



IAF PPR | PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE | FIRST EDITION

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE & EVIDENCE MANUAL

Competence, impartial judgment, original evidence,
independent review and accountable professional reporting.

PREPARED FOR IAF ADOPTION

Version 1.0 | 16 September 2026

Independent Experts & Professionals
Corporate Recognition | English master text

International Automotive Federation

iaf.com

Document control

Item	Controlled value
Programme	IAF Professional Practice Recognition Programme (IAF PPR)
Document	Professional Practice & Evidence Manual
Edition / version	First Edition Version 1.0
Prepared	16 September 2026
Status	Prepared for IAF adoption. Effective operation requires recorded adoption, validated pilots and an operational verification route.
Owner	International Automotive Federation
Master language	English
Public recognition wording	IAF Corporate Recognition - bounded to the approved legal entity, sites and activities.
Hierarchy	Standard including internal directives and normative annexes; adopted implementation notice within those rules; Status and Mark Rules; Audit and Professional Practice Manuals; Applicant Guide; controlled forms.
Authority boundary	Corporate implementation assurance. Individual role authorisation is separate; no transferable personal licence, report endorsement or vehicle approval is conferred.
Control	Retain exact scope and criterion versions. Protect completed records, personal information and professional evidence.

Purpose and use

Competence, impartial judgment, original evidence, independent review and accountable professional reporting.

Shall denotes a requirement; should guidance; may permission. Examples are illustrative unless a normative provision expressly establishes a rule. No checklist score can compensate for failed safety, integrity, competence or an unsupported scope.

Contents

Document control	2
TM01 Build a defensible professional assurance case	4
TM02 Map entities, hubs and professional roles	4
TM03 Demonstrate individual competence without credential shortcuts	5
TM04 Manage assignment conflicts and paid independence	5
TM05 Contract for a question that can be answered	6
TM06 Plan evidence and safe examination	6
TM07 Preserve physical provenance and custody	7
TM08 Acquire and interpret digital evidence	7
TM09 Control measurements and quantitative decision rules	8
TM10 Validate models, spreadsheets and simulations	8
TM11 Make reasoning and uncertainty visible	9
TM12 Perform independent technical review	9
TM13 Issue a complete and authentic report	10
TM14 Correct errors and protect continuing reliance	10
TM15 Apply discipline-specific evidence controls	11
TM16 Use AI and future technology responsibly	11
TM17 Protect confidentiality, liability and continuity	12
TM18 Calculate coverage and effort transparently	12
TM19 Measure professional quality and improve it	13
TM20 Implement globally and prepare future capability	13

TM01 Build a defensible professional assurance case

Implementation and evidence

Begin with a precise claim: the named practice consistently controls specified professional activities through competent people, reliable evidence, impartial judgment and accountable reporting. Identify entity, hub, discipline, technology, intended use and evidence period. A general claim of automotive expertise cannot establish competence in every vehicle system or professional role.

Connect each requirement to the process owner, implemented control, original case evidence, independent check and limitation. Triangulate policy, actual engagement records, practitioner explanation and observed outcomes. Preserve contradictory evidence and withdrawn opinions. More pages do not compensate for an unsupported inference or unverified source.

Verification and practical application

A consultancy may advise on battery durability without being capable of destructive cell investigation or fire-cause attribution. Its approved scope must distinguish these activities. Shared automotive vocabulary does not make their methods, hazards or necessary experience interchangeable. Identify referrals and outsourced contributions transparently.

Use the scope schedule for boundaries, professional roster for individual authority, self-assessment for the implementation narrative, engagement dossier for real work and checklist for assessment conclusions. The independent recognition decision concerns the resulting corporate assurance case. It neither adopts every expert conclusion nor turns a report into a product approval.

TM02 Map entities, hubs and professional roles

Implementation and evidence

Identify the legal person that contracts, invoices, employs or controls contributors and assumes professional responsibility. Record sole-practice status honestly. List each hub from which work is delivered or technically controlled, including home offices and physical examination facilities. A shared address is not evidence that all occupants belong to the recognised practice.

Map discipline, independent lead, contributor, reviewer and issuer separately. The person issuing a report must have recorded authority, and technical responsibility must remain traceable even where an executive signs a covering letter. Record external reviewer arrangements and contingencies for absence, conflict or sudden departure.

Verification and practical application

Example: a three-hub firm offers engineering advice at all hubs and accident investigation at one. Initial evidence requires three completed engineering engagements at each hub plus three investigation engagements at the relevant hub. The other hubs cannot advertise investigation delivery merely because the company employs one investigator elsewhere.

For a governance-only centre, demonstrate actual oversight decisions rather than fabricated client work. A client vehicle-storage location is not automatically a delivering hub, but its custody and examination conditions remain part of the engagement evidence. Separate legal entities need enforceable participation and audit access before inclusion.

TM03 Demonstrate individual competence without credential shortcuts

Implementation and evidence

Create an individual competence file with verified identity, education or equivalent demonstrated learning, discipline-specific experience, actual contributions, technical challenge and role decisions. Distinguish a certificate of attendance from demonstrated capability. Check material credential claims through reliable evidence and record uncertainty rather than treating an attractive biography as verified.

Independent leads require at least 24 months of relevant practice and three representative completed assignments within the previous 36 months for each authorised discipline. Review authorship and responsibility. A person named on a team report may have supplied only data; their own analysis and decisions must be established before authorising independent leadership.

Verification and practical application

Use structured challenge: ask the practitioner to explain a method choice, identify the most consequential assumption, consider adverse evidence and show what would change the conclusion. A changed input or missing sensor channel can reveal whether they understand the model or merely operate a tool. Record the response and evaluator competence.

Junior contributors can develop under supervision with clearly bounded tasks. Plan continuing development from actual gaps, new methods, inactivity and errors, then evaluate learning in practice. This edition sets outcome-based development rather than an invented universal annual-hours quota. Significant competence loss requires restriction until demonstrated recovery.

TM04 Manage assignment conflicts and paid independence

Implementation and evidence

Before accepting work identify client, payer, subject owners, relevant counterparties, prior advice, financial interests, close relationships and other engagements creating incompatible duties. Review conflicts again when parties or questions change. A generic annual declaration cannot replace assignment-specific review.

Disclosure is useful but cannot cure every conflict. A practitioner asked to independently validate their own disputed design should not relabel self-review as an external assessment. Use a genuinely independent alternative, narrow the task to factual explanation or decline. Record why the selected control protects judgment and confidentiality.

Verification and practical application

Ordinary professional fees and independent review fees are permitted when transparent and unrelated to the desired conclusion. An independent valuation paid only if it reaches the client's target creates an unacceptable incentive. Separate a permissible advisory role from an independent opinion; switching labels after analysis does not erase the conflict.

For a sole practice, secure an external reviewer with relevant competence and no material interest. Review reciprocal arrangements for dependency and weak challenge. The IAF case-team 36-month look-back is an operator impartiality rule; it is not a requirement that a professional reviewer work without pay or have no ordinary review relationship.

TM05 Contract for a question that can be answered

Implementation and evidence

Clarify who instructs, who can authorise evidence access, intended use, recipients, decision context, deliverables, timing, fees, confidentiality, reliance limits and correction route. Distinguish client preference from the professional question. A broad request to prove that a vehicle is safe may need narrower identified systems, conditions and evidence.

Before acceptance review competence, capacity, permissions and evidence feasibility. Identify actual forum or jurisdiction duties for disputed work without assuming one country's procedures apply worldwide. A contractual disclaimer cannot erase a binding professional duty or make an unsupported conclusion reliable.

Verification and practical application

Example: an insurer asks for a damage valuation while another party expects a cause opinion. Separate the two questions, authors and methods, and document any additional authority. A payment instruction does not automatically permit accessing the owner's vehicle account or conducting destructive examination.

Control scope changes with versioned instructions and impact review. Explain additional cost and evidence needs before material expansion where appropriate. Reject instructions requiring omission of adverse facts or a predetermined conclusion. Retain a clear cancellation and custody plan if the assignment cannot be completed lawfully or competently.

TM06 Plan evidence and safe examination

Implementation and evidence

Turn each question into competing explanations, necessary observations, suitable methods and limits. Identify safety hazards, permissions, evidence preservation and independent review points before irreversible activity. Work backward from the intended conclusion: what fact would support it, what could contradict it and how will both be sought?

For physical investigation record subject identity, prior condition, energy hazards, safe access, competent personnel, equipment and emergency arrangements. The programme does not provide vehicle-specific hazardous-work instructions; use a valid applicable method and authorised capability. Do not perform destructive work merely to create an impressive assessment demonstration.

Verification and practical application

An investigator examining a burned electrified vehicle should distinguish observation of damage from handling a potentially hazardous battery. If the practice lacks safe capability, use an appropriately controlled specialist or exclude the activity. Document what could not be examined and how that limits causal conclusions.

Assessors may observe real or safely arranged representative work. Demonstrations support competence but do not satisfy the completed-engagement gate. Record deviations, unavailable evidence and why an alternative method remains fit for purpose. Stop and escalate when the actual subject differs materially from the planned configuration.

TM07 Preserve physical provenance and custody

Implementation and evidence

Assign stable IDs to vehicle, component, sample, photograph set and location. Record identifying features, condition, collection method, collector, time and custody transfers. Separate client-reported identity from independently checked identity. Maintain seals or other controls proportionate to the risk of substitution, contamination or deterioration.

Record each material alteration, examination and access. Before destructive testing establish specific lawful authority, preservation duties, notice to entitled parties where required and representative retention. Describe missing or damaged material without inferring that its absence proves a preferred explanation.

Verification and practical application

Example: a detached steering component arrives without the original vehicle. A serial label and client statement may support association but leave uncertainty about installation and prior handling. Explain that uncertainty at the point of conclusion and seek corroboration; do not imply uninterrupted custody merely because the sample is now securely stored.

At closure document return, storage or authorised disposal and retained evidence. Custody gaps do not automatically invalidate every observation, but their effect must be assessed for each conclusion. Preserve enough original context for a competent reviewer to reconstruct what was actually available and what changed.

TM08 Acquire and interpret digital evidence

Implementation and evidence

Confirm lawful authority, purpose and boundaries before accessing vehicle logs, devices, cloud accounts or personal data. Possession of a vehicle or password is not necessarily permission for every account or data subject. Use a proportionate acquisition plan, protecting unrelated locations, images, messages and credentials.

Preserve an appropriate original acquisition, hashes where relevant, acquisition tool/version, settings, timestamps, access record and controlled working copies. Document conversion, filtering and failed retrieval. A matching hash establishes identity of bytes, not completeness, authenticity of the original event or correct interpretation.

Verification and practical application

Example: a log timestamp differs from a roadside recording by 73 seconds. Check time zones, clock drift, synchronisation and recording coverage before combining them. Preserve raw time and adjusted time with the basis of correction. A neat timeline without provenance can create a false causal sequence.

Identify firmware, units, sampling rate, missing channels, event-trigger conditions and retention limits. Treat dashboards and exports as views whose scope must be established. Assess manipulated or synthetic media with corroboration; neither an automated authenticity score nor visual plausibility is conclusive.

TM09 Control measurements and quantitative decision rules

Implementation and evidence

Select measurement capacity, resolution, accuracy and uncertainty for the actual decision. Record equipment identity, verification, conditions, method and traceability. A recent calibration certificate alone does not prove correct setup, suitable range or absence of damage during use.

Agree a decision rule before interpreting a limit-sensitive result and report its consequences. As an illustrative conservative rule for an upper limit L , a result y with expanded uncertainty U passes when $y + U$ is at most L , fails when $y - U$ exceeds L , and is otherwise inconclusive. This example is not a universal acceptance rule.

Verification and practical application

For $L = 10$ and $U = 0.2$, $y = 9.7$ passes, $y = 10.1$ is inconclusive and $y = 10.3$ fails under that chosen rule. State units, uncertainty basis and whether the rule is appropriate to the assignment. Do not silently switch rules after seeing an inconvenient result.

If equipment is found unreliable, identify potentially affected assignments, estimate the direction and magnitude of impact and review issued conclusions. Recalibration fixes a future control but does not retrospectively validate earlier data. Preserve adverse results and issue necessary corrections through the report-control process.

TM10 Validate models, spreadsheets and simulations

Implementation and evidence

Record purpose, equations or logic, input provenance, assumptions, units, software version, dependencies, boundary conditions and validation evidence. Distinguish calibration data from independent validation data. Good agreement with the data used to fit a model does not alone establish predictive validity.

Challenge sensitivity, alternative plausible inputs, extreme conditions, numerical stability and data leakage. Verify spreadsheets with independent calculations and protected formula/version control. Preserve the exact run supporting the report, including failed or superseded runs relevant to the reasoning.

Verification and practical application

For a collision reconstruction, vary uncertain speed, friction, timing and geometry within justified ranges and explain resulting scenarios. A photorealistic animation illustrates the selected model; it does not prove that the depicted sequence was uniquely established. Label reconstruction and synthetic exhibits clearly.

After a software update, compare representative and adverse cases before consequential use. Identify changed results, implications for prior reports and human override controls. A vendor assertion or black-box score may be supporting information but cannot replace sufficient understanding and validation of the intended professional use.

TM11 Make reasoning and uncertainty visible

Implementation and evidence

Build a conclusion map linking each material opinion to observations, source material, method, assumptions and alternatives. Mark which facts were directly observed, supplied by others, inferred or simulated. Explain how contradictory evidence was addressed and what could change the conclusion.

Distinguish association, temporal sequence, contributing factor, mechanism and established cause. Avoid a single-cause statement when evidence supports several interacting factors. Use qualitative confidence language carefully and numerical probabilities only when a justified model or data basis exists.

Verification and practical application

Example: a component failed after a software change. Timing alone does not establish software causation. Review configuration, mechanical condition, operating history, changed loads and alternative failure mechanisms. If required data are unavailable, a bounded set of plausible explanations may be more defensible than a forced attribution.

Place consequential limits in the executive conclusion as well as technical detail. Avoid claiming absolute certainty or complete safety from a narrow inspection. Preserve an unresolved answer where evidence does not distinguish alternatives; professional value includes identifying what is not established and what further work would resolve it.

TM12 Perform independent technical review

Implementation and evidence

Before issuing an output affecting safety, legal rights, significant financial decisions or public claims, obtain competent independent technical review. The reviewer must not have created or directed the conclusion. Assign review early enough to examine evidence and method, not merely proofread a finished report under commercial pressure.

Review instructions, conflicts, competence boundaries, source provenance, calculations, methods, assumptions, uncertainty, alternative explanations, conclusion wording and intended reliance. Reperform material checks proportionate to consequence. Record queries, answers, changes and remaining disagreement.

Verification and practical application

A sole practitioner can send protected material to a contracted reviewer under lawful access and confidentiality arrangements. A reviewer who helped devise the decisive analysis cannot independently review that same conclusion; obtain another suitable reviewer. Ordinary review fees are allowed, but payment must not depend on a favourable opinion.

If essential disagreement remains, keep a technical hold and obtain further evidence, revise the conclusion or state an appropriate unresolved result. A commercial executive cannot clear the hold merely to meet a deadline. Preserve the review trail and actual pre-issue approval time; a retrospective signature is not equivalent.

TM13 Issue a complete and authentic report

Implementation and evidence

Identify practice, report ID/version/date, authors and roles, instructions, intended users/use, subject/configuration, examination dates, evidence, methods, findings, reasoning, limitations and conclusions. State independent review and issue authority. Explain whether information came from direct examination or supplied records.

List authentic technical materials and sources actually relied upon with enough detail for competent checking. The scheme's absence of external normative references does not justify omitting sources from an expert report. Check quoted facts, figures and citations against originals; fabricated references are an integrity failure.

Verification and practical application

Protect issued versions and authentication, maintain recipients and provide a suitable authenticity-verification route. Distinguish drafts, final versions and superseded reports. A copied signature image or editable template is not sufficient evidence of authorised issue; retain the actual approval and control record.

When a new recipient, purpose or vehicle configuration is proposed, assess whether the original evidence and assumptions support extended reliance. Record the decision and revised terms. A corporate recognition statement may identify the practice, but must not suggest IAF reviewed or endorsed the individual opinion.

TM14 Correct errors and protect continuing reliance

Implementation and evidence

On discovering a material error or invalid basis, record awareness, affected conclusions, potential harm, recipients and immediate containment. Distinguish a typographical correction from a change affecting reliance. Do not silently overwrite a final report or leave a known misleading version circulating without appropriate action.

Notify entitled affected users through a lawful route, issue a linked corrected or withdrawn version and explain the material change. Review confidentiality and actual legal duties, especially in disputed proceedings. Where direct distribution is constrained, obtain competent advice and record the authorised protective route rather than assuming silence is required.

Verification and practical application

Example: a unit-conversion error affects a valuation model used in 18 engagements. Identify all runs using the formula and data version, assess each conclusion and inform affected recipients. A correction to the template alone does not remedy already issued reports; verify actual notices and replacements.

Report serious incidents to IAF within 48 hours of awareness where the programme trigger applies. Preserve originals and review cause, population boundary, correction effectiveness and recurrence. Payment disputes cannot justify withholding a necessary protective correction, and ending recognition does not erase continuing professional duties.

TM15 Apply discipline-specific evidence controls

Implementation and evidence

Engineering advice should trace design assumptions, interfaces, failure modes, constraints and validation. Investigation should preserve physical/digital provenance and test competing causes. Valuation should identify date, market, condition, comparables, adjustments, ownership assumptions and uncertainty rather than present a single unexplained number.

Technical inspection should distinguish observable condition from hidden integrity and define access limits. Quality and supply-chain advice should identify sampled processes, evidence period and limitations; an advisory audit is not automatically an independent certification decision. Training should distinguish attendance, demonstrated learning and any authority to practise.

Verification and practical application

Electrification assignments need exact battery/energy technology and safe capability boundaries. Digital and cyber work requires written testing authority, bounded systems and safe methods; recognition does not authorise intrusion. Advanced-mobility work should identify operational conditions, human interaction and degraded or fallback behaviour relevant to the question.

Use the profile and domain controls together. A valuation involving an AI model and disputed ownership can trigger VAL, T03, T04, T05 and T06. Select based on actual responsibility, not a preferred marketing category. A general professional profile cannot waive specialist evidence or conceal outsourced critical judgment.

TM16 Use AI and future technology responsibly

Implementation and evidence

Inventory AI tools by purpose, provider/version, inputs, confidential-data exposure, human responsibility and consequence. Separate drafting assistance from source interpretation, prediction or a conclusion affecting users. Prohibit uploading protected material without lawful authority and an adequate controlled arrangement.

Validate representative and adverse cases, check bias and distribution limits, preserve material settings and outputs, and verify consequential claims against original evidence. The named professional remains accountable for conclusions; automation does not become an independent technical reviewer merely because it returns a confidence score.

Verification and practical application

Label synthetic images, reconstructions and generated exhibits clearly. Do not create a realistic missing photograph and present it as an observation. An invented citation or plausible fabricated event must be rejected and investigated as a tool/process failure. Preserve the human checks supporting any retained content.

For emerging mobility systems, predictive battery health or digital-twin services, define the bounded pilot, representative conditions, failure modes, support horizon and exit plan. Keep unsupported future capability outside active scope. Revalidate after material model or data changes and expand recognition only after actual evidence and independent assessment.

TM17 Protect confidentiality, liability and continuity

Implementation and evidence

Map necessary data, purpose, entitlement, access roles, providers, cross-border restrictions and retention. Minimise personal identifiers while preserving technical meaning. Prepare lawful protected source review instead of indiscriminately copying complete client files to assessors or public registers.

Retain professional case evidence for at least ten years after final issue or case closure, whichever is later, subject to binding retention limits and lawful holds. IAF case records run ten years after expiry or withdrawal. Record the actual basis for exceptions and preserve essential lawful evidence; pseudonymisation is not a reason to destroy technical context.

Verification and practical application

Assess professional liability exposure and legally required cover, exclusions, deductibles and resources. Where suitable cover is unavailable, document lawful alternatives and client disclosure and obtain IAF adequacy review. Recognition does not insure every opinion, guarantee solvency or transfer the practice's liabilities to IAF.

Test loss of a key practitioner, cloud outage, ransomware, damaged samples or office closure. Restore case links, originals, review status and issued versions, not just files. Define authorised custody and correction responsibilities after incapacity or closure, with protected access and client communication.

TM18 Calculate coverage and effort transparently

Implementation and evidence

Initial and renewal effort is at least two central auditor-days plus one per hub up to ten professionals, two for 11-50 and three above 50. Add one hub-day for each material factor: novel consequential method, hazardous/destructive activity, complex critical outsourcing and unresolved systemic risk. An auditor-day is eight actual assessment hours excluding travel.

Example: a practice has an eight-professional remote hub and a 25-professional physical investigation hub with hazardous work and complex critical outsourcing. The floor is $2 + 1 + 2 + 1 + 1 = 7$ auditor-days. Add further time to challenge all independent leads and cover actual disciplines; central and hub hours cannot be counted twice.

Verification and practical application

At annual review cover every new/materially changed lead and adverse case, then at least $\text{ceil}(\sqrt{N})$ of remaining leads. With three new leads, one additional adverse-case lead and 17 remaining leads, the minimum is $3 + 1 + 5 = 9$ distinct leads. Deduplicate overlapping mandatory groups and rotate selection so every lead is covered within three years.

Three hubs each delivering two disciplines require at least $3 \times 2 \times 3 = 18$ completed-engagement sample selections. Samples can support multiple controls only when the relevant evidence exists; cross-reference honestly. Physical facilities require annual visits; remote-only office alternatives require independent adequacy approval. Floors never cap necessary assessment.

TM19 Measure professional quality and improve it

Implementation and evidence

Define indicators with population, period, numerator, denominator, exclusions, owner and source. Useful measures include material report corrections, review-query recurrence, overdue technical holds, complaints, missed conflict checks, custody gaps and development effectiveness. Avoid a target that rewards suppressing errors or issuing opinions too quickly.

Example: four materially corrected reports among 200 reports issued in a defined cohort yield a 2% material-correction rate. Record discovery lag, repeated corrections and reports not yet exposed to meaningful use. A low reported rate is not evidence of quality if complaints or later discoveries are excluded.

Verification and practical application

For timeliness preserve original and revised commitments and explain client-caused pauses separately from internal delay. For independent review measure completed substantive reviews and unresolved material queries rather than signatures alone. Analyse by discipline, hub, method and lead where necessary while protecting personal data.

Annual internal audit and management review should examine original cases, adverse trends, independence, resources, methods, complaints, corrective action and future risks. Assign owners and due dates, verify actual effectiveness and retain failed actions. A presentation of favourable averages does not fulfil a review of consequential weaknesses.

TM20 Implement globally and prepare future capability

Implementation and evidence

Use one controlled core with local obligation and permission registers for actual territories, professional activities and forums. Translate accurately, retain original evidence and record competent interpretation. Apply the same evidence threshold while recognising that lawful access, titles, duties and public acceptance differ by place.

Before launch complete four representative pilots and independently close essential gaps. Test a sole practice, multidisciplinary firm, disputed physical investigation and remote/digital practice, including a failed or contested case. Validate time assumptions, personnel coverage, protected review, appeals and status verification.

Verification and practical application

Future development should prioritise traceable digital reports, structured scope registries, interoperable evidence metadata, accessible reporting, climate-related vehicle risks and increasingly software-defined mobility. Introduce change through controlled consultation, validation, competence development and a published transition; do not silently weaken existing assurance.

Programme improvement requires annual operator audit and independent review at least every three years. Evaluate false or overstated claims, decision consistency, cost and access barriers, technical outcomes and complaint learning. International credibility is earned through transparent limited claims and dependable decisions, not declared universal equivalence.