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ACCREDITATION CRITERIA FOR PRODUCT CERTIFICATION AGENCIES

AC370

September 2018
Effective November 1, 2018

PREFACE

The attached accreditation criteria have been issued to provide all interested parties with guidelines on implementing performance features of the applicable standards referenced herein. The criteria were developed and adopted following public hearings conducted by the International Accreditation Service, Inc. (IAS), Accreditation Committee and are effective on the date shown above. All accreditations issued or reissued on or after the effective date must comply with these criteria. If the criteria are 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. These 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.

ACCREDITATION CRITERIA FOR PRODUCT CERTIFICATION AGENCIES

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. **Scope**: These criteria set forth the requirements for obtaining and maintaining International Accreditation Service, Inc. (IAS), Product Certification Agency accreditation. These criteria supplement the IAS Rules of Procedure for Product Certification Agency Accreditation.

1.2. **Normative and Reference Documents**: Publications listed below refer to current editions (unless otherwise stated).

1.2.1. ISO/IEC Standard 17065, Conformity assessment – Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services.

1.2.2. ISO/IEC Standard 17067, Conformity assessment – Fundamentals of product certification and guidelines for product certification schemes.

1.2.3. ISO/IEC Standard 17020, Conformity assessment – Requirements for the operation of various types of bodies performing inspection.

1.2.4. ISO/IEC Standard 17021-1, Conformity assessment – Requirements for bodies providing auditing and certification of management systems – Part 1: Requirements.

1.2.5. ISO/IEC Standard 17025, General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories.

1.2.6. ISO/IEC Standard 17000, Conformity assessment – Vocabulary and general principles.

1.2.7. ISO/IEC Standard 17011, Conformity assessment – General requirements for accreditation bodies accrediting conformity assessment bodies.

1.2.8. IAF MD12: Accreditation Assessment of Conformity Assessment Bodies with Activities in Multiple Countries.

1.2.9. IAF ML 2: General Principles on the Use of the IAF MLA Mark.

1.2.10. GLOBALG.A.P. General Regulations.

2. DEFINITIONS

Applicable definitions of ISO/IEC Standard 17000 series apply.

3. ELIGIBILITY

Accreditation services are available to a third-party certification agency that:

3.1. Certify products, processes or services,

3.2. Operates, or maintains a subcontract agreement with, a testing laboratory and inspection agency, that meet the requirements of ISO/IEC Standard 17065, Sections 6.2.2, External resources (outsourcing),

3.3. Has operated and provided certification services for at least six months in accordance with ISO/IEC 17065 and completed a minimum of one certification per major category of certification, including completion of the decision-making process and issuance of certificate.

4. REQUIRED BASIC INFORMATION

4.1. Certification agencies must demonstrate compliance with the following requirements:

4.1.1. ISO/IEC Standard 17065, Conformity assessment – Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services;

4.1.2. IAS Rules of Procedure for Product Certification Agency Accreditation;

4.1.3. Scheme requirements under which the certification is granted.

4.2. Certification programs for processes and services must have requirements for determining continued compliance, that include assessment of the management system and the actual process or service, at least once per year.

5. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION (AS APPLICABLE)

5.1. When the certification system used as the basis for a certification activity requires surveillance at the point of manufacturing or assembly, the certification agency must have requirements that every manufacturing or assembly plant producing certified products be visited to perform surveillance activities for certified products. In the absence of a generally recognized minimum surveillance frequency, the certification agency shall require that each manufacturing or assembly location authorized to produce the certified product be subject to at least one surveillance activity each calendar year.

Note: Surveillance techniques, include, but are not limited to:

- Announced (planned) onsite audits
- Remote audits
- Unannounced visits
- A combination of the above

5.2. Inspection agencies and testing laboratories used as part of the certification process must meet one of the following criteria:

5.2.1. Accreditation by IAS, or by another signatory to the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA); or

5.2.2. Comply with ISO/IEC 17020 and/or ISO/IEC 17025 as applicable, determined through assessment of the inspection agency and/or testing laboratory by qualified certification agency personnel. In addition to the requirements given in ISO/IEC 17020 and/or

ISO/IEC 17025, evidence of compliance shall include the qualifications of personnel conducting the assessment, and a system for determining continued compliance that includes periodic onsite assessments, review of assessment reports, and corrective action reports.

5.3. Product certification agencies must comply with regulatory requirements of Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) or other regulatory entities, including specific compliance requirements for qualification, licensing, etc., of personnel and operation of product certification body.

5.4. **Witnessing Inspection Activities**: When the certification scheme used as the basis for a certification activity requires the onsite evaluation of the production process or management system, IAS will periodically witness actual onsite inspections by each accredited certification agency. The selection of location and scope for witness activity shall be made by IAS, in consultation with the certification agency, based on various factors – risk, complexity, personnel changes, technology utilized, etc. Where possible, the full scope of accreditation will be reviewed over a full accreditation cycle.

5.5. **Witness Testing**: All witness testing activities conducted at a manufacturer's facility must be witnessed by technically competent certification agency staff who are trained not only in the test being witnessed, but in the appropriate sections of ISO/IEC Standard 17025. If the certification scheme to which the product is to be certified contains specific requirements or limitations pertaining to witness testing, the requirements of the certification scheme shall also apply. Appropriate measures must be taken for long-term testing or sample collection, where constant witnessing is not feasible, to ensure tampering of the sample or testing equipment does not take place.

5.6. **Use of Manufacturer's Data**: If the certification scheme to which the product is to be certified contains specific requirements or limitations pertaining to the use of manufacturer's data, the requirements of the certification scheme shall also apply.

If a certification agency plans to use test data generated and submitted by a manufacturer that is not part of witness testing, the certification agency must have a program in place to ensure validity and independence of the test data. The certification agency shall consider one or more of the following for such a program, and shall have justification for those it chooses not to utilize:

5.6.1. Auditing, including unannounced random visits to the manufacturer's laboratory, to ensure key requirements of ISO/IEC Standard 17025 are satisfied;

5.6.2. Performing random duplicate analyses;

5.6.3. Having the manufacturer's laboratory participate in proficiency testing programs, where available, for applicable test method;

5.6.4. Technical review of the raw test data rather than acceptance of just the result.

6. LINKS TO ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

6.1. Asia Pacific Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation – www.aplac.org

6.2. CARB ATCM – https://www.arb.ca.gov/toxics/compwood/compwood.htm

6.3. EPA Energy Star – https://www.energystar.gov/

6.4. EPA Formaldehyde – https://www.epa.gov/formaldehyde

6.5. EPA WaterSense – https://www3.epa.gov/watersense/

6.6. IAS – www.iasonline.org

6.7. International Code Council – www.iccsafe.org

6.8. International Accreditation Forum – www.iaf.nu

6.9. International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation – www.ilac.org

6.10. Pacific Accreditation Cooperation – www.apec-pac.org

6.11. GLOBALG.A.P – https://www.globalgap.org/uk_en/

These criteria were previously issued May 2007, April 2008, October 2009, October 2011, June 2013, February 2014, February 2015 and April 2017.