

GUIDANCE FOR OBTAINING OPERATION FITNESS CERTIFICATE (OFC)

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance to clients operating under the jurisdiction of RAKEZ to comply with the requirements of the Operational Fitness Certificate (OFC).

2. Scope

OFC is a mandatory certificate issued by the HS&E Department of RAKEZ to the companies carrying out any activity (regardless of their licence type) and operating in retail shops, pre-built warehouses, or customised facilities in a plot of land within the jurisdiction areas of RAKEZ.

3. Definitions

- a. **OFC:** is a certificate that confirms that the operations of the company under the issued licence and declared location/s, as assessed during an inspection, is satisfactory from the HS&E Department's perspective. The client shall not operate without a valid OFC.
- b. **OFI:** is an inspection conducted prior to the issuance of OFC.
- c. **Non-compliance:** Any action by a client that (in the opinion of the HS&E Department of RAKEZ) results in or has a potential to result in health, safety & environmental non-compliance with the UAE and RAKEZ Rules and Regulations.
- d. **Corrective Action:** Action to eliminate the cause of detected non-compliance or other undesirable situations.
- e. **Preventive Action:** Action to eliminate the cause of a potential non-compliance or other potential undesirable situation
- f. **Acronyms:**
 - **RAKEZ:** Ras Al Khaimah Economic Zone - Government of Ras Al Khaimah
 - **HS&E:** Health, Safety & Environment Department
 - **OFC:** Operation Fitness Certificate
 - **OFI:** Operation Fitness Inspection

4. Procedure

All companies operating in retail shops, pre-built warehouses & plots shall be assessed as per the procedure outlined below:

4.1. OFC Issuance

Upon issuance of trade licence/lease, the client should notify HS&E via hse@rakez.com to conduct an OFI and issue OFC accordingly within 10 days of commencing the operations. Fees according to the risk category associated with client activities (Refer to HS&E services charges) shall be paid prior to the OFI.

- 4.1.1. The HS&E schedules OFI as agreed with the client.
- 4.1.2. The HS&E conducts the OFC Inspection.
- 4.1.3. If the OFI is satisfactory, then the HS&E issues the OFC to the client.
- 4.1.4. If the OFI is not satisfactory, the HS&E will send an OFI report to the client.
- 4.1.5. The OFI report will contain specific observations/recommendations and timeframes for the client to action. Clients are required to implement the corrective actions/preventive actions and respond to the HS&E via hse@rakez.com with the close-out report. All evidences/photos attached in the close-out report shall be in landscape mode.
- 4.1.6. HS&E may do a follow-up inspection where required to verify the compliance and confirm closing out the OFI report. Additional fees are applied to the follow-up inspection.

4.2. Client Non-Compliance

If there is no response from the client within 15 days, OFC will not be issued and this may trigger a violation procedure as per the RAKEZ Violation Code.

4.3. OFC Renewal

For trade licence renewal, RAKEZ notifies the client 120 days prior to the trade licence expiry date. Fees according to the risk category associated with client activities (Refer to HS&E services charges) shall be paid prior to the OFI. Steps 4.1.1 to 4.1.6 are applied.

4.4. OFC Amendment

Upon amendment of trade licence/lease, modification of the current facility or installation of new machinery/equipment/racking systems in the existing facility, the client should notify HS&E to conduct an OFI and issue OFC accordingly within 10 days of commencing the operations. Fees according to the risk category associated with client activities (Refer to HS&E Services Charges) shall be paid prior to the OFI. Steps 4.1.1 to 4.1.6 are applied.

4.5. OFC Validity

OFC is valid only for a period of 1 year or till the expiry of the trade licence (whichever comes earlier); it needs to be renewed before 90 days of its expiry to avoid delay in the licence renewal process since OFC is one of the requirements by RAKEZ for the licence renewal.

5. Related Documents

This document should be read in conjunction with the following related documents:

- OPERATION FITNESS CERTIFICATE (OFC) APPLICATION (HSE-GU01.F01)
- OPERATION FITNESS CERTIFICATE (OFC) PROCESS FLOWCHART (HSE-GU01.FL01)