An Overview of
UBO Regime in the Qatar Financial Centre

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Overview (1/2)

- Beneficial Ownership Regime in QFC was established in 2019, by introducing new General Rule 8A in the Qatar Financial Centre Authority Rules. ("UBO Rules").
- The requirements are in line with FATF Recommendations and applicable laws in State of Qatar.
- Threshold limit for ownership and voting power is 20% (FATF recommended threshold is 25%).
- Beneficial Ownership in respect of each type of entities in QFC is defined in the UBO Rules.
- Primary responsibility is on the firms, with requirements for timebound reporting to the QFC Companies Registration Office ("CRO").
- Bearer shares and bearer share warrants are expressly prohibited.
Overview (2/2)

- Restriction on appointment of Corporate Directors.
- Registers to be maintained by the Firms and the CRO.
- Beneficial Ownership Information to be confidential.
- Additional requirements for Trusts registered in QFC.
- Contraventions may attract financial penalties and/or other appropriate actions including withdrawal of licence and forced deregistration.
- The framework includes a dedicated UBO Team within the CRO, supported by QFC Authority’s Monitoring, Enforcement, and Legal departments.
Firms’ Responsibilities (1/2)

All QFC Entities must:

- Identify and take reasonable measures to verify the identity of each of its:
  - Beneficial Owners;
  - Nominees of Nominee Shareholders and Nominee Directors and their Beneficial Owners; and
  - Corporate Directors and their Beneficial Owners.

- Establish and maintain:
  - a Register of Basic Information,
  - a Register of Beneficial Owners, and
  - a Register of Nominee Particulars.
Firms’ Responsibilities (2/2)

Verification of information and updating the Register:
- Firms must obtain adequate supporting documentation or otherwise verify the accuracy of the change for any change in Beneficial Owner Information and Nominee Particulars, within 15 days.

Notification / Filing Requirements to the CRO:
- At the time of Incorporation / Registration.
- With Controller Change Notices.
- Within 30 days of any changes in the information earlier provided.
- Annually by Annual UBO Report.
- As and when required by any regulations or rules in QFC or by the CRO in writing.
Exemptions

- Exemptions apply if the QFC Firms or any body corporates in the ownership / control chain falls in one of the below categories:

  a) a company whose securities are traded on a regulated market that the QFCA considers to be subject to adequate requirements in relation to the transparency of ownership information;

  b) an entity regulated by a financial services regulator recognised by the QFCA as applying equivalent standards of regulation as those applicable in the QFC;

  c) an entity ultimately owned by a government or government agency or authority, of the State of Qatar, or other jurisdiction that the QFCA determines from time to time; or

  d) established under a law of the State of Qatar to perform governmental functions.

- All firms including Exempt firms, are required, to file UBO forms
Confidentiality and Security of UBO Information and Nominee Particulars

- QFC Entities must ensure that its Registers of Beneficial Ownership and Nominee particulars are maintained in a manner that protects the security and confidentiality of information.

- QFC Entities must not disclose UBO Information or Nominee particulars, to any Person except if:
  a) the disclosure is permitted or required by law, regulation or rules applicable in the QFC or the State of Qatar; or
  b) the relevant Beneficial Owner, Nominee Director, or Nominee Shareholder, has given written permission for the disclosure.

- The CRO or the QFC Authority not to disclose details of Beneficial Owners, or Nominee Particulars except if there is:
  a) a statutory basis for disclosure of the information; or
  b) an order of the QFC Court to disclose the information.
Thank You