

Fact Sheet – Specifying Accreditation in Regulation



Accredited Once
Accepted Everywhere

In many economies, regulators may be national, state, provincial, or even municipal in their scope of responsibility. Regulators may be public authorities or represent private sector specifiers. Many regulatory authorities are already using accreditation effectively to support their regulatory and policy objectives. However, there are some that do not possess sufficient information, which could lead to the incorrect application or specification of accreditation requirements.

The following text sets out examples of how to specify accredited services for external conformity assessment bodies (CABs) that are certification bodies (management systems, products or persons) or validation/verification bodies (VVBs), covered by the IAF Multilateral Recognition Arrangement (MLA). All four paragraphs below are needed to ensure that a party requesting external certification/ validation/ verification has met the relevant international standard or scheme and IAF requirements for competence and are providing reliable certificates or validation/verification statements.

The text can be provided to regulators and specifiers to assist them in their drafting of regulation or specification.

- “1. The conformity assessment body shall be accredited, as applicable to the activities concerned, in accordance with the requirements of ISO/IEC 17021-1:– *Conformity assessment – Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems – Part 1: Requirements (for management systems certification)* or ISO/IEC 17065 – *Conformity assessment – Requirement for bodies certifying products, processes and services, (for product certification)*, or ISO/IEC 17024 – *Conformity assessment – General requirements for bodies operating certification of persons (for certification of persons)*, or ISO/IEC 17029 – *Conformity assessment – General principles and requirements for validation and verification bodies (for validation/verification)*.
2. The conformity assessment body’s scope of accreditation to ISO/IEC 17021-1, ISO/IEC 17065, ISO/IEC 17024 or ISO/IEC 17029 shall encompass the area that is required for certification or validation/verification.
3. The accreditation of a CAB shall be issued by an accreditation body (AB), operating in accordance with ISO/IEC 17011 – *General requirements for accreditation bodies accrediting conformity assessment bodies and signatory to the IAF MLA*.
4. Additional requirements can be laid down by the regulator. The AB shall evaluate compliance with these additional requirements.”

The first paragraph stipulates that the CAB be accredited to ISO/IEC 17021-1, ISO/IEC 17065, ISO/IEC 17029 or ISO/IEC 17024, while the second paragraph requires that the area in which certificates or validation/verification statements are issued be listed on the CAB’s scope of accreditation. If this requirement is not met, the CAB could claim that it is compliant with one of the above standards despite not being actually accredited for the requested standard(s).

The third stipulates that the (AB) be an IAF MLA signatory. Without this paragraph, the CAB could be accredited by an AB that has inadequate or misleading credentials. There are ABs that claim to be in compliance with ISO/IEC 17011. Holding IAF MLA signatory status indicates that the AB has been periodically peer-evaluated against the requirements of ISO/IEC 17011 and additional IAF requirements.

Public Sector Assurance & Business Benefits



Public Sector Assurance (www.publicsectorassurance.org) has been developed by the leading global quality infrastructure organisations to illustrate the value of accredited conformity assessment. It allows government officials and regulators are able to access case studies from around the world in key policy areas demonstrating how different tools are able to deliver results.

The site also contains links to independent research where conformity assessment is, and can be, used for policy areas such as economic development, healthcare, environmental protection, energy, food safety, construction, crime and security.

Business Benefits (business-benefits.org) showcases how accredited conformity assessment is used around the world by businesses to deliver positive benefits. The case studies and research published on the site cite tangible financial data to demonstrate the cost savings achieved through resource efficiency, meeting regulations at lower cost, the value of accessing new markets, and/or savings achieved through recognition from organisations such as insurers, regulators or purchasers.



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