Overview

The Center for Audit Quality (CAQ) has developed this tool to assist audit committee members in better understanding the new Public Company Accounting Oversight Board (PCAOB) auditor disclosure requirements regarding audit participants. Audit committees evaluate audit participants as part of their responsibility for the oversight and appointment of the external auditor, and PCAOB standards already require communication to the audit committee about many aspects of the audit, including audit participants.\(^1\)

This tool is intended to: (1) assist audit committees in discussing the role of audit participants with their engagement partner and company management; and (2) help prepare audit committee members to anticipate potential questions that may arise as a result of these new disclosures.

WHAT IS FORM AP, AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT FOR AUDIT COMMITTEES?

Under PCAOB Rule 3211, Auditor Reporting of Certain Audit Participants, independent registered public accounting firms are required to file Form AP, with specific disclosures, with the PCAOB for each audit report issued.\(^2\) These disclosures are accessible in a searchable database on the PCAOB website and the information therein may serve as an additional data point for investors and other stakeholders.

Form AP includes the engagement partner name as well as the name(s) and extent of participation of other accounting firm(s).\(^3\) Form AP enhances transparency but does not provide all the context necessary when considering the quality of the financial statement audit. For example, Form AP does not include information about the contributions of other key personnel involved with the audit (e.g., auxiliary partners and other key engagement team members, the engagement quality review partner, technical consultation partners and staff, and/or specialists) or the engagement partner’s experience. Further, it does not provide information about the firm’s system of quality control.

Through its regular communication and interaction with the external auditor, the audit committee has access to additional context around the information provided—and not provided—on Form AP. As Form AP disclosures become available in the public domain, the audit committee may find that questions arise related to the external audit.

ENGAGEMENT PARTNER NAME DISCLOSURE

Form AP is required to be filed with the PCAOB for audit reports issued on or after January 31, 2017. Form AP includes disclosure of the name of the engagement partner, which is made publicly available on the PCAOB’s website and included in a searchable database.

Audit committee members may want to refresh their knowledge of the audit partner’s qualifications, industry, and other experience, and to understand whether the audit partner is the lead engagement partner on other issuer audits.\(^4\) This information could help audit committee members fulfill their broader responsibilities to evaluate and oversee the external auditor.

DISCUSSION POINTS REGARDING PARTICIPATION OF OTHER ACCOUNTING FIRM(S) DISCLOSURE

For audit reports issued on or after June 30, 2017, the names and extent of participation of other accounting firm(s) are also required to be disclosed on Form AP. Other accounting firm(s)
may be member firms of a global audit network or firms outside the signing firm’s network.

There could be questions arising from these disclosures. The following sample questions are intended to assist audit committees in further understanding the information disclosed on Form AP in the context of their audit:

1. **Consistency with planning communications**
   a. Is the other accounting firm(s) disclosure on Form AP consistent with the audit committee’s understanding of audit participants based on audit planning discussions, company operations, legal names, or other considerations?
   b. Which other accounting firm(s) disclosed on Form AP are member firms (of the signing firm’s global network)?

2. **System of quality control**
   a. How does the firm network’s leadership, through its tone at the top, emphasize audit quality and integrity throughout its global network and among member firms? How is audit quality addressed with nonmember firms participating in the audit?
   b. How does the firm’s network address quality control matters pertaining to ethics compliance, including independence, for other accounting firm(s) participating in the audit?
   c. How does the audit firm’s system of quality control determine that other accounting firm(s) participating in the audit have the requisite competence and expertise related to PCAOB standards?5

3. **Oversight of other accounting firm(s)**
   a. How does the engagement partner supervise the work of other accounting firm(s) and evaluate whether it has been performed in accordance with professional standards?6
   b. Which members of the group engagement team meet with the members of the other accounting firm(s) performing work on the audit? How frequently?
   c. When was the last in-person visit conducted by the

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5 PCAOB Quality Control Standards, QC Section 20, System of Quality Control for a CPA Firm’s Accounting and Auditing Practice, paragraph .06.

6 Note to Item 3.2 of Form AP states that “an other accounting firm participated in the Firm’s audit if (i) the Firm assumes responsibility for the work and report of the other accounting firm as described in paragraphs .03 - .05 of AS 1205, Part of the Audit Performed by Other Independent Auditors, or (ii) the other accounting firm or any of its principals or professional employees was subject to supervision under AS 1201, Supervision of the Audit Engagement.”
OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Audit committee members may want to consider other implications of these new disclosures and how other employees within a company may be impacted.

1. Other employees impacted by Form AP

   a. Is company management—including investor relations, the office of general counsel, and the corporate secretary—aware of the new disclosures of Form AP?

   b. Have investor relations considered how to address questions from investors or other stakeholders (e.g., media) that may result from review of new disclosures, or from a regulatory sanction or inspection report?

   c. What is the process for investor relations to advise the audit committee of questions received, if any, from outside stakeholders?

2. Social media policy considerations

   a. Has the audit firm considered the impact, if any, of these new disclosures on its social media policy?

   b. How has the firm communicated its policy with engagement partners?
Appendix 1

Summary Form AP Select Reporting Requirements

The following select provisions related to Form AP, Auditor Reporting of Certain Audit Participants (Form AP) reporting requirements are provided to assist audit committee members in their understanding of the relevant requirements of Form AP reporting.

FORM AP REPORTING APPLICABILITY AND EFFECTIVE DATES

Applicability

For each new or revised auditor’s report included in an issuer’s filings with the SEC, a registered public accounting firm must file with the PCAOB a report on Form AP in accordance with the instructions to that form.

The information reported on Form AP is publicly available in a searchable database maintained on the PCAOB’s website.

Form AP reporting is NOT required for audits of brokers and dealers performed pursuant to Rule 17a-5 under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (Exchange Act).

However, if a broker or dealer is an issuer required to file audited financial statements under Section 13 or 15(d) of the Exchange Act, the Form AP reporting requirements would apply.

Effective Dates

The PCAOB elected a phased effective date, starting with the disclosure of the engagement partner name, followed by the disclosure of the extent of participation by other accounting firm(s) a few months later. Specifically:

► The engagement partner name is required to be reported on Form AP filed for auditors’ reports issued on or after January 31, 2017.

► Information about participation of other accounting firm(s) is required to be reported on Form AP filed for auditors’ reports issued on or after June 30, 2017.

Due Date

Form AP is due by:

► The 35th day after the date the audit report is first included in a document filed with the SEC pursuant to the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (for example, a Form 10-K); or

► The 10th day after the date the audit report is first included in a Securities Act of 1933 registration statement filed with the SEC (for example, a Form S-1).

7 Excerpt from CAQ Alert #2016-03 – Form AP, Auditor Reporting of Certain Audit Participants (December 2016). In May 2016, the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) approved the PCAOB Rules 3210 and 3211, Rules of the Board to Require Disclosure of Certain Participants in the Audit on Form AP.

8 PCAOB Staff Guidance, Form AP, Auditor Reporting of Certain Audit Participants and Related Voluntary Audit Report Disclosure Under AS 3101, Reports on Audited Financial Statements, footnote 1 explains that “issuers, in general, are entities that are required to file periodic reports with the SEC under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (Exchange Act) or that file or have filed a registration statement that has not yet become effective under the Securities Act of 1933 (Securities Act), and that has not been withdrawn. See Rule 1001(i)(iii). In addition to companies that are required to file annual reports on Forms 10-K, 20-F, and 40-F, issuers include certain employee stock purchase, savings, and similar plans; unit investment trusts; and registered investment companies.” Further, PCAOB Rule 1001(i)(iii) states: “the term ‘issuer’ means an issuer (as defined in Section 3 of the Exchange Act), the securities of which are registered under Section 12 of that Act, or that is required to file reports under Section 15(d) of that Act, or that files or has filed a registration statement that has not yet become effective under the Securities Act of 1933, and that it has not withdrawn.”

9 Note to Item 3.2 of Form AP states that “an other accounting firm participated in the Firm’s audit if (i) the Firm assumes responsibility for the work and report of the other accounting firm as described in paragraphs .03 - .05 of AS 1205, Part of the Audit Performed by Other Independent Auditors, or (ii) the other accounting firm or any of its principals or professional employees was subject to supervision under AS 1201, Supervision of the Audit Engagement.” General Instruction 2 of Form AP defines the term “the Firm” as “the registered public accounting firm that is filing this Form with the Board.”

10 General Instruction 2 of Form AP states that the term “other accounting firm” means “(i) a registered public accounting firm other than the Firm; or (ii) any other person or entity that opines on the compliance of any entity's financial statements with an applicable financial reporting framework.”

11 The name of the engagement partner who is responsible for a firm’s issuance of an issuer audit report, Auditing Standard (AS) 1201, Supervision of the Audit Engagement defines the term “engagement partner” as “the member of the engagement team with primary responsibility for the audit.”
DISCLOSURE OF ENGAGEMENT PARTNER NAME FOR AUDITORS’ REPORTS ISSUED ON OR AFTER JANUARY 31, 2017

Engagement Partner Name (Form AP, Part III, Item 3.1.a.6)

The required disclosures related to the engagement partner name on Form AP are:

► The name of the engagement partner on the most recent period’s audit;
► The engagement partner’s unique 10-digit Partner ID number; and
► Any other Partner IDs by which the engagement partner has been previously identified.

Each firm is required to assign a unique 10-digit Partner ID number to all of its engagement partners who are responsible for issuer audits. This Partner ID number is required to be comprised of:

► The Firm’s ID (the five-digit identifier assigned to the firm by the PCAOB at the time of registration), followed by
► A unique five-digit partner identifier created by the firm.

DISCLOSURE OF EXTENT OF OTHER FIRM(S’) PARTICIPATION FOR AUDITORS’ REPORTS ISSUED ON OR AFTER JUNE 30, 2017

If an other accounting firm participated in an audit, information about the other accounting firm’s participation is required to be reported on Form AP. The nature of the required disclosure depends on the extent of participation of the other accounting firm in the audit of the issuer.

Responsibility Is Not Divided – Extent of Participation (Form AP, Part IV)

► Many global accounting firms are structured as separate legal entities that operate as a global network. Any separate legal entity that meets the definition of an other accounting firm and that participates in the audit, individually contributing 5 percent or more of total audit hours, is reported on Form AP. This includes all other accounting firms participating in an issuer audit even when they are part of the same global network.

► If one or more other accounting firm(s) participated in the firm’s audit and the responsibility for the audit is not divided, the firm is required to report on Form AP the extent of participation of such firm(s) as follows:

• Individually 5 percent or greater of total audit hours (Item 4.1): Legal name, Firm ID for firms that have a publicly available PCAOB-assigned number, city and state (or, if outside the United States, the city and country), and the extent of participation, expressed as a single number or within the appropriate range of the percentage of total audit hours, attributable to each other accounting firm.

• Individually less than 5 percent of total audit hours (Item 4.2): The number of other accounting firm(s) that participated in the audit, and the aggregate extent of participation of such firms, expressed as a single number or within the appropriate range of the percentage of total audit hours. The name(s) of such firm(s) does not have to be disclosed.

► Excluded from required reporting on Form AP:12 An accounting firm performing the audit of entities in which the issuer has an investment that is accounted for using the equity method.13

Divided Responsibility (Form AP, Part V)

If the responsibility for the audit is divided with one or more public accounting firm(s),14 the firm filing Form AP is required to report:

► The legal name of the other firm with whom responsibility is divided;
► Its Firm ID, when applicable;
► City and state (or, if outside the United States, the city and country) of the office that issued the other audit report; and
► The magnitude of the portion of the financial statements audited by the other firm.15

12 For a complete list of exclusions see Instructions to Part IV of Form AP, and PCAOB Staff Guidance, Section III.B.
14 An audit report of a registered public accounting firm(s) that is referred to by the principal auditor in accordance with AS 1205, Part of the Audit Performed by Other Independent Auditors. See Note to Item 5.1 of the Form AP.
15 See Note to Item 5.1 of the Form AP.
Appendix 2
Sample Form AP

FORM AP

AUDITOR REPORTING OF CERTAIN AUDIT PARTICIPANTS

Registered public accounting firms must report information about certain participants in the audit and any amendments thereto to the PCAOB by completing and submitting this Form according to the instructions to Form AP.

It is important to refer to the instructions when completing each item of the Form. The Firm is responsible for completing each item according to the instructions, and should not merely rely on the Firm’s own interpretation of the item descriptions appearing in this Form.

Italicized terms are defined in PCAOB Rule 1001, except for the definition of “other accounting firm” which appears in the general instructions to Form AP. The Firm must apply those definitions in completing the Form.

PART I - IDENTITY OF THE FIRM

ITEM 1.1 - NAME OF THE FIRM

a. Firm legal name

b. If different than its legal name, state the name under which the Firm issued this audit report.

PART II - AMENDMENTS

ITEM 2.1 - AMENDMENTS

If this is an amendment to a report previously filed with the Board -

a. Indicate, by checking the box corresponding to this item, that this is an amendment.

b. Identify the specific Part or Item number(s) of this Form (other than this Item 2.1) as to which the Firm’s response has changed from that provided in the most recent Form AP or amended Form AP filed by the Firm with respect to an audit report related to the issuer named in Item 3.1.

• Part I, Identity of the Firm
  • Part III, Audit Client and Audit Report
    • Item 3.1, Audit Report
    • Item 3.2, Other Accounting Firms
    • Item 3.3, Divided Responsibility
  • Part IV, Responsibility for the Audit Is Not Divided
    • Item 4.1, Other Accounting Firm(s) Individually 5% or Greater of Total Audit Hours
    • Item 4.2, Other Accounting Firm(s) Individually Less Than 5% of Total Audit Hours
  • Part V, Responsibility for the Audit Is Divided
  • Part VI, Certification of the Firm

If you check this box, use the text field below to describe the error or omission in Part VI as previously filed and to supply the information that should have been provided in the previous submission. Use Part VI of this amended form only to certify the amended form, not to supply corrections to the previous form.
**PART III - AUDIT CLIENT AND AUDIT REPORT**

**ITEM 3.1 - AUDIT REPORT**

a. Provide the following information concerning the issuer for which the Firm issued the audit report:

1. Indicate, by checking the box corresponding to this item, if the audit client is an:
   - Issuer, other than employee benefit plan or investment company
   - Employee Benefit Plan
   - Investment Company

2a. Central Index Key (CIK) number, if any

2b. Fund Series, if any

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Series Identifier</th>
<th>Fund Name</th>
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3. The name of the issuer whose financial statements were audited

4. Date of the audit report (mm/dd/yyyy)

5. The end date of the most recent period’s financial statements identified in the audit report (mm/dd/yyyy)

6. The name (that is, first and last name, all middle names and suffix, if any) of the engagement partner on the most recent period’s audit. His/her Partner ID, and any other Partner IDs by which he/she has been identified on a Form AP filed by a different registered public accounting firm or on a Form AP filed by the Firm at the time when it had a different Firm ID

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family name (last name)</th>
<th>Given name (first name)</th>
<th>Middle name</th>
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<tr>
<th>Partner ID</th>
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<tr>
<th>Previously reported Partner ID(s)</th>
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7. The office of the Firm issuing the audit report

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<th>Country</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>State</th>
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b. Indicate, by checking the box corresponding to this item, if the most recent period and one or more other periods presented in the financial statements identified in Item 3.1.a.5 were audited during a single audit engagement.

c. In the event of an affirmative response to Item 3.1.a, indicate the periods audited during the single audit engagement for which the individual named in Item 3.1.a.6 served as engagement partner (for example, as of December 31, 20XX and 20X1 and for the two years ended December 31, 20XX).

d. Indicate, by checking the box corresponding to this item, if the audit report was dual-dated pursuant to AS 3110, Dating of the Independent Auditor’s Report.

e. In the event of an affirmative response to Item 3.1.d, indicate the date of the dual-dated information.

Note: In responding to Item 3.1.e, the firm should provide each date of any dual-dated audit report.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date(s) of the dual-dated audit report (mm/dd/yyyy)</th>
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If different from the engagement partner named in Item 3.1.a.6, provide information about the engagement partner who audited the information within the financial statements to which the dual-dated opinion applies.

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<tr>
<th>Family name (last name)</th>
<th>Given name (first name)</th>
<th>Middle name</th>
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<tr>
<th>Partner ID</th>
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</table>
Previously reported Partner ID(s)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>ITEM 3.2 - OTHER ACCOUNTING FIRMS</th>
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</table>
| Indicate, by checking the box corresponding to this item, if one or more other accounting firms participated in the Firm's audit. If this item is checked, complete Part IV. By checking this box, the Firm is stating that it is responsible for the audits or audit procedures performed by the other accounting firm(s) identified in Part IV and has supervised or performed procedures to assume responsibility for their work in accordance with PCAOB standards.

Note: For purposes of Item 3.2, an other accounting firm participated in the Firm's audit if (1) the Firm assumes responsibility for the work and report of the other accounting firm as described in paragraphs .03-.05 of AS 1205, Part of the Audit Performed by Other Independent Auditors, or (2) the other accounting firm or any of its principals or professional employees was subject to supervision under AS 1201, Supervision of the Audit Engagement.

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<tr>
<th>ITEM 3.3 - DIVIDED RESPONSIBILITY</th>
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| Indicate, by checking the box corresponding to this item, if the Firm divided responsibility for the audit in accordance with AS 1205, Part of the Audit Performed by Other Independent Auditors, with one or more other public accounting firm(s). If this item is checked, complete Part V.
Italized terms are defined in PCAOB Rule 1001, except for the definition of "other accounting firm" which appears in the general instructions to Form AP. The Firm must apply those definitions in completing the Form.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PART IV - RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE AUDIT</th>
<th>IS NOT DIVIDED</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In responding to Part IV, total audit hours in the most recent period's audit should be comprised of hours attributable to: (1) the financial statement audit; (2) reviews pursuant to AS 4105, Reviews of Interim Financial Information; and (3) the audit of internal control over financial reporting pursuant to AS 2201, An Audit of Internal Control Over Financial Reporting That Is Integrated with An Audit of Financial Statements. Excluded from disclosure and from total audit hours in the most recent period's audit are, respectively, the identity and hours incurred by: (1) the engagement quality reviewer; (2) the person who performed the review pursuant to SEC Practice Section 1000.45 Appendix K; (3) specialists engaged, not employed, by the Firm; (4) an accounting firm performing the audit of the entities in which the issuer has an investment that is accounted for using the equity method; (5) internal auditors, other company personnel, or third parties working under the direction of management or the audit committee who provided direct assistance in the audit of internal control over financial reporting; and (6) internal auditors who provided direct assistance in the audit of the financial statements. Hours incurred in the audit by entities other than other accounting firms are included in the calculation of total audit hours and should be allocated among the Firm and the other accounting firms participating in the audit on the basis of which accounting firm commissioned and directed the applicable work.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Actual audit hours should be used if available. If actual audit hours are unavailable, the Firm may use a reasonable method to estimate the components of this calculation. The Firm should document in its files the method used to estimate hours when actual audit hours are unavailable and the computation of total audit hours on a basis consistent with AS 1215, Audit Documentation. Under AS 1215, the documentation should be in sufficient detail to enable an experienced auditor, having no previous connection with the engagement, to understand the computation of total audit hours and the method used to estimate hours when actual hours are unavailable.</td>
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</table>

Indicate, by checking the box, if the percentage of total audit hours will be presented within ranges in Part IV. -

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM 4.1 - OTHER ACCOUNTING FIRM(S) INDIVIDUALLY 5% OR GREATER OF TOTAL AUDIT HOURS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Firm ID</td>
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<tr>
<td>Legal name</td>
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<tr>
<td>Headquarters’ office location:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Country</td>
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<tr>
<td>City</td>
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</table>

Note 1: In responding to Items 4.1 and 4.2, the percentage of hours attributable to other accounting firms should be calculated individually for each firm. If the individual participation of one or more other accounting firm(s) is less than 5%, the Firm should complete Item 4.2.

Note 2: In responding to Item 4.1, the Firm ID represents a unique five-digit identifier for firms that have a publicly available PCAOB-assigned number.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM 4.2 - OTHER ACCOUNTING FIRM(S) INDIVIDUALLY LESS THAN 5% OF TOTAL AUDIT HOURS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. State the number of other accounting firm(s) individually representing less than 5% of total audit hours.</td>
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</table>

b. Indicate the aggregate percentage of participation of the other accounting firm(s) that individually represented less than 5% of total audit hours by filling in a single number or by selecting the appropriate range as follows: Aggregate percentage of participation % or range |
Italicized terms are defined in PCAOB Rule 1001, except for the definition of "other accounting firm" which appears in the general instructions to Form AP. The Firm must apply those definitions in completing the Form.

**PART V - RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE AUDIT IS DIVIDED**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM 5.1 - IDENTITY OF THE OTHER PUBLIC ACCOUNTING FIRM(S) TO WHICH THE FIRM MAKES REFERENCE</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Provide the following information concerning each other public accounting firm the Firm divided responsibility with in the audit.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. The legal name of the other public accounting firm and when applicable, the other public accounting firm's Firm ID.

   - Firm ID: [Field]
   - Legal name: [Field]
   - Check here if no Firm ID is available: [Yes/No]

2. The office of the other public accounting firm that issued the other audit report.

   - Country: [Field]
   - City: [Field]
   - State: [Field]

3. The magnitude of the portion of the financial statements audited by the other public accounting firm.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Dollar Amount</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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Note: In responding to Item 5.1.a.3, the Firm should state the dollar amounts or percentages of one or more of the following: total assets, total revenues, or other appropriate criteria, as it is described in the audit report in accordance with AS 1205.
**PART VI - CERTIFICATION OF THE FIRM**

**ITEM 6.1 - SIGNATURE OF PARTNER OR AUTHORIZED OFFICER**

This Form must be signed on behalf of the Firm by an authorized partner or officer of the Firm by typing the name of the signatory in the electronic submission.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Typed signature (to be submitted electronically):</th>
<th>Given name (first name)</th>
<th>Family name (last name)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date of typed signature (mm/dd/yyyy):</td>
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<td>Business Title:</td>
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<td>Capacity in which signed: Partner + Officer +</td>
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<td>Business telephone number (incl. country and area codes)</td>
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<td>Business e-mail address</td>
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About the Center for Audit Quality

The CAQ is an autonomous public policy organization dedicated to enhancing investor confidence and public trust in the global capital markets. The CAQ fosters high quality performance by public company auditors, convenes and collaborates with other stakeholders to advance the discussion of critical issues requiring action and intervention, and advocates policies and standards that promote public company auditors’ objectivity, effectiveness, and responsiveness to dynamic market conditions. Based in Washington, DC, the CAQ is affiliated with the American Institute of CPAs.
WE WELCOME YOUR FEEDBACK
Please send comments or questions to info@thecaq.org.