



Tournai Hall, Evelyn Woods Road, Aldershot,
 Hampshire GU11 2LL
 Tel: +44 (0) 1252 357839 Fax: +44 (0) 1252 357831
 email: info@irata.org web: www.irata.org
 IRATA is a Company Limited by Guarantee and
 Registered in England No: 3426704
 VAT Registration No: 529 0111 77

GUIDANCE FOR YOUR IRATA COMPANY APPLICATION

There are many reasons why you as a rope access or work-at-height company would seek membership of the Industrial Rope Access Trade Association (IRATA International) and these can include temporary trading benefits or the simple desire for a 'badge of authority.' IRATA has always set high standards that it requires its members to achieve and, by doing so, understands that some applicants are discouraged from completing their application or do not see why such strict requirements are necessary.

IRATA has a worldwide reputation for effective training and safe working that it will not have prejudiced by a decline in standards. It is this creed that has seen the Association become truly international and, indeed, the sole global organisation in its sector; existing members gain much reward for being part of such a body.

To assist the decision-making of applicant companies the following explanation of the application process is provided. Depending on the size of the company, its existing compatibility with requirements or the need for extra assistance with their application, the stages and time periods described can vary. Help is always available from the IRATA offices, existing members or IRATA auditors.

THE APPLICATION PROCESS

Applicant contacts IRATA	Contact can be by telephone, fax, e-mail or post
Application pack is sent	Includes application form and other supporting information
Completed application form is returned to IRATA together with non-refundable application fee	Access to data contained provided in the application is restricted to the IRATA administration staff and the Auditor appointed by the Association.
IRATA appoints Auditor <i>(IRATA auditors are experienced rope access personnel who have gained auditor qualifications)</i>	There is an Auditor's rota and the applicant will be appointed the next available auditor on that list. Consideration as to the geographic location of the applicant may be applied. The applicant can veto the first appointment without giving just cause.
Auditor contacts applicant. Discusses the audit checklist that will need to be completed and the other details required.	The audit checklist enables the applicant to gauge how well their existing procedures match IRATA's requirements. It allows the applicant to assess their levels of conformity for themselves.
Auditor conducts a desktop audit and schedules the HQ/office audit	The desktop audit enables a precise view to be gained of the applicant's level of compliance.
Auditor conducts HQ/office audit	Double-check of desktop audit Check for actual implementation of stated procedures: e.g. equipment compliance confirmation equipment inspection process inspection of training area (if relevant) evidence of suitable range of equipment evidence of knowledge of IRATA Guidelines and other Association guidance and rules (Where the application is for Probationary Membership some items may not be auditable. These will be required to be in place for all critical items before the Full Membership Audit is undertaken)

Corrective Action Requests	<p>Where the Auditor finds non-conformances (NC) then Corrective Action Requests (CARs) will be issued. These may be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing company procedures not meeting an audit requirement • Work forms showing activities being conducted outside the requirements of company procedures <p>CARs for the above NCs might be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amend procedures to meet audit requirements • Provide work form showing evidence of compliance with the procedure <p>(Some corrective action may require minimal changes to documents, others may require evidence of the changes being incorporated into practical action, i.e. training course amendments)</p>
CARs completed	Completion of the remedial actions required will enable the auditor to file a report recommending membership approval or not to the Executive Committee
Probationary Membership approval	The Executive Committee action is by ballot and the recommendation of the Auditor is usually followed though the Executive can ask for further clarification at this stage. Auditor suggests regular internal audit to check compliance.
Full Member Audit	<p>After holding Probationary Membership for at least one year and no more than two years, the company will be audited for Full Member status. The procedure is as the Probationary Audit from submitting a self-checklist through desktop and site audit to completing CARs</p> <p>Normally the same Auditor will conduct both audits. He will check written procedures, including any required changes, and ensure new issues of IRATA Guidelines or General Requirements have been included.</p> <p>The major difference in the audit will be to focus on records that provide objective evidence of compliance. It is also usual for a company new to training to IRATA Guidelines to show evidence of training courses having been run to an acceptable standard during the probationary period</p>
Re-audit	A full audit is thereafter conducted every three years. A different auditor from previous audits will be allocated from the rota.

TIMELINE FOR THE AUDIT PROCESS

0 months	Application received for Probationary Membership/Notification given for Full Membership or Re-Audit
6 months	Desktop audit conducted and Site Audit conducted. CARs issued as relevant
9 months	CARs completed and returned to auditor
10 months	Auditors report circulated to the IRATA Executive Committee

(The above timings are provided for guidance only. The Auditor may extend the time line at his discretion). See below for where specific times apply.

Irata Bye-Laws specify the following:

3.5.2 Non-compliance, non-conformance

Any non-compliances or non-conformances revealed shall be corrected within 3 months. The member shall subsequently demonstrate that the above non-compliances or non-conformances are rectified within this time. Failure to do so within three months may result in the company being suspended and after six months excluded from membership.

3.3.2 Probationary membership requirements

Applicants shall submit themselves for an IRATA Probationary Audit before becoming a probationary member.

Probationary members shall apply and successfully complete an IRATA Full Audit within twelve months of the first anniversary of their probationary membership, failing which their membership shall be terminated and they shall be required to re-apply.

Companies wishing to apply for full membership shall normally complete a minimum of one year as a probationary member in the type(s) of full membership required.

Where the management personnel within a Probationary member company have previous experience of the successful management of an IRATA Full Member company then the one-year probationary 'information and guidance period may not be appropriate and may be shortened to a probationary period of not less than four months at the discretion of the Executive Committee.

3.5.1 Re-audits

An IRATA Audit shall be undertaken on a full member each three years.