



Terms of Reference (TOR): Variance Request (VR)

Version 2.0

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to describe the Terms of Reference of the ASC Variance Request Committee.

2. Supporting Documents

- [ASC Standards](#)
- [ASC Certification and Accreditation Requirements \(CAR\)](#)
- [ASC Requirements for Unit of Certification \(RUoC\)](#)
- [ASC Standard Setting Procedure](#)
- ASC Certification and Accreditation (CAR); Development, Revision, Approval and Communication Procedure
- [ASC Variance Request Procedure](#)

3. Roles and Responsibilities

- VR Committee Members – Voting members that are responsible for the ultimate decision on the outcome of a Variance Request.
- VR Committee Advisors – Non-voting members that are responsible for completing the technical review and formulating the Variance Request analysis.
- VR Committee Observers – Non-voting members that are responsible for providing input on a Variance Request where applicable.

4. Standards VR Committee Members

4.1 The Standards VR Committee shall consist of three voting Members, two non-voting Advisors and four non-voting Observers, consisting of:

4.1.1 Standards VR Committee Members:

4.1.1.1 ASC Technical Advisory Group (TAG) Chair.

4.1.1.2 ASC Technical Advisory Group (TAG) Member, as elected by TAG.

4.1.1.3 ASC Director of Standards and Science.

4.1.2 Standards VR Committee Advisors:

4.1.2.1 Technical Advisory Group (TAG) member(s) with relevant expertise on the VR topic.

4.1.2.2 ASC Standards and Science staff member responsible for the technical review.

4.1.3 Standards VR Committee Observers:

4.1.3.1 ASC Senior Director of Technical Operations.

4.1.3.2 ASC Programme Assurance staff member.

4.1.3.3 ASC Market Development staff member.

4.2 The VR Committee Member names shall be listed on the ASC website.

5. Standards VR Committee Alternate Members

5.1 If a member of the Standards VR Committee is unable to fulfil their obligation on a short-term basis, the member will notify ASC.

5.2 ASC will delegate the role to an alternate VR Committee member on an interim basis.

5.3 Alternate members for the Standards VR Committee are:

5.3.1 ASC Senior Director of Technical Operations.

5.3.2 ASC Head of Standards.

5.3.3 ASC Head of Research.

6. Standards VR Committee Membership Term

6.1 The Standards VR Committee Members shall be automatically assigned in response to their appointment to the position within ASC Standards and Science, or the ASC Technical Advisory Group.

6.2 Membership on the Standards-related VR Committee shall terminate when:

6.2.1 Employment with ASC ends, or their position within the ASC changes.

6.2.2 Their TAG-term expires.

7. CAR VR Committee Members

7.1 The CAR VR Committee shall consist of three voting Members, one non-voting Advisor and two non-voting Observers, consisting of:

7.1.1 CAR VR Committee Members

7.1.1.1 ASC Director of Programme Assurance

7.1.1.2 ASC Head of Certification

7.1.1.3 ASC Programme Assurance team member with relevant expertise

7.1.2 CAR VR Committee Advisor

7.1.2.1 ASC Programme Assurance staff member responsible for the technical review.

7.1.3 CAR VR Committee Observer

7.1.3.1 ASC Senior Director of Technical Operations.

7.1.3.2 ASC Head of Standards.

8. CAR VR Committee Alternate Members

8.1 If a member of the CAR VR Committee is unable to fulfil their obligation on a short-term basis, the member will notify ASC.

8.2 ASC will delegate the role to an alternate CAR VR Committee member on an interim basis.

8.3 Alternate members for the CAR VR Committee are:

8.3.1 ASC Senior Director of Technical Operations.

8.3.2 ASC Programme Assurance team member with equivalent expertise.

8.3.3 ASC CEO.

9. CAR VR Committee Membership Term

9.1 The CAR VR Committee Members shall be automatically assigned in response to their appointment to the position within ASC Programme Assurance.

9.2 Membership on the CAR VR Committee shall terminate when:

9.2.1 Employment with ASC ends, or their position within the ASC changes.

10. Conflict of Interest

10.1 All VR Committee members shall act only in the best interest of ASC.

10.2 Conflicts of interest may be revealed during the review of the VR analysis.

10.3 VR Committee members shall declare to ASC any conflicting personal or loyalty interests, either directly or through connections with any company, business, or other entity.

11. VR Committee Authority

11.1 The VR Committee Members are the decision-making body for variance requests.

11.2 The decision from the VR Committee shall be consensus-driven, otherwise majority-rule shall apply.

12. VR Committee Knowledge and Expertise

12.1 Members of the VR Committee shall have one or more of the following skills and knowledge-areas:

12.1.1 Vision and mission of ASC.

12.1.2 Understanding of the ASC Certification Programme.

12.1.3 Reputation of the ASC and risks that may jeopardize it.

12.1.4 Understanding of the aquaculture sector, including related environmental and social impacts.

12.1.5 Ability to read and distill scientific information and recommendations.

13. Amendment History

Date:	Version:	Summary of Amendment:
9 Mar 2023	2.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• General formatting and layout <p>New Sections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Roles and Responsibilities (Section 3)• Alternate members (Section 5 and 8)• CAR VR Committee Membership Term (Section 9)• Conflict-of-Interest clause (Section 10)• VR Committee Authority (Section 11) <p>Amended Sections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Standards VR Committee Membership Term (Section 6)
15 Dec 2020	1.0	New document

Annex 1 - Current Standards VR Committee Members

- Petter Arnesen, Chair of Technical Advisory Group
- Peter Cook, Technical Advisory Group member
- Michiel Fransen, Director of Standards and Science