American National Standards Institute (ANSI)
International Standards Organization (ISO) 17024

ANSI is probably more known on the product manufacturing side. ANSI also has a program for certification programs to become accredited, ISO 17024.

ISO sets an internationally recognized benchmark to assure that the certification organization meets the set standards. It assures that the certifying organization operates in a consistent, comparable and reliable manner. It provides an independent, "third party" review process for the program that leads to an internationally recognized accreditation.

The ICCA Program should strive to meet the ANSI ISO 17024 accreditation. It would provide enhanced creditability with regulatory agencies at the state/provincial and national levels as well as with the international communities.

Basic ANSI ISO guidelines:
Certification body: The certification body shall define policies and procedures for granting, maintaining, renewing, expanding and reducing the scope of the desired certification and suspending or withdrawing the certification.

Certification Structure: The certification body shall be structured so as to give confidence to interested parties in its competence, impartiality and integrity. In particular, the certification body:
a.   shall be independent and impartial in relation to its applicants, candidates and certified persons, including their employers and their customers and shall take all possible steps to assure ethical operations;
b.   shall be responsible for its decisions relating to the granting, maintaining, renewing, expanding and reducing the scope or suspending and withdrawing the certification;
c.   shall identify the management group or person which shall have overall responsibility for:
      1. evaluation, certification, oversight
      2. formulation of policies relating to the operations
      3. decisions on certification
      4. implementation of its policies and procedures
      5. finances of the body
      6. delegation of authority to any committees or individuals
d.   shall have documents establishing it as a legal entity or part of a legal entity;
e.   shall have a documented structure that safeguards impartiality.

Certification Management: Shall be committed to continuous quality improvement.

Needs to go forward: All processes, policies and procedures at the international and local levels would need to be evaluated and very detailed documents completed.

Estimated costs: $10,000 to 15,000 in first year (application process/fees), $3,000 to 4,000 annual fee in subsequent years to maintain accreditation