

# 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
  - **OFA:** Operation Fitness Audit

## 4. Procedure

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

### 4.1. Operation Fitness Verification

#### 4.1.1. Operation Fitness Inspection

Upon issuance of trade licence/lease, the client shall fill out and submit the OFC application by clicking [here](#) 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.

- a. The HS&E schedules OFI as agreed with the client.
- b. The HS&E conducts the OFC Inspection.
- c. If the OFI is satisfactory, then the HS&E issues the OFC to the client.
- d. If the OFI is not satisfactory, the HS&E will send an OFI report to the client.
- e. 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](mailto:hse@rakez.com) with the close-out report. All evidence/photos attached in the close-out report shall be in landscape mode.
- f. 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.

#### 4.1.2. Operation Fitness Audit *(Optional process for the client having leased area of 200,000 SQM or more)*

Upon issuance of trade licence/lease, the client should assign a RAKEZ registered 3<sup>rd</sup> party consultant for auditing and client shall fill out and submit the OFC application by clicking [here](#) to conduct an OFA 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 OFA.

- a. The HS&E schedules OFI as agreed with the client.
- b. The HS&E conducts the OFC Inspection.
- c. If the OFA is satisfactory, then the HS&E issues the OFC to the client.
- d. If the OFA is not satisfactory, the HS&E will send an OFA report to the client.
- e. The OFA 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](mailto:hse@rakez.com) with the close-out report. All evidence/photos attached in the close-out report shall be in landscape mode.
- f. HS&E may do a follow-up inspection where required to verify the compliance and confirm closing out the OFA report. Additional fees are applied to the follow-up inspection.

#### 4.1.3. Points of Considerations

- If a company has more than one licence with different expiry dates, separate inspections will be carried out for each licence, and HSE service fees will apply to all. However, if all the company's licences expire on the same date, the risk-related activity charges will be applied only and additional fees for leased units/area on the non-primary licences will not be charged.
- An undertaking letter provision for exempting the licence from OFC for below conditions will be offered and its subject to HS&E department discretion of accepting/rejecting/asking for further information for verification:
  - If the non-primary licence(s) is similar (in nature and product types) to the primary one.
  - If the facility is not in operation at all.
  - If the company's materials are traded outside the RAKEZ premises and there is no storage in the leased premises within RAKEZ.
  - If the licence is inactive.
- For Sublease cases, if the sublessor has been charged for the leased area then only activity risk-related fees shall be applied to sublessee.

- For Sublease cases, if the sublessor has not been charged for the leased area (e.g. due to not being active) then activity risk-related fees and subleased area charges shall be applied to sublessee.

#### 4.2. Issuance of OFC

Upon satisfactory compliance with the OFI/OFA, HS&E issues the OFC to the client.

#### 4.3. 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.

#### 4.4. OFC Renewal

For OFC renewal, RAKEZ notifies the client 60 days prior to the OFC 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/OFA. Steps 4.1.1 (a) to (f) are applied for OFI and 4.1.2 (a) to (f) are applied for OFA.

#### 4.5. 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/OFA 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/OFA. Steps 4.1.1 (a) to (f) are applied for OFI and 4.1.2 (a) to (f) are applied for OFA.

#### 4.6. OFC Validity

OFC is valid only for a period of 1 year or till the expiry of the trade licence (whichever comes earlier). The process for renewing the OFC shall start before the expiry (preferably 90 to 60 days) of the OFC to have sufficient time to complete the renewal process. The client is required to maintain a valid OFC at all times to prevent delays in the licence renewal process and to avoid administrative penalties in accordance with RAKEZ violation codes.

### 5. Related Documents

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

- OPERATION FITNESS CERTIFICATE (OFC) APPLICATION (HSE-GU01.F01) - click [here](#)
- OPERATION FITNESS CERTIFICATE (OFC) PROCESS FLOWCHART (HSE-GU01.FL01)

## Appendix 1: TYPICAL OPERATIONS FITNESS INSPECTION CHECKLIST

<b>Facility Certification</b>	
1.	Is a Building Completion Certificate from RAKEZ available?
2.	Is a Modification Completion Certificate from RAKEZ available?
3.	Is a Building Completion Certificate from RAK Civil Defence available?
4.	Is a Building Modification Completion Certificate from RAK Civil Defence available?
5.	Is a valid Environmental Permit from EPDA for industrial license companies available?
6.	Is a valid Building Safety Certificate from RAK Civil Defence for companies operating in land plots available?
7.	Is a valid Facility Safety Certificate from RAK Civil Defence for companies operating in warehouses available?
8.	Is a valid NOC from RAK Municipality for foodstuff activities available?
<b>Asset Certification</b>	
9.	Does the employer have valid certificates for lifting equipment and accessories as per ENAS?
10.	Does the employer have valid certificates for pressure vessels as per ENAS?
11.	Do the employers have valid certificates for work equipment that requires annual certification as per ENAS?
12.	Do employees have valid certificates to operate all types of lifting equipment as per ENAS?
13.	Does the employer have a valid NOC from RAKEZ HSE for the usage of lifting equipment?
14.	Does the employer have a valid NOC from RAKEZ HSE for the radiography activities?
<b>Hazardous Materials</b>	
15.	Does the employer have a valid NOC from RAKEZ HSE for the storage of hazardous materials?
16.	Does the employer have a valid NOC from RAKEZ HSE for the import of restricted material?
17.	Does the employer have a valid NOC from RAKEZ HSE for the usage of LPG?
18.	Are hazardous materials classified and labeled as per GHS, and have SDS?
19.	Does the employer import or supply any restricted materials?
20.	Are hazardous materials stored, transported, handled, supplied, and disposed of and have been appropriately packaged as per SDS?
21.	Are appropriate inventory records available and maintained?
22.	Are hazardous materials stored separately and segregated from incompatible materials?
23.	Are hazardous substances stored in a secure area with containment bunding of 110% of the storage capacity?
24.	Are storage areas adequately ventilated to prevent the accumulation of flammable vapors?
25.	Has the employer engaged a waste collection and transportation company that is licenced and authorised by PSD to collect and transport waste for further processing and final disposal?
26.	Does the employer have emergency procedures in place to deal with spills, accidental release, fire, and explosions?

<b>Electrical Safety</b>
27. Is the electrical system adequately maintained, inspected, and tested?
28. Is electrical cabling protected from damage and electrical control panels locked to prevent access? Are electrical cords organized in good condition without any damaged?
29. Are electrical cables, cords/plugs, sockets, or switches free from damage or deterioration?
30. Are electrical danger warning notices provided on all control panels?
31. Is there a system for electrical machinery and equipment to be isolated in both normal or operating, and abnormal or fault conditions?
<b>Emergency Response</b>
32. Is the Emergency/Fire Plan displayed and includes a floor plan/map, emergency phone numbers, evacuation procedures & routes, location of exits & assembly point(s), location & use of fire extinguishers, etc.?
33. Are employees appointed and trained as First-aiders and Fire Wardens for each working shift to respond to emergency situations?
34. Are exit routes and doors marked, kept clear & never left open, and do they lead directly to a safe area or assembly point?
35. Are aisles and walkways marked, adequately lit, safe clearance, and kept clear?
36. Are first aid boxes/kits available to each work area, with necessary supplies available, periodically inspected, and replenished as needed?
37. Is all fire and life safety system equipment tested and maintained regularly?
38. Is Hassantuk Fire Alarm Monitoring System installed and working without any faults?
<b>General Requirements</b>
39. Is workplace equipment, machinery, devices, and systems adequately maintained to preserve the safety, health, and well-being of employees?
40. Are pedestrian and vehicles routes including any stairs, fixed ladder, doorway, gateway, loading bay, or ramp of sufficient width and headroom to allow employees and vehicles to move safely?
41. Have suitable PPEs been selected and provided to the employees?
42. Is the workplace arranged to prevent employees from falling from heights and protect employees from objects falling onto them?
43. Is proper housekeeping/cleaning maintained in the workplace?
44. Is the proper regime of waste segregation and disposal maintained in the workplace?
45. Are suitable Warning, Mandatory, and Prohibition signs displayed within the workplace as required?
46. Has a Risk Assessment been performed to assess all identified significant hazards and effective control measures implemented?
47. Does the company provide employees with transport?
48. Does the company provide employees accommodation within the leased facility?
49. Is the accommodation kitchen approved and in hygienic condition?
50. Are adequate welfare facilities provided in the workplace? Is it clean, lit & and ventilated?

**Note:** Please be advised that the provided information does not encompass the entirety of RAKEZ Health, Safety & Environment (HS&E) Requirements. Additional requirements, as stipulated within the RAKEZ HS&E Regulations, identified during the inspection, will be duly highlighted in the inspection report.