PREFACE

The attached accreditation criteria has been issued to provide all interested parties with guidelines on implementing performance features of the applicable standards referenced herein. The criteria was developed and adopted following public hearings conducted by the International Accreditation Service, Inc. (IAS), Accreditation Committee and is effective on the date shown above. All accreditations issued or reissued on or after the effective date must comply with this criteria. If the criteria is an updated version from a previous edition, solid vertical lines (|) in the outer margin within the criteria indicate a technical change or addition from the previous edition. Deletion indicators (→) are provided in the outer margins where a paragraph or item has been deleted if the deletion resulted from a technical change. This criteria may be further revised as the need dictates.

IAS may consider alternate criteria provided the proponent submits substantiating data demonstrating that the alternate criteria are at least equivalent to the attached criteria and otherwise meet applicable accreditation requirements.
1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose: The purpose of this accreditation criteria is to specify qualifications and competency for IAS-accredited field evaluation bodies (FEBs) performing evaluations of electrical equipment. FEBs complying with this criteria shall demonstrate that they have the personnel, organization, experience, knowledge and competence to inspect and test using applicable product safety standards, unlisted or field-modified electrical equipment installed or to be installed at a specified location in accordance with applicable installation Code(s).

1.2 Accreditation of certification bodies for listing of products is addressed in the IAS Accreditation Criteria for Product Certification Agencies (AC370).

2.0 REFERENCES

Publications listed below refer to current editions (unless otherwise stated), current editions of related construction codes published by the International Code Council or codes duly adopted by the relevant jurisdiction.


2.2 NFPA 790, Standard for Competency of Third-Party Field Evaluation Bodies.

2.3 NFPA 791, Recommended Practice and Procedures for Unlabeled Electrical Equipment Evaluation.

2.4 IAS Accreditation Criteria for Product Certification Agencies (AC370).

2.5 IAS Policy on Accreditation Certificate Validity.

3.0 DEFINITIONS

3.1 Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ): An organization, office, or individual responsible for enforcing the requirements of a code or standard, or for approving equipment, materials, an installation, or procedure.

3.2 Evaluator: Personnel appropriately trained to inspect products or systems or types of products or systems, and appropriately trained and qualified to conduct any associated testing that may be required.

3.3 Field Evaluation: The process used to determine conformance with requirements for one-of-a-kind, limited-production, used, or modified products that are not listed or labeled under a certification program [NFPA 790, Section 3.3.3].

3.4 Field Evaluation Body (FEB): An organization or part of an organization that performs field evaluations of electrical equipment and is accredited by IAS in accordance with this criteria.

3.5 Field Labeled (as applied to evaluated products): Equipment or materials to which a label, symbol, or other identifying mark of an FEB has been attached, indicating the equipment or materials were evaluated and found to comply with requirements as described in an accompanying field evaluation report. [NFPA 790, Section 3.3.6]. This is not a certification label.

3.6 Listed: Equipment, materials, or services included in a list published by an organization acceptable to the AHJ and concerned with evaluation of products or services and that maintains periodic inspection of production of listed equipment or materials or periodic evaluation of services, and whose listing states that either the equipment, material, or service meets appropriate designated standards or has been tested and found suitable for a specified purpose.

3.7 Technical Manager: Personnel specifically designated as responsible for oversight and approval, and for assuring the quality and technical competence of evaluators and associated testing.

4.0 GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

4.1 Required: The organization seeking accreditation under this criteria must meet all requirements of this criteria, NFPA 790 and NFPA 791.

The FEB must apply for each product category to be included in the accredited scope as defined in NFPA 790, Appendix C.

Note: Recommended practices and procedures in NFPA 791 are considered to be mandatory requirements for the purposes of IAS accreditation.

4.2 Assessment by IAS

4.2.1 Prior to accreditation under this criteria, the FEB is required to undergo an assessment by IAS, including observation of field evaluation(s). The purpose is to assess the evaluation procedures and the competence of personnel performing the evaluation.

4.2.2 After the initial year of accreditation, FEBs are subject to a surveillance evaluation.

4.2.3 A full reassessment visit is required at the end of every two-year term commencing from the date of the surveillance assessment for verification of continued compliance with IAS accreditation requirements. IAS field observation of the FEB’s personnel under this criteria will be conducted at a minimum of once every two years. Depending on the number of personnel employed by the FEB (staff and/or contract), a sampling of personnel may be observed. Scheduling for field observations may be flexible, depending on evaluation contracts.

4.2.4 The FEB shall seek feedback at least annually from customers and AHJs. This feedback shall be included in the agency’s management review process.

4.3 Required Personnel

4.3.1 Technical Manager(s): The FEB shall designate one or more technical managers with specific documented authority and responsibility.

The FEB shall document the technical manager’s training and conduct refresher training as appropriate to assure continuing competency.
The technical manager shall meet the requirements in NFPA 790, and the following:

4.3.1.1 The technical manager shall designate, in writing, those authorized to review evaluation reports (aka, Authorized Signatory).

4.3.1.2 The technical manager shall be a permanent employee.

4.3.1.3 The technical manager shall have a minimum of five years of experience in product safety testing or product safety evaluation in the same or similar technical field.

4.3.1.4 The technical manager or approved designee shall ensure that evaluators in the field are observed performing a field evaluation at an interval not to exceed three years. Such observation is in addition to field observation by IAS.

4.3.1.5 The authorized signatory and the evaluator for any specific evaluation cannot be the same person.

4.3.2 Evaluator: The FEB shall determine evaluator competency for each product category.

The evaluator shall meet the requirements of NFPA 790 and the following:

The FEB shall document the evaluator’s training, and conduct refresher training as appropriate to assure continuing competency.

5.0 PERFORMING FIELD EVALUATIONS

Procedures used for performing and documenting field evaluations shall be in accordance with NFPA 791 and this section:

5.1 Technical standards used for the evaluation shall be documented.

5.2 The FEB shall have test and measuring equipment used in the evaluation appropriately calibrated by a calibration provider accredited to ISO/IEC Standard 17025, by an accrediting body that is a signatory to the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA). Records of the calibrations shall be maintained.

5.3 Digital (electronic) records may be maintained in lieu of hard copies. The FEB must have procedures to assure that reports in progress or complete cannot be tampered with, either internally or externally, and that reports are backed up (with a copy of the backup to be maintained off-site).

5.4 Subcontracting of evaluations to another organization under this criteria is allowed providing the subcontracted organization is also accredited under this criteria. The technical manager employed by the primary FEB must conduct a review of the report. The primary FEB must make the decision on the statement of conformity in accordance with NFPA 790, Section 12. The label from the evaluation cannot be applied until after the primary FEB has reviewed the report.

6.0 REQUIRED REPORT INFORMATION

6.1 Reports shall be completed in accordance with NFPA 791, and this section. The report must be maintained by the FEB in accordance with record retention time specified in the Management System (MS), but not less than four years. The report shall be provided to the following parties:

6.1.1 The FEB customer.

6.1.2 The AHJ.

6.2 Reports shall accurately and clearly outline the results of evaluations. Report formats may vary, but reports must be easily understandable and readable.

6.3 Reports shall contain at least the following information:

6.3.1 FEB customer and their appropriate contact information.

It is optional to use the IAS logo and accreditation number in the evaluation report. The IAS logo shall only be used in accordance with the IAS rules.

6.3.2 If the report is an amended/revised report, the amendment or revision information must be clearly identified.

6.3.3 A statement that the report addresses only the product described in the report, as the product existed at the time of the inspection.

6.3.4 If the evaluation is subcontracted, that must be specifically stated, with the accreditation information of the subcontracted organization included.