inclusion of IQARB's budget within the QACE Budget continued in 2023. The Members expect that the merger process will be completed in 2024.

Another development in 2023 was the change in the certification body which audits and certifies QACE's quality management system to ISO 9001 standard. The previous certification body, **DAS Certification**, lost their UKAS accreditation in February 2023. In line with the transition agreement with UKAS, the certification was successfully migrated to **Centre for Assessment**, another UKAS accredited certification body based in the United Kingdom.





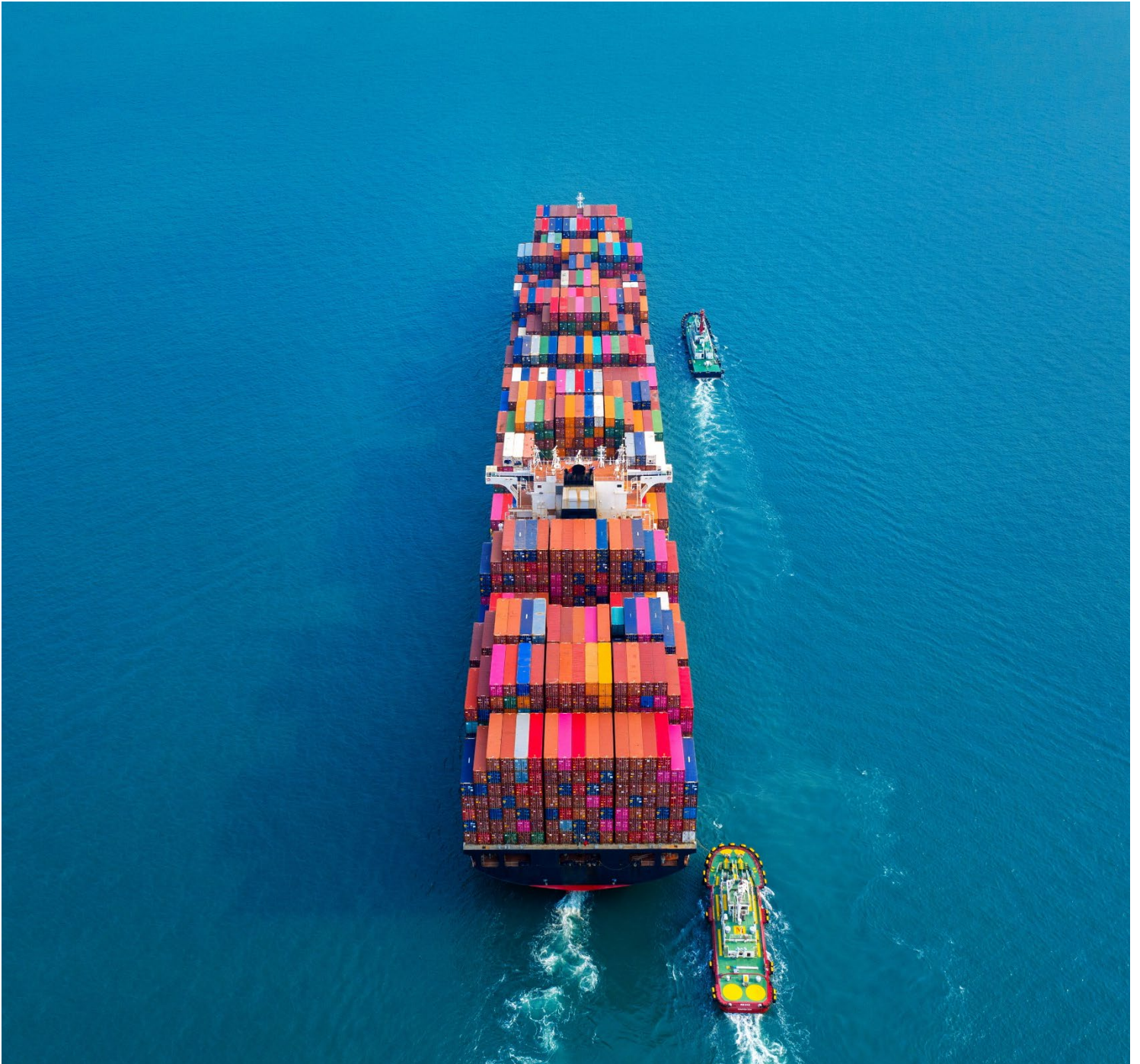
## II

# Scope of Activities

---

The QACE Scope of Activities continued unchanged as defined in Article 11 of Regulation (EC) No 391/2009 of the European Parliament and the Council, on “Common rules and standards for ship inspection and survey organisations”, namely: “The assessment of the Quality Management Systems (QMS) of the EU Recognised Organisations (EU ROs) in accordance with the principles of ISO 19011:2011 ‘*Guidelines for auditing management systems*’, through the witnessed application of the ISO 9001:2015 and IACS Quality System Certification Scheme (QSCS) requirements by ISO 17021:2011 accredited certification bodies.”

QACE complied with this scope by assessing the QMS of ROs through the audits by the Accredited Certification Bodies (ACBs). The audits verified the effectiveness of the processes, systems, and controls of the Members in their classification and statutory certification services. The audits also verified their compliance with the requirements of the international quality management standards ISO 9001, ISO 17020, IACS QMSR and other applicable international technical standards, like the IMO Regulations and Codes and the IACS technical resolutions. QACE Interpretation of the International Quality Standards (IQS) and QACE Requirements (QRs) were included in the scope of the audits held in 2023.



### III

## The 2023 Activities

---

The following activities were completed satisfactorily:

- Assessors' meeting to finalise the 2023 Assessment Plan, and to share experiences.
- Refresher training of Assessors on Cyber Security regulations.
- Assessments of selected ACB audits of the ROs.
- Publication of Collective Recommendations.
- Issuance of Individual Recommendations to three ROs.
- Surveillance audit of QACE's QMS to ISO 9001:2015, first by **DAS Certification** and subsequently by **Centre for Assessment**.
- Internal audit.
- Development, jointly with IACS, of the Focus Areas for 2024.
- Renewal of the certificates of compliance for three ROs.

Apart from the above, the 2023 activities also included:

- Four Board meetings in February, May, October & November.
- Members' Extraordinary General Meeting in April.
- IACS QC meeting in September.
- One meeting with IACS in October.
- IACS End User Workshop in November.
- Annual General Meeting in December.
- Three IQARB Meetings, in May, August, October.





## IV

### 2023 Assessment Activities

---

The main objectives of QACE's assessments are to ensure that the audits held by ACBs are robust and able to confirm the effectiveness of the quality management systems of the ROs.

The one-day Assessors' Meeting, held in January, finalised the year's Assessment Programme, identifying the locations, dates, and types of audits for assessment. The basis for developing the QACE Assessment Plan is the annual audit program produced by the ACBs based on their own risk-based samples to audit, including newbuilding projects and ships in service undergoing major classification and statutory surveys. A risk-based approach was employed in the selection of assessment visits, tailored to each RO's fleet and activities. This plan was approved by the Board of Directors of QACE at their February meeting.

Assessments are planned to be held at the ROs' Head Offices (HO), Control Offices (CO) (generally only the larger ROs have COs), Survey Locations (SL), Plan Approval (PA) Offices outside of Head Offices (generally only the larger ROs have such additional PA offices), and during Vertical Contract Audits (VCAs).

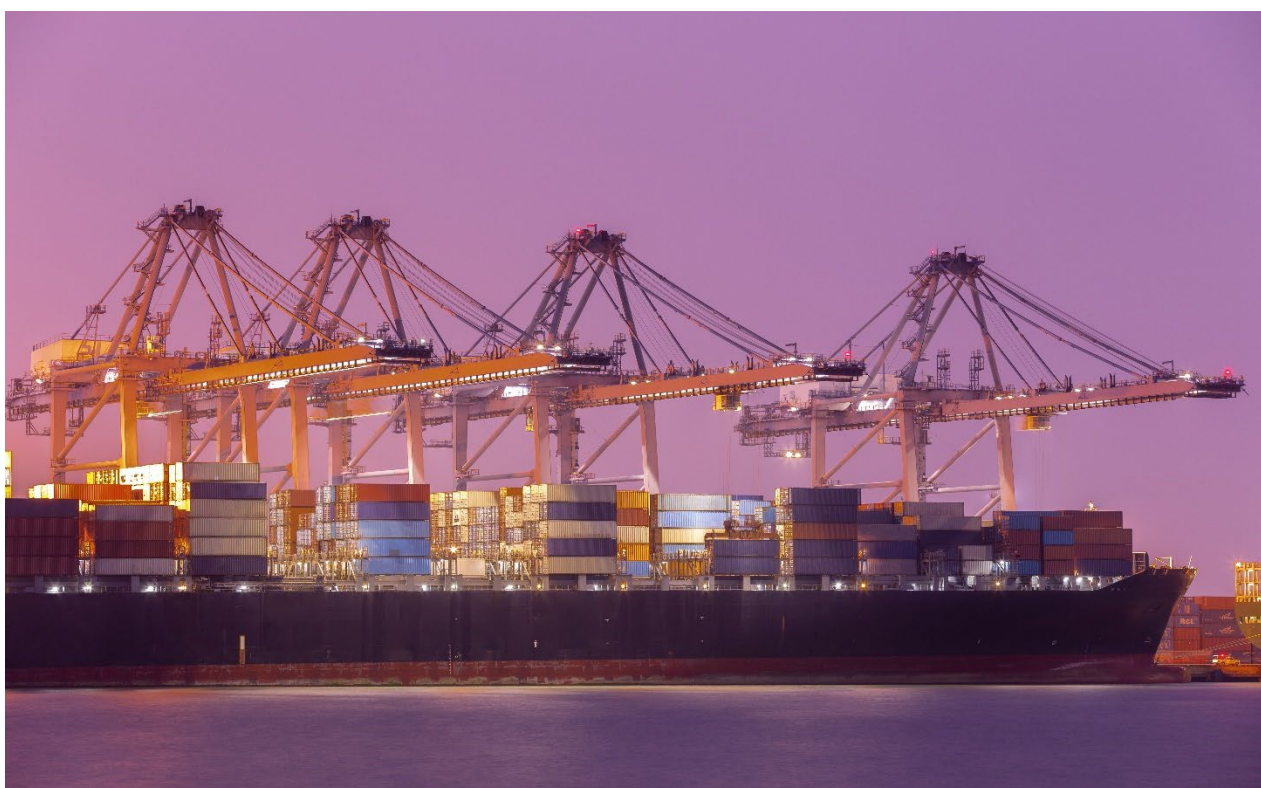
VCAs were held during ACB audits:

- Of surveys onboard ships in service (SiS) during major periodical and statutory surveys;
- Of surveys of New Construction (NC) projects;
- Of surveys of Machinery and Component;
- Of audits of the ISM process both on board ships and in the offices of ship management companies.

In 2023, the plan included assessments of 11 Member ROs, excluding the Russian Maritime Register of Shipping whose membership had been terminated in 2022, and of a non-member, Türk Loydu.

In 2023, 77 audits were assessed as follows:

- 12 Head Offices (HO)
- 4 Control Offices (CO)
- 7 Plan Approval Offices
- 18 Survey Locations (SL)
- 3 Vertical Contract Audits of Machinery Component
- 9 Vertical Contract Audits of ISM
- 11 Vertical Contract Audits of New Construction
- 13 Vertical Contract Audits of Ship in Service





## 2023 ASSESSMENTS

### American Bureau of Shipping

First Date	Last Date	Type	Location	Country
13 Feb 2023	14 Feb 2023	SL	New Orleans	USA
14 Feb 2023	15 Feb 2023	PA	New Orleans	USA
16 Feb 2023	16 Feb 2023	VCA MC	New Orleans	USA
27 Feb 2023	27 Feb 2023	VCA MS	Chennai	India
9 May 2023	10 May 2023	PA	Dubai	UAE
11 May 2023	12 May 2023	SL	Dubai	UAE
15 May 2023	16 May 2023	VCA SiS	Dubai	UAE
15 May 2023	19 May 2023	HO	Houston	USA
22 May 2023	23 May 2023	VCA NC	Philadelphia	USA
7 Aug 2023	11 Aug 2023	CO	Shanghai	China

### Bureau Veritas

First Date	Last Date	Type	Location	Country
27 Feb 2023	28 Feb 2023	SL	Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco	Algeria
21 Mar 2023	22 Mar 2023	SL	Marseilles	France
22 May 2023	23 May 2023	PA	Madrid	Spain
24 May 2023	25 May 2023	VCA SiS	Cuxhaven,	Germany
23 May 2023	23 May 2023	VCA MC	Waren	Germany
2 Oct 2023	6 Oct 2023	HO	Paris	France

### China Classification Society

First Date	Last Date	Type	Location	Country
8 Mar 2023	10 Mar 2023	CO	Zhejiang	China
14 Mar 2023	17 Mar 2023	PA	Guangzhou	China
23 Mar 2023	24 Mar 2023	VCA NC	Guangzhou	China
20 Apr 2023	21 Apr 2023	SL	Bergen	Norway
18 May 2023	19 May 2023	VCA MS	Singapore	Singapore
12 Jun 2023	13 Jun 2023	SL	Sao Paulo	Brazil
17 Jul 2023	21 Jul 2023	HO	Beijing	China
30 Nov 2023	1 Dec 2023	VCA SiS	Hamburg	Germany

**Croatia Register of Shipping**

First Date	Last Date	Type	Location	Country
<b>14 Mar 2023</b>	14 Mar 2023	VCA MS	Split	Croatia
15 Mar 2023	15 Mar 2023	SL	Sibenik	Croatia
16 Mar 2023	17 Mar 2023	VCA SiS	Split	Croatia
12 Jun 2023	16 Jun 2023	HO	Split	Croatia
20 Jun 2023	21 Jun 2023	VCA NC	Adria & Pula	Italy

**DNV AS**

First Date	Last Date	Type	Location	Country
30 Jan 2023	31 Jan 2023	CO	Singapore	Singapore
1 Feb 2023	2 Feb 2023	SL	Singapore	Singapore
6 Feb 2023	7 Feb 2023	VCA SiS	Singapore	Singapore
8 Feb 2023	9 Feb 2023	PA	Singapore	Singapore
28 Mar 2023	29 Mar 2023	SL	Constanza	Romania
30 Mar 2023	31 Mar 2023	VCA NC	Constanza	Romania
16 Oct 2023	20 Oct 2023	HO	Hovik	Norway

**Indian Register of Shipping**

First Date	Last Date	Type	Location	Country
<b>11 Apr 2023</b>	12 Apr 2023	VCA NC	Goa	India
17 Apr 2023	21 Apr 2023	HO	Mumbai	India
26 Apr 2023	27 Apr 2023	VCA SiS	Colombo	Sri Lanka
17 Jul 2023	18 Jul 2023	SL	Istanbul	Turkey
30 Nov 2023	1 Dec 2023	VCA MS	Mumbai,	India

**Korean Register**

First Date	Last Date	Type	Location	Country
<b>15 May 2023</b>	15 May 2023	VCA MS	Rotterdam	Netherlands
8 Jun 2023	9 Jun 2023	SL	Sao Paulo	Brazil
4 Sep 2023	8 Sep 2023	HO	Busan	Korea
11 Sep 2023	12 Sep 2023	VCA NC	Changwon	Korea
21 Sep 2023	22 Sep 2023	VCA SiS	Guangzhou	China



**Lloyds Register**

First Date	Last Date	Type	Location	Country
<b>6 Feb 2023</b>	9 Feb 2023	SL	Seattle	USA
7 Feb 2023	8 Feb 2023	VCA SiS	Kalama, Washington	USA
21 Feb 2023	22 Feb 2023	CO	Houston/Miami	USA
11 May 2023	12 May 2023	VCA NC	Yokohama	Japan
6 Jun 2023	9 Jun 2023	HO	Southampton	UK
19 Jun 2023	20 Jun 2023	SL	Dubai	UAE
21 Jun 2023	22 Jun 2023	VCA SiS	Dubai	UAE
12 Sep 2023	13 Sep 2023	VCA MS	Athens	Greece

**Nippon Kaiji Kyokai**

First Date	Last Date	Type	Location	Country
<b>9 May 2023</b>	10 May 2023	VCA SiS	Piraeus	Greece
24 May 2023	25 May 2023	SL	Taiwan	Taipei
23 May 2023	23 May 2023	VCA MC	Taiwan	Taipei
30 May 2023	31 May 2023	PA	Singapore	Singapore
15 Jun 2023	16 Jun 2023	SL	Rio de Janeiro	Brazil
17 Jun 2023	19 Jun 2023	VCA MS	Rio de Janeiro	Brazil
26 Jun 2023	30 Jun 2023	HO	Tokyo	Japan
3 Jul 2023	4 Jul 2023	VCA NC	Usuki	Japan

**Polski Regester Statkow SA**

First Date	Last Date	Type	Location	Country
<b>10 Jan 2023</b>	13 Jan 2023	HO	Gdansk	Poland
30 Jan 2023	31 Jan 2023	SL	Piraeus	Greece
1 Feb 2023	2 Feb 2023	VCA SiS	Piraeus	Greece
13 Feb 2023	14 Feb 2023	VCA NC	Calais	France
1 Mar 2023	3 Mar 2023	VCA MS	Gdynia	Poland

**RINA Services**

First Date	Last Date	Type	Location	Country
<b>22 Mar 2023</b>	24 Mar 2023	PA	Shanghai	China
3 Apr 2023	4 Apr 2023	SL	Barcelona	Spain
7 Apr 2023	8 Apr 2023	VCA SiS	Barcelona	Spain
14 Sep 2023	15 Sep 2023	VCA NC	Ulsan	Korea
13 Nov 2023	17 Nov 2023	HO	Genoa	Italy

**Türk Loydu**

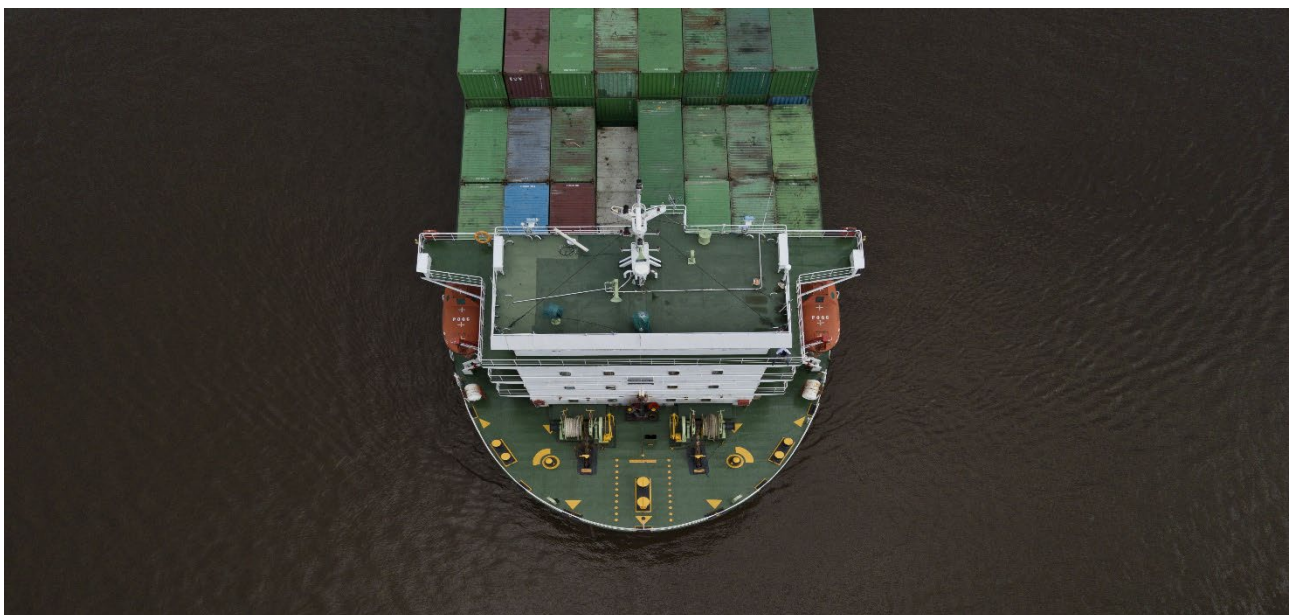
<b>First Date</b>	<b>Last Date</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Country</b>
<b>10 Jul 2023</b>	11 Jul 2023	VCA MS	Istanbul	Turkey
11 Jul 2023	13 Jul 2023	VCA SiS	Istanbul	Turkey
8 Aug 2023	8 Aug 2023	SL	Izmir	Turkey
2 Oct 2023	3 Oct 2023	VCA NC	Istanbul	Turkey
30 Oct 2023	3 Nov 2023	HO	Istanbul	Turkey

## V

# Assessment Results

The review of the assessments completed in 2023 showed:

- The ROs' processes of the management of technical knowledge, plan approval, survey management, activity monitoring, fleet quality and supplier services were well managed;
- The ROs' processes of the management of new construction, ISM auditing, health and safety, follow-up of Port State Control detentions, and root cause analysis had scope for improvement;
- The ACBs' processes of audit execution were well managed, and the quality of findings had improved;
- The ACBs' preparation for and scheduling of audits, and following audit trails had scope for improvement.



## VI

# Recommendations

QACE has issued Collective Recommendations (CRs) each year since 2012, to all the ROs, ACBs and Assessors. The CRs are developed on the basis of an analysis of all the audit findings of the previous year. The recommendations have been effective in bringing a focus to issues highlighted by QACE Assessments over the years.

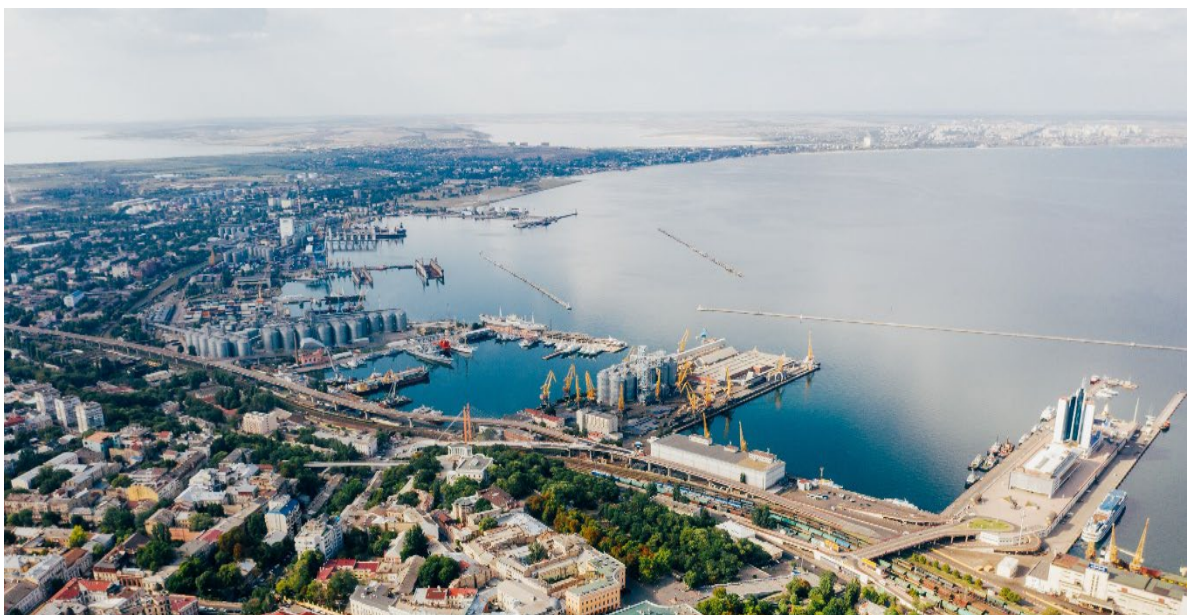
For 2023, two CRs were made:

**CR#1 related to the review of the training systems to improve their understanding and implementation thereof;**

Our assessments of 2023 showed that the ROs have focused on this during the year and improvement had resulted.

**CR#2 related to review of the procedures training, authorisation and monitoring processes of ISM auditing.**

Our assessments of 2023 showed the validity of this recommendation and that improvement scope existed.





## Collective Recommendations 2024

---

Based on our analysis of all the findings of all the ROs in 2023, the following Collective Recommendations are made:

***CR2024 #1: All ROs to focus on improving their reporting and monitoring processes to ensure that errors are minimised in job execution and reporting thereof.***

***CR2024 #2: All ROs to review their provision of resources to ensure that the job execution, reporting and monitoring processes are performed efficiently and effectively to the required quality and standard.***



## VII

# Working with Interested Parties

---

**Report Distribution** In continuation of the decision taken in 2020, printing of hard copies of the Annual Report has been discontinued. The 2022 Annual Report was distributed to interested parties only electronically, by email and was also published in the QACE website.

**The Accredited Certification Bodies (ACBs)** The relationship between ACBs and QACE was satisfactory. The ACB auditors cooperated well with QACE assessors as envisaged in the Tripartite Agreement and achieved the audit objectives satisfactorily. ACB Auditors used the QACE Collective and Individual Recommendations and the ROs' responses in their auditing. The ROs and the ACBs have supported this use of the IRs and feedback and confirmed that this practice is beneficial to the ROs.

**The International Association of Classification Societies (IACS)** QACE continued to work with IACS and jointly developed, in Q4 2023, three Focus Areas for 2024.

QACS and IACS held one meeting, in the October and exchanged ideas on common issues such as updates to the IACS QMSR, QACE QIQS and QRs, auditor training, and End-User Workshop arrangements.

Furthermore, QACE also attended, in part, the IACS Quality Committee meeting in September to work with IACS on the review of the IACS QMSR and other relevant issues of common interest.

QACE also worked with IACS in a small working group to progress the merger of IQARB with QACE. However, at the 2023 AGM, the Members informed the Board of Directors that they had decided to take on themselves the complete responsibility of this merger, just keeping the QACE Board of Directors informed of developments.

## VIII

# Concluding Remarks

---

The QACE Board of Directors and the Secretariat confirmed that the operations have indeed improved the effectiveness in meeting the purpose of QACE as set out in the EU Regulation.

The QACE Board of Directors and the Secretariat continued their commitment to the principles of independence and transparency .





## IX

# Acknowledgments

---

QACE acknowledges the importance of the QACE Assessors in delivering the QACE core activity - its assessment programme. Without their expertise, professionalism, and commitment, it would be impossible to deliver on the QACE objectives and the expectations of the interested parties.

QACE thanks the Accredited Certification Bodies and their auditors, for their positive implementation of the Tripartite Agreement and incorporation of QACE requirements and Assessors into the audit process. Their efforts have resulted in a team philosophy, which helps all participants to achieve their objectives through a single auditing scheme.

QACE thanks the ROs for the support extended by them to the QACE Assessors in fulfilling their assessments. QACE acknowledges the valuable feedback the ROs and ACBs provided on various occasions, throughout the year.

QACE appreciates the valuable assistance of its President, Mr Lukasz Korzeniewicz, for his ongoing commitment to QACE.

QACE acknowledges with thanks the support of the European Commission and the EMSA, through their valuable support to QACE.

QACE thanks the IACS Secretariat and the IACS Quality Committee for their cooperation with QACE in jointly developing the Focus Areas



## Glossary

---

ABS .....	American Bureau of Shipping
ACB .....	Accredited Certification Body
AGM.....	Annual General Meeting
BSI .....	The British Standards Institution [ <i>Certification Body</i> ]
BV .....	Bureau Veritas S.A.
CCJ .....	Quality Certification Center [ <i>Certification Body</i> ]
CCS .....	China Classification Society
CIC .....	Community Interest Company [ <i>Non-Profit</i> ]
CO .....	RO Controlling Office
CRs .....	Collective Recommendations
CRS .....	Croatian Register of Shipping
DEKRA .....	DEKRA Certification GmbH [ <i>Certification Body</i> ]
DNV .....	DNV SE
EC .....	European Commission
EMSA .....	European Maritime Safety Agency
EU .....	European Union
EUW .....	IACS ACB Auditor End User Workshop
HO .....	RO Head Office
IACS .....	International Association of Classification Societies
IACS PR .....	IACS Procedural Requirements
IACS UR .....	IACS Unified Requirements
IAF .....	International Accreditation Forum, Inc.
IMO .....	International Maritime Organisation
IRS .....	Indian Register of Shipping

IRs .....	Individual Recommendation
ISM .....	International Safety Management Code
ISO .....	International Organisation for Standardization
KR .....	Korean Register of Shipping
LR .....	Lloyd's Register
NC .....	Audit finding graded as Nonconformity
NGO .....	IMO Non-Governmental Organisation
NK .....	Nippon Kaiji Kyokai
OB .....	Audit finding graded as Observation
PA .....	RO Plan Approval Centre
PRS .....	Polish Register of Shipping S.A.
QIQS.....	QACE Interpretation of Quality Standards
QMS .....	Quality Management System
QRNs.....	QACE Requirements Notices
QSCS .....	IACS Quality System Certification Scheme
RINA .....	RINA Services S.p.A.
RO .....	Recognised Organisation
RS .....	Russian Maritime Register of Shipping
SGS.....	SGS S.A. <i>[Certification Body]</i>
SL .....	RO Survey Location
SO .....	Scheme Owner
TL .....	Türk Loydu
VCA .....	Vertical Contract Audit

# Annex A

---

## Elected Non-Executive Directors of the Board for QACE

Ashok MAHAPATRA (Chair) .....	India
Nikos MIKELIS .....	UK
Niels Bjørn MORTENSEN .....	Denmark
Peter HINCHLIFFE .....	UK
Lars LANGE <sup>1</sup> .....	Germany

## Secretariat

Nikos MIKELIS.....	Company Secretary
Anantha PADMANABHAN.....	Executive Secretary
Matina BINIAKOU.....	Administration Manager

## Sub-contracted Assessors

Tim HO .....	Far East
Hartmut NICKEL .....	Europe
Priyabratha PATNAIK.....	USA
Abhay SHAH.....	Southeast Asia
Chitta DASH.....	South Asia
Steve BLAIR.....	Europe
Frankie HO.....	Australia
Chen WANG.....	Far East

---

<sup>1</sup> Until his resignation effective 15 November 2023

## Annex B

---

### Members of QACE – EU Recognised Organisations

American Bureau of Shipping  
Bureau Veritas SA  
China Classification Society  
Croatian Register of Shipping  
DNV SE  
Indian Register of Shipping  
Korean Register of Shipping  
Lloyd's Register  
Nippon Kaiji Kyokai  
Polish Register of Shipping S.A.  
RINA Services S.p.A.

### Elected President

**Lukasz Korzeniewicz**, Polish Register of Shipping

The QACE Members' Certificates of Compliance can be found on the QACE website [www.qace.co](http://www.qace.co)

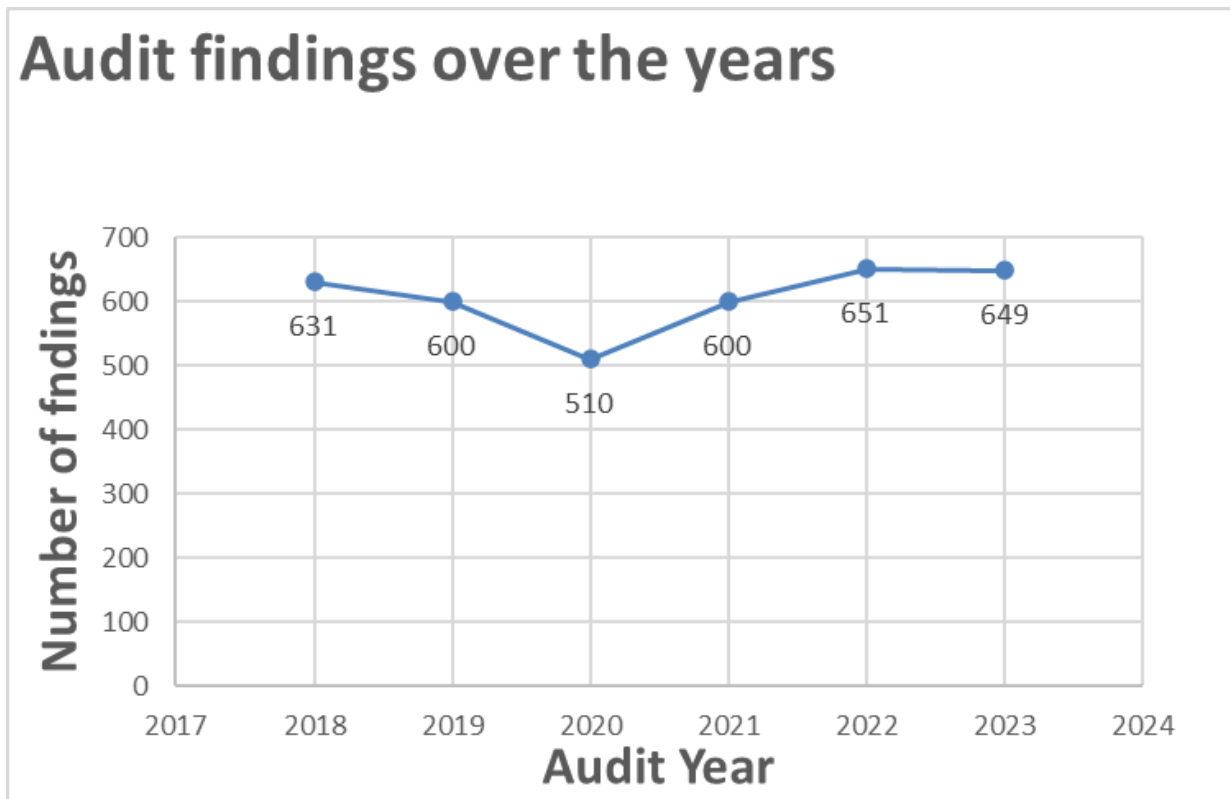
### Approved Accredited Certification Bodies

BSI	Milton Keynes, U.K.
CCJ	Warsaw, Poland
DEKRA Certification B.V.	Arnhem, The Netherlands
SGS S.A.	Geneva, Switzerland

# Annex C

## 2024 Collective Recommendations

2023 Audits resulted in a total of 649 findings – 210 nonconformities and 439 observations – for all ROs. The trend in the number of findings has remained rather flat over the years:



The dip in the year 2000 can be attributed to the general reduction in the VCAs due to restrictions arising out of COVID pandemic.

The 2023 audit findings were analysed quantitatively and qualitatively, to identify Collective Recommendation(s) for 2024.

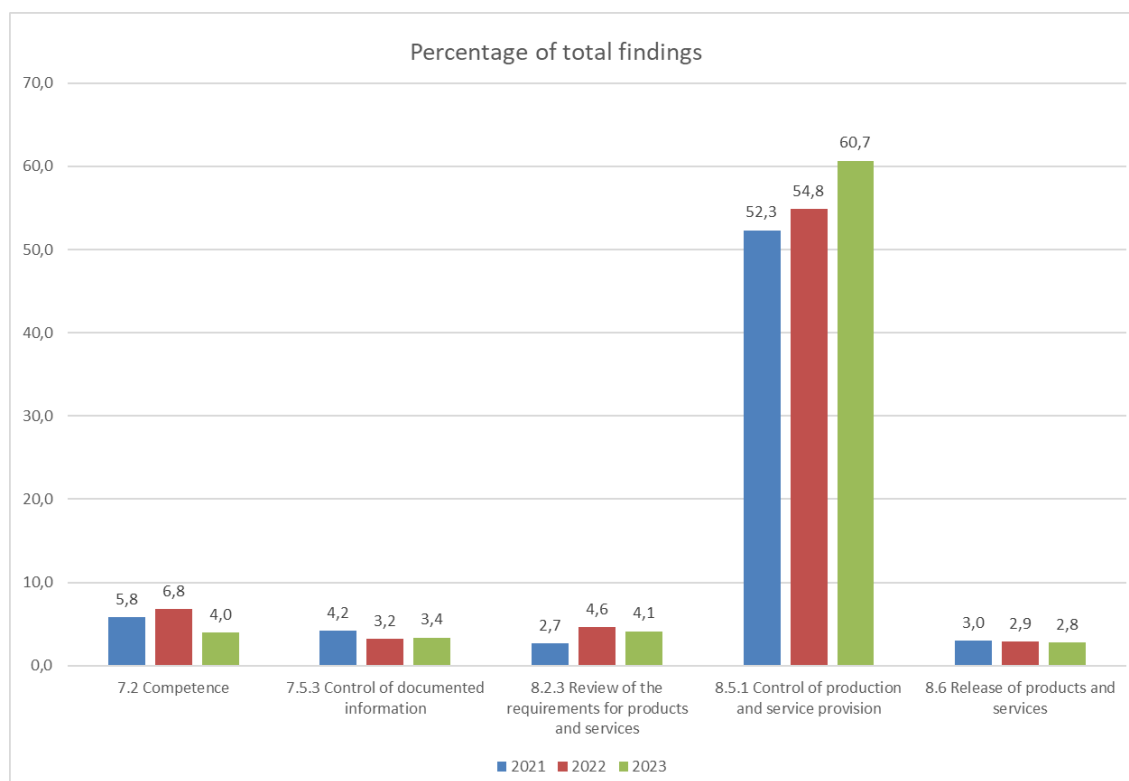
The quantitative analysis shows the following:

*(Note: The percentages in the following will add up to more than 100 because many findings fall under more than one category)*

- Control of production and Service Provision (QMSR Clause 8.5.1 & RO Code Clause 5.2.5, 5.7) has contributed 395 (60.9%) of the 649 findings:
  - 161 (40.8%) of the 395 findings under this category are consequent to errors in 'job execution' – inadequate implementation of requirements, non-compliance with own procedures;
  - 131 (33.2%) of 395 are from VCAs;
  - 264 (66.8%) of 395 are from SiS VCAs.
- Survey during service (IACS Category 9) has contributed 286 (44.7%) of the 649 findings:
  - 101 (35.3%) are from Ships in Service VCAs;
  - 92 (32.2%) are from Survey Locations;
  - 75 (26.2%) are from Head Offices.
- VCAs have contributed to 189 (35.1%) of the 649 findings;
  - 110 (58.2%) of these 189 are from 'Ships in Service';
  - 50 (22.5%) of these 189 are from 'New Construction';
- ISM Audits (IACS Category 10) has contributed 79 (12.2%) of the 649 findings:
  - 52 (65.8%) of these 79 are from survey locations and VCAs.
 This is supported by the fact that PR9 Procedural Requirements for ISM Code Certification has attracted the highest number of findings – 51 – amongst PRs.

An interesting improvement is that the number of findings recorded against 'training' is rather low at 25 (3.9%) of the 649 findings.

It is interesting to note that there is no significant change – except for a rising trend in 8.5.1 findings – in the distribution of the audit findings compared to those in 2021 and 2022.





A qualitative analysis was carried out by assigning a proximate cause for each of the finding. The analysis shows that 98% of the findings are distributed amongst the following proximate causes:

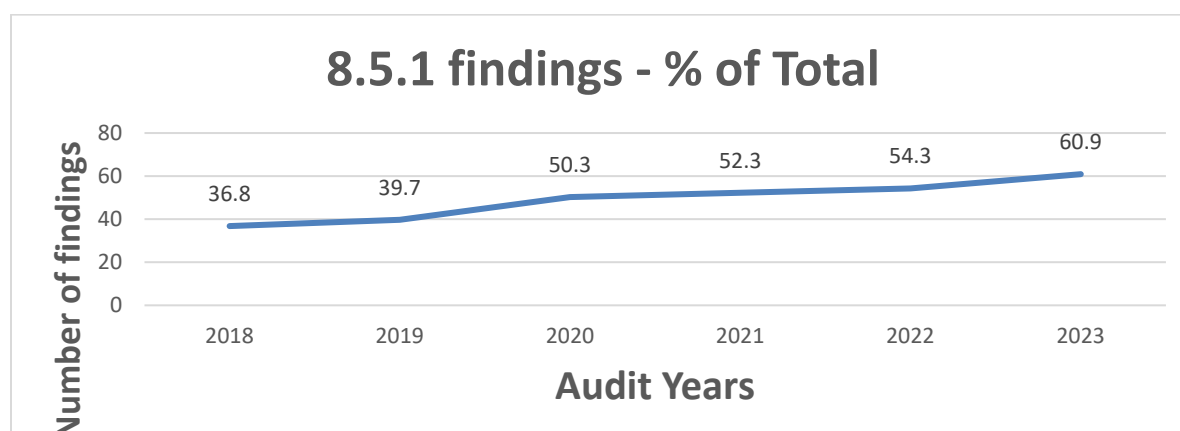
- Inadequate implementation: 244 (37.6%) of the 649 findings;
  - 122 (50%) of these have occurred during 'Survey during service'
- Incomplete reporting / records: 226 (34.8%) of the 649 findings;
  - 94 (41.6%) of these have occurred during 'Survey during service'
- Inadequate/incorrect reference/guidance documentation: 164 (25.3%) of the 649 findings;
  - 94 (57.3%) of these are in 'Survey during service'.

Considering that 'training' does not appear to be a significant cause, the primary causes for these findings, *prima facie*, seem to be, one or more of the following;

- Inadequate preparation time for the surveyors and auditors to execute the jobs;
- Inadequate attention on the part of HO staff in supporting the field personnel with correct reference documentation;
- Inadequate reporting time for the field staff to pay sufficient attention to the accuracy of their reports;
- Inadequate monitoring time for the vetting of the reports and for providing system/process/training updates, as warranted.

This list is not exhaustive and there could be other root cause(s) which could vary between the ROs. It is expected that they would analyse their own performance to arrive at the causes applicable to their systems.

A possible root cause for the above could be inadequate resources, not only in the field for job execution but also in the Head offices both for job execution and for adequate monitoring. The audits cannot, unfortunately, pinpoint resource inadequacies but can identify only their effects, as can be seen in the above analysis. An increasing trend in the percentage of findings recorded against 'QMSR Clause 8.5.1 – Control of production and service provision' also seems to indicate that the 'resources provision' may have been affected over the years, even while acknowledging that the extent and complexity of the classification and statutory services delivered by the ROs have increased.



Therefore, it is incumbent on the ROs to analyse this aspect further in their systems to arrive at corrective actions, if so warranted.

Considering the above the collective recommendations for 2024 are:

***CR2024 #1: All ROs to focus on improving their reporting and monitoring processes to ensure that errors are minimised in job execution and reporting thereof.***

***CR2024 #2: All ROs to review their provision of resources to ensure that the job execution, reporting and monitoring processes are performed efficiently and effectively to the required quality and standard.***

