

INTERNATIONAL ACCREDITATION SERVICE, INC.

5360 Workman Mill Road · Whittier, CA 90601 USA
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July 18, 2008

TO: IAS-ACCREDITED TESTING LABORATORIES AND OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES

SUBJECT: Proposed Revisions to Accreditation Criteria for Inspection Agencies, Subject AC98-0908-0908-R1 (JP/RN)

Hearing Information:

Thursday September 18, 2008
8:00 a.m.

Minnesota Convention Center
1301 Second Avenue South
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55403

Dear Madam or Sir:

The IAS Accreditation Criteria for Inspection Agencies (AC98) has been placed on the committee agenda for the above noted meeting. The following proposed changes pertain to inspector qualifications/certifications and the field monitoring of newly hired inspectors as follows:

Section 2.3 (new): A matrix matching inspector qualifications/certifications against the fields of inspection shall be maintained and kept current. This matrix must also include the date of employment and date of qualification/certification of each inspector.

Section 5.2.2: Newly hired inspectors shall be monitored at least once in the field during the first sixty days of employment. Inspection agencies shall maintain records of all field monitoring activities of its inspectors.

You are cordially invited to submit written comments, or to attend the committee hearing and present verbal comments. Written comments will be forwarded to the committee, **prior to the hearing**, if received by **August 28, 2008**. As stated in Section 4.0 of the Rules of Procedure for Accreditation Committee Meetings (Rules) (copy enclosed), all written communications and submissions shall be delivered at least ten days before the scheduled Accreditation Committee meeting if they are to be forwarded to the committee.

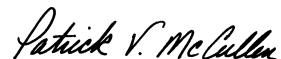
Any written material submitted for committee consideration will be available for public distribution as set forth in Section 4.0 of the Rules.

Visual aids (including, but not limited to, charts, overhead transparencies, slides, videos, or presentation software) for viewing at meetings will be permitted only if the presenter provides to IAS, before the presentation, a copy of the visual aid(s) in a medium that can be retained by IAS with its record of the meeting, and that can also be provided to interested parties.

Your cooperation is requested in forwarding to the Whittier office all material directed to the committee. Parties interested in the deliberations of the committee should refrain from communicating, whether in writing or verbally, with committee members regarding agenda items. The committee reserves the right to refuse communications that do not comply with this request.

If you have any questions, please contact John Pakianadan, assistant manager, accreditation, at 562-699-0541, extension 3309, or the undersigned at extension 3309. You may also reach us by e-mail at info@iasonline.org.

Yours very truly,



Patrick V. McCullen
Vice President

PVM/nl

Enclosures

cc: Accreditation Committee

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Leading Accreditors Since 1975

RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE MEETINGS

1.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of the Accreditation Committee and its meetings is to monitor the work of and to develop accreditation criteria for International Accreditation Service, Inc. (IAS).

2.0 MEETINGS

2.1 The Accreditation Committee shall schedule meetings that are open to the public in discharging its duties under Section 1, subject to Section 5.

2.2 All scheduled meetings shall be publicly announced.

2.3 Two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) of the voting Accreditation Committee members shall constitute a quorum. A majority vote of members present is required on any action.

2.4 In the absence of the nonvoting Chair-Moderator, Accreditation Committee members present shall elect an alternate Chairman from the committee for that meeting. The alternate Chairman shall be counted as a voting committee member for purposes of maintaining a committee quorum and to cast a tie-breaking vote of the committee.

2.5 Minutes of the meetings shall be kept.

3.0 MEETING RECORDS

An electronic audio record of meetings shall be made by IAS; no other audio, video, electronic or stenographic recordings of the meetings will be permitted. Visual aids (including, but not limited to, charts, overhead transparencies, slides, videos, or presentation software) viewed at meetings shall be permitted only if the presenter provides IAS before presentation with a copy of the visual aid in a medium which can be retained by IAS with its record of the meeting and which can also be provided to interested parties requesting a copy. A copy of the IAS recording of the meeting and such visual aids, if any, will be available to interested parties upon written request made to IAS together with a payment as required by IAS to cover costs of preparation and duplication of the copy. These materials will be available beginning five days after the conclusion of the meeting but will no longer be available after 30 days have elapsed from the conclusion of the meeting.

4.0 WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS AND SUBMISSIONS

Parties interested in the deliberations of the committee should refrain from communicating, whether in writing or verbally, with committee members regarding agenda

items. All written communications and submissions regarding agenda items should be delivered to IAS. All such written communications and submissions shall be considered nonconfidential and available for discussion in open session of an Accreditation Committee meeting, and shall be delivered *at least ten days* before the scheduled Accreditation Committee meeting if they are to be forwarded to the Committee. Correspondence received by IAS will not be released to any party, except to the Accreditation Committee, prior to the meeting without permission of the author. The committee reserves the right to refuse recognition of communications which do not comply with the provisions of this section. All such communications and submissions will be available from IAS upon written request and payment of costs associated with duplication. The materials will be available beginning five days after the conclusion of the meeting but will no longer be available after 30 days have elapsed from the conclusion of the meeting.

5.0 CLOSED SESSIONS

Meetings shall be open except that the chairman may call for a closed session to seek advice of counsel.

6.0 ACCREDITATION CRITERIA

Accreditation criteria are established by the committee to provide a basis for International Accreditation Service, Inc., accreditations. Consideration of accreditation criteria must be in conjunction with a current and valid application for an IAS accreditation listing or as otherwise determined by the Accreditation Committee.

6.1 Procedure

6.1.1 New Criteria

6.1.1.1 Proposed accreditation criteria may be submitted by interested parties to IAS, and shall be developed by the IAS staff and discussed in open session with the Accreditation Committee during a scheduled meeting.

6.1.1.2 Proposed accreditation criteria shall be available to interested parties at least 45 days before discussion at the committee meeting.

6.1.1.3 The committee shall be informed of all pertinent written communications received by IAS.

6.1.1.4 Attendees at Accreditation Committee meetings shall have the opportunity to speak on accreditation criteria listed on the meeting agenda, to provide information to committee members.

6.1.2 Existing Criteria

6.1.2.1 Changes to existing accreditation criteria may be submitted by interested parties to IAS, and shall be developed by the IAS staff. Existing accreditation criteria may be revised by the committee either (i) at a public meeting pursuant to the procedures set forth herein, or (ii) by postal ballot, provided public notice is provided as stipulated in Section 6.1.1.2.

6.1.2.2 The committee shall be informed of all pertinent written communications received by IAS. Parties interested in the proposed revisions to accreditation criteria may deliver communications and submissions regarding such proposed revisions to IAS within 35 days of the posting of the public notice regarding such proposed revisions to accreditation criteria. Such communications and submissions will otherwise be subject to the provisions of Section 4.0.

6.1.2.3 Upon an amendment to existing accreditation criteria, the effective date of the criteria shall be no earlier than 30 days after publication of the approved criteria.

6.2 Approval

Approval of accreditation criteria shall be as specified in Section 2.3 of these rules.

Approved by the Board of Directors

October 4, 2007

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PROPOSED REVISIONS TO THE ACCREDITATION CRITERIA FOR INSPECTION AGENCIES

AC98

Proposed September 2008

(Previously issued September 2002, March 2004, May 2005 and August 2006)

PREFACE

The attached accreditation criteria has been proposed to provide all interested parties with an opportunity to comment. If the proposed criteria is an updated version from a previous edition, underlined text within the criteria indicate a technical change or addition from the previous edition; and text marked with the strikeout indicates 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.

PROPOSED REVISIONS TO THE ACCREDITATION CRITERIA FOR INSPECTION AGENCIES

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Scope: This criteria sets forth the requirements for obtaining and maintaining International Accreditation Service, Inc. (IAS), inspection agency ("agency") accreditation and for the qualifying data that must be submitted relating to the scope of inspection for which accreditation is sought. This criteria supplements the IAS Rules of Procedure for Inspection Agency Accreditation.

1.2 Reference Documents:

1.2.1 ISO/IEC (International Organization for Standardization/International Electrotechnical Commission) Standard 17020:1998, General Criteria for the Operation of Various Types of Bodies Performing Inspection.

1.2.2 IAS Rules of Procedure for Inspection Agency Accreditation.

1.2.3 IAF/ILAC-A4:2004, Guidance on the Application of ISO/IEC 17020.

2.0 BASIC INFORMATION

The following basic information is necessary:

2.1 Data showing compliance with the IAS Rules of Procedure for Inspection Agency Accreditation.

2.2 Data showing compliance with ISO/IEC Standard 17020:1998, General Criteria for the Operation of Various Types of Bodies Performing Inspection.

2.3 A matrix matching inspector qualifications/certifications against the fields of inspection shall be maintained and kept current. This matrix must also include the date of employment and date of qualification/certification of each inspector.

3.0 SUPPLEMENTAL REQUIREMENTS

Inspection Reports: Inspection reports shall accurately and clearly outline the results of inspections. Inspection reports shall contain the following information, as applicable:

3.1 Inspection date, and arrival and departure times of the inspector.

3.2 Information pertaining to review of incoming-material records.

3.3 Products inspected.

3.4 Any changes in supervisory personnel, vendors, production or process, and equipment relating to the product inspected.

3.5 Results of tests witnessed or performed.

3.6 Information pertaining to review of labeling and label control system.

3.7 Evidence that the inspector has checked product traceability from incoming material to finished product through product records.

3.8 Resolution of any discrepancies noted during previous inspections.

3.9 Description of samples obtained, if any, including quantity, dimensions and relevant physical characteristics.

3.10 Information pertaining to review of calibration records for manufacturing and test equipment.

3.11 Signatures of the inspector and a manufacturer's representative (as applicable).

4.0 GUIDANCE ON THE APPLICATION OF ISO/IEC 17020

Although ILAC A4:2004 is termed a guidance document, the guidance and interpretations therein are considered mandatory for inspection agencies accredited under ISO/IEC 17020. This guidance document will form the basis of mutual recognition arrangements between accreditation bodies and is considered necessary for the consistent application of ISO/IEC 17020. This guidance document is available for free from the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) website at www.ilac.org/downloads/IAF-ILAC-A4_2004.pdf.

5.0 TRAINING AND SUPERVISION/MONITORING OF INSPECTORS

Inspection agencies shall have procedures for the training and supervision/monitoring of inspectors. Detailed records of training and supervision/monitoring activities shall be maintained and be made available for review by IAS during on-site assessments, reassessments and surveillance visits.

5.1 Inspector Training: All inspectors shall undergo training in specific competencies by a supervisor or senior inspector or shall obtain training/education through other formal arrangements that are applicable to the inspector's duties. Plans for continued training to keep pace with developing technology shall be considered.

All such training shall be documented by the inspection agency.

5.2 Supervision/Monitoring of Inspectors

5.2.1 To ensure consistency in inspections and compliance with accreditation requirements, inspection agencies shall have an effective supervision/monitoring system for their inspectors.

5.2.2 Newly hired inspectors shall be monitored at least once in the field during the first sixty days of employment. Inspection agencies shall maintain records of all field monitoring activities of its inspectors.

Each inspector shall undergo annual review of his/her performance in conducting inspections by the agency. The annual review shall, at a minimum, include: review of the inspector's reports for adequacy and completeness, compliance of the inspector with the agency's internal SOPs and client feedback.

5.2.3 Inspectors shall be monitored periodically in the field but not less than once every three years.

Inspector monitoring schedules may be based on the inspector's performance. Inspectors who grade well in field monitoring and grade well in accordance with the criteria in Section 4.2.2, above, may have field monitoring intervals extended, to a maximum of four years. Conversely, inspectors not grading well shall be monitored yearly until an acceptable level of performance is demonstrated. The agency shall retain records of the monitoring of its inspectors.

Note: Agencies whose inspectors are witnessed conducting inspections in the field by an IAS assessor during the reassessment process satisfy the once-in-three-year field monitoring requirement outlined in Section 5.2.3. However, the inspection agency is still required to maintain annual performance review records required under Section 5.2.2.

6.0 ASSESSMENT

6.1 Prior to accreditation, inspection agencies shall be subject to an on-site assessment by IAS. This assessment is to determine compliance with this criteria (AC98) and to evaluate expertise in the area(s) of inspection where accreditation is sought.

6.2 After the initial year of accreditation, inspection agencies are subject to an on-site surveillance assessment. The surveillance assessment shall include review of at least the following: internal audit reports, minutes of management review meetings, any changes in key personnel or facilities, and information on any other significant changes in the quality system of the inspection agency.

6.3 IAS will conduct an on-site reassessment of accredited inspection agencies at a minimum of once every two years, for verification of continued compliance with IAS accreditation requirements.

7.0 WITNESSING INSPECTION ACTIVITIES

IAS will periodically witness actual on-site inspections by each inspection body. The minimum amount of technical witnessing per inspection body is:

7.1 One activity in each major category of inspection prior to the granting of accreditation.

7.2 One activity relating to each major sub-area of the major disciplines of the inspection body's scope of accreditation at least every four years.

8.0 CROSS-REFERENCE MARK

IAS-accredited agencies that conduct quarterly inspections of IAS-accredited fabricator inspection programs shall prepare and submit to IAS a cross-reference matrix to the fabricator's quality management system manual showing that the manual addresses the general requirements in Section 4.0, data in Section 5.0, the statements in Section 6.0, and the written procedures noted in Section 7.0 of the IAS Accreditation Criteria for Fabricator Inspection Programs for Structural Steel (AC172) or the IAS Accreditation Criteria for Fabricator Inspection Programs for Reinforced Concrete (AC157), as applicable.

The cross-reference matrix must be signed and dated by an authorized representative of the IAS-accredited inspection agency attesting that the agency has reviewed

the fabricator's quality management system and that it is sufficiently compliant with the applicable accreditation criteria to schedule an on-site joint assessment with IAS.

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