

False CMMI Certification

Identifying and Reporting Illegitimate CMMI Certificates

ISACA frequently receives reports of organizations presenting falsified certificates as verification of alleged CMMI maturity level ratings. These certificates do not correlate to any of the appraisals that appear on the CMMI [Published Appraisal Results System \(PARS\)](#), or any others on record with ISACA, and do not represent valid CMMI appraisal results.

Quality Management routinely receives emails from individuals and/or organizations that have encountered a falsified certificate. These inquiries often come from individuals charged with verifying the information submitted with bids on Requests for Proposal (RFPs), especially when the organization submitting a bid does not appear on PARS. When asked about a certificate that does not reflect an appraisal submitted to and approved by ISACA, Quality Management informs the person inquiring that both the document and the claim to be Maturity Level "X" are illegitimate.

Usually, these certificates that are reported to Quality Management have been issued by organizations with no CMMI credentials; these companies are not ISACA CMMI Partners and do not employ certified CMMI Instructors or Lead Appraisers (LAs). Organizations such as Quality System Assessments International Limited (QSA), Vintage Certifications Inc., UKCert Certification and Inspection, and Regal Register (UK) Limited (RRUL) have all issued falsified certificates obtained by Quality Management. These companies claim to offer CMMI appraisals and services without authorization from ISACA, but the certificates they issue are not recognized by ISACA.

In the past, we have received certificates that have listed the names of certified LAs and were said to be issued by the LAs' sponsoring Partners. Investigations by Quality Management found these certificates to be forgeries; the "appraised" organizations had created—or obtained from parties who had created—the documents by altering real certificates the LAs had awarded to clients. The LAs and Partners had no knowledge of the existence of these fabricated certificates and were not culpable in the actions of the organizations named.

ISACA does not issue certificates to appraised organizations. ISACA neither certifies the results of appraisals nor grants accreditation. ISACA does not prohibit its Partners from creating certificates for organizations they have appraised; however, it cautions against this practice since it creates the potential for those documents to be misused, and for the Certified LA and/or ISACA CMMI Partner's name to be tarnished by the dishonest actions of others.

In more infrequent cases, an LA and/or a Partner organization have themselves been found to be at fault for issuing falsified certificates. The companies named by these documents had not

been appraised but had been awarded Maturity Level ratings. ISACA does not tolerate such acts, and in these instances CMMI certifications and Partner agreements were terminated.

The unauthorized awarding of CMMI ratings is harmful to the valuable work of both ISACA and ISACA CMMI Partners. LAs and Instructors are ISACA's eyes and ears around the world; when a falsified certificate is found, please report it to Quality Management immediately.

Questions regarding this Quality Tip can be sent to quality@cmmiinstitute.com.