

ETHIOPIAN NATIONAL ACCREDITATION OFFICE

Minimum Requirements for Operation of Product Certification Bodies

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1. Introduction

This documents set out minimum requirements for the operation of product certification bodies. And it is prepared based on international standards (ISO/IEC Guide 65)

2. Scope

This criteria document is applicable to all organization performing certification of product.

3. Definitions

For the purposes of this document, the relevant definition given in ISO/IEC guide 2 and ISO 8402 applicable.

4. Management Requirements

4.1 General provisions

4.1.1 The policies and producers under which the product certification body operates and their demonstration shall be non –discriminatory and administrated in a non discriminatory manner. Procedures shall not be used to impede or in habit access by applicants, other than as provided for in this document.

4.1.2 The product certification body shall make its services accessible to all applicants whose activities fall with in its declared filed operation. There shall not be undue financial or other conditions. Access shall not be condition up the size of the supplier or member ship of association or group nor shall certification be conditional upon the number of certificates already issued.

4.1.3 The criteria against which the products of supplier are evaluated shall be those outlined in specified standards. If explanation is required to the application of these documents for specific product certification system, it shall be formulated by relevant and impartial committees or persons possessing the necessary technical competence and published by the product certification body.

4.14 The product certification body shall confine its requirements, evaluation and decision on certification to those matters specifically related to the scope of the certification being considered.

4.2 Organization

The structure of the product certification body shall be such as to foster confidence in its certifications. In particular, the product certification body shall:-

- a. Be impartial.
- b. Be responsible for decisions relating to its granting maintaining, extending, suspending and withdrawing of certification
- c. Identify the management (committee, group or person) which shall have overall responsibility for all of the following:
 1. Performing of testing, inspection, evaluation and certification
 2. Formulation of policy matters relating to the operation of the product certification body
 3. Decisions on certification
 4. Delegation of authority to committees or individuals of as required to under taken defined activities on its be half
 5. Technical basis for granting certification
- d. have documents which demonstrates it a legal entity
- e. have documents structure which safe guards impartiality
- f. Ensure that each decision on certification taken by a person(s) different from those who carried out the evaluation.
- g. Have rights and responsibilities relevant to its certification activities.
- h. Have the financial stability and resources required for the operation of a product certification system.
- i. Employ a sufficient number of personnel having the necessary education, training; technical knowledge and experience for performing certification function relating to the type range and volume of work performed, under responsible senior executive.

- j. Have policies and procedures that distinguish between product certification and any other activities in which the certification body is engaged.
- k. Have formal rules and structure that enforces any committee or personnel involved in the certification process shall be free from any commercial, financial and other pressure that might influence decisions.
- l. Have policies and procedures for the resolutions of complaints, appeals and disputes received from suppliers or other parties about handling of certification or any other related matters.

4.3 Operations

The product certification body shall take all steps necessary to evaluate conformance with the relevant product standards according to the requirements of specific product certification system. It shall specify the relevant standards and other requirements such as sampling, testing and inspection requirements which form the basis for the applicable product certification system.

4.4 Subcontracting

When a product certification body decides to subcontract work (e.g. testing or inspection) to an external body or person, a properly documented agreement covering the arrangements including confidentiality and conflict of interest shall be drawn up and the product certification body shall take full responsibility for such subcontracted work and maintain its responsibility for granting, maintaining, extending, suspending or withdrawing certification.

4.5 Quality system

4.5.1 The certification body shall operate an effective quality system. The quality shall be documented in quality manual and associated procedures.

4.5.2 The product certification body shall specify the conditions and shall have procedure for granting, maintaining, extending, suspending and withdrawing.

4.5.3 The product certification body shall provide update at regular intervals, and make available on request, at least the following:

- a) Information about the authority under which the product certification body operates.

- b) A documented statement of its product certification system, including its rules and procedures for granting, maintaining, extending, suspending and withdrawing certification.
- c) A description of the rights and duties of applicants and suppliers of certified products, including requirements, restrictions or limitations on the use of the product certification body's logo and on the ways of referring to the certification granted.
- d) Its procedure for conducting internal audits, and other relevant information.

4.5.4 The certification body should maintain a directory of certified products and their suppliers and make publicly accessible.

4.6 Records

The product certification body shall maintain a record system to suit its particular circumstances, and to comply with applicable regulations, The records shall demonstrate that the requirements for recognition including competence have been effectively fulfilled. The records shall be identified, managed and disposed of in such away as to ensure the integrity of the process and the confidentiality of the information.

4.7 Confidentiality

The product certification body shall have adequate arrangements consistent with applicable laws to safe guard confidentiality of the information obtained in the course of its certification activities at all levels of its organization, including committees and external bodies or individuals acting on its behalf.

5. Certification body personnel

5.1 General

The certification body shall have clearly documented maintained and up to date instructions which describe personnel's duties and responsibilities.

The personnel of the product certification body shall be competent for the functions they perform.

The certification body shall have to sign its personnel by which they with commit themselves to comply with the rules defined by product certification body.

5.2 Qualification criteria (Requirement)

- 521** The personnel who involve in product certification activities shall have B.S.C degree in engineering or science, relevant experience, technical knowledge and taken relevant training.
- 522** The certification body shall define a minimum relevant requirement (criteria) for the competence of its personnel, in order to ensure that evaluation and certification are carried out effectively and uniformly.
- 523** The product certification body shall maintain information on the relevant qualifications, training and experience of each member of the personnel involved in the certification process.
- 524** Records of training and experience shall be kept up to date in particular the following:-
- a) Names and address
 - b) Organization affiliation and position held
 - c) Educational qualification and professional status
 - d) Experience and training in each field of the certification body's competence
 - e) Date of most recent updating records
 - f) Performance appraisal

6. Change in the certification requirements

The certification body shall give due notice of any changes it intends to make in its requirements for certification.

7. Appeals, complaints and disputes

Appeals, complaints and disputes brought before the certification body by suppliers or other parties shall be subject to the procedure of the certification body.