



Considering ASCB Accreditation

An introduction for product certification bodies · ISO/IEC 17065 edition

\$250B+

COMBINED TURNOVER

1M+

GLOBAL WORKFORCE

230+

ACCREDITED BODIES

140+

COUNTRIES

Across organizations certified by ASCB-accredited bodies. Standards-based accreditation since 1995. ISO/IEC 17011.

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Comprehension matters to us. If you would prefer this document in another language, please ask.

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01 Introduction

This edition is for product certification bodies considering accreditation with ASCB against ISO/IEC 17065. It describes who ASCB is, what accreditation involves, how the application process works, and the basis on which ASCB operates, so that you can consider an application with a clear picture of the relationship you would be entering.

Accreditation is independent third-party assessment of a conformity assessment body against the international standard written for its activity. For your clients, and their customers, it distinguishes work delivered under accreditation from work delivered without it.

Product certification demonstrates a product's ability to meet the general safety requirement and the specific requirements of a product standard. Certification rests on three demonstrations: adequate design, evidenced through the product's technical construction file; adequate manufacture and manufacturing environment, evidenced through quality assurance records and the management system behind them; and adequate inspection and test against the documented product standard and applicable directives and regulations. Accredited product certifiers are expected to demonstrate awareness, knowledge and intimacy with the relevant product standards and the legal requirements of the nations their clients' products are distributed to.

Alongside the published standards, ASCB can assess against bespoke standards and can develop bespoke accreditation schemes to meet the needs of clients, scheme owners and other third-party stakeholders, through its Bespoke Standards Development service. Where a published standard exists for an activity, ASCB applies it directly, without proprietary additions; where one does not, a scheme can be built for the purpose.

For more than 30 years, ASCB has delivered independent, standards-based accreditation to certifying bodies operating internationally. Formed in 1995 in the United Kingdom and now headquartered in the United States, ASCB operates to ISO/IEC 17011 and accredits conformity assessment bodies across the principal management systems, product, personnel, inspection, laboratory and educational standards, applying the published ISO/IEC standard directly, without proprietary schemes or non-standard criteria.

ASCB around the world

230+**Conformity assessment bodies accredited since 1995**

Cumulative count of CABs that have achieved accreditation through the ASCB framework.

30,000+**Organizations holding ASCB-accredited certification**

Estimated combined annual turnover of approximately USD 250 billion and a workforce exceeding one million people.

140+**Countries**

Locations of the organizations holding ASCB-accredited certification.

10,000+**Assessors, auditors and quality-related personnel**

Registered through ASCB's training accreditation programs.

How we assess

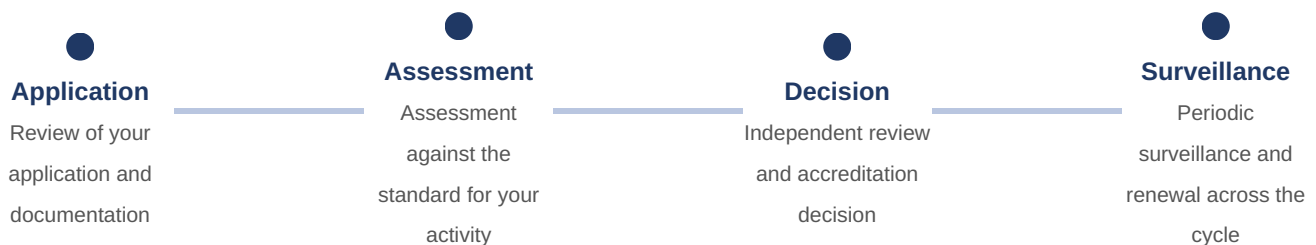
ASCB's assessment reporting goes further than a binary compliant or non-compliant baseline. Assessors apply a metric scoring system across each applicable requirement, based on the performance maturity levels developed by ISO Technical Committee 176: the traditional minor and major nonconformities, opportunities for improvement and recommendations are identified, and emphasis on continual improvement and best-in-class performance is recognized, with quantitative scores across areas such as competence, leadership and documentation. The methodology follows published rules that can be interrogated and challenged, and it adds no requirements beyond the published standard.

Where we operate

ASCB operates from United States headquarters in Dover, Delaware. Organizations certified by ASCB-accredited bodies serve clients across the public and private sectors, including national and local governments, hospital trusts, regional councils, and a wide range of commercial and industrial customers.

Accreditation is a periodic, risk-based assessment of your organization against the requirements of the relevant standard, carried out on a sampling basis. It examines the arrangements behind your activity, governance, impartiality where applicable, the competence framework behind your people, and the certification, inspection, testing, validation or training work you deliver, and it continues through surveillance across the cycle rather than ending at the initial decision.

Accreditation brings practical apparatus with it: the ASCB accreditation mark and logos for your certificates and materials, clear guidance on describing your accredited status, and a public listing at ascb.com that anyone can check. Your schedule of accreditation keeps pace with your organization; scope extensions are assessed and granted through the same disciplines as the original accreditation.



Ahead of each surveillance and renewal assessment, ASCB makes contact in advance to confirm how the assessment will be conducted and any information required, so each assessment is planned with you. Assessment findings are reported through the scoring methodology described in section 02.

Impartiality and independence from consultancy

Impartiality is a foundation of accreditation. ISO/IEC 17011 requires an accreditation body to safeguard the objectivity of its decisions, and ASCB protects this structurally: it explains its requirements and its process to every applicant and accredited body, and it does not provide consultancy. Neither ASCB nor its leadership or employees hold any interest in, or common ownership with, any consultancy business, so the body that assesses you has no stake in how you prepare.

For the same reason, ASCB will never recommend a particular consultant or adviser, and will never suggest that using one would secure accreditation or make it simpler, faster or cheaper. Accreditation is decided on what the assessment finds, and on nothing else.

04 The path to accreditation

Product certification accreditation is granted in stages, summarized here from ASL(G)15, Summary Procedure for Product Certification Accreditation, available on request. The process evaluates your documentation and your certification activity, using the scoring methodology described in section 02, with site witness as required.

- 1 Application.** Apply on form ASL(F)56, the Product Certification Application, with the application fee. Our terms of engagement and the applicable fees are provided with the application invitation, so you can read both before committing to anything. On acceptance of your application, you accept the terms expressly and the application stage is invoiced.
- 2 Compliance basis and document review.** The applicant complies with ISO/IEC 17065 and maintains a management system that supports it: either one addressing the general management system requirements of ISO/IEC 17065 directly, or one in accordance with ISO 9001. Both routes are recognized by the standard. You send the manuals and procedures for operation as a product certifier; ASCB reviews and comments, and may ask you to amend and respond before the next step.
- 3 Provisional accreditation.** When the document review meets ASCB's criteria, a provisional accreditation certificate is issued and your organization is listed as a provisional body on ascb.com.
- 4 Certification activity in practice.** You conduct product certification activity and provide ASCB with the records of that work, in accordance with the documentation reviewed earlier.
- 5 Assessment of your activity as delivered.** ASCB determines the means, timing and extent of this assessment on a risk basis: witnessing certification activity on site, witnessing remotely using ICT, detailed review of the complete records of completed work, or a combination. Where local conditions make attendance impracticable or inadvisable, or the assessment of risk does not warrant it, ASCB proceeds by the other means available to it. Assessor day rates apply to the assessment however it is conducted; travel and accommodation are at cost where conducted on site. However conducted, it is a genuine assessment and its outcome is not predetermined.
- 6 Full accreditation and registration.** On a successful outcome your accreditation becomes full, listed and publicly searchable on ascb.com. Every certificate you issue is registered on the IRQAO register at irqao.com, ASCB's contracted agent, which calculates and charges the applicable certificate fee at the time of approval. ASCB monitors activity and conducts reviews on a risk basis, and you keep ASCB informed of certification activity through the cycle.

05 Fees

Product certification body fees are set out in ASL(G)90, ISO/IEC 17065 Fee Rates USD, available on request; the figures below are from ASL(G)90.501. All fees are in US dollars. For applicants based in the United Kingdom or the Eurozone, ASCB can quote and invoice in pounds sterling or in euros, and publishes the fee table in those currencies for some schemes. Where a quotation is issued in sterling or euros, that is the currency for the engagement. Ask us which applies to your scheme.

- 1 Application fee: \$1,640** , covering up to two certification standards, with \$550 for each additional conformity standard. Scope extension assessment: \$550.
- 2 Annual administration fee: \$1,640** , discounted each year by the certification fees paid to ASCB in the prior 12 months, up to a maximum discount of 100 percent. An active certification body can therefore reduce the administration fee to nil.
- 3 Assessor day rate: \$750.** The number of days depends on the applied scope, conformity standards and key locations; ask for a detailed quotation. Traveling time is not chargeable; travel and accommodation are at cost under the ASCB auditor travel policy.
- 4 Certificate fees per product certificate issued.** Once accredited, a fee is payable for each product certificate issued, at a country-based rate collected through the IRQAO register on ASCB's behalf; the full country table is in ASL(G)90, effective January 1, 2025. Certificates covering multiple products incur the fee for each product assessed.

Fees relate to the administration and assessment work conducted and carry no presumption of the accreditation outcome. Where rates change, the current published fee schedule prevails over any figures reproduced here. A specimen copy of our terms of engagement is published on our website under “How do I apply?”, and the terms are available on request at any stage. They are provided as a matter of course with every application invitation, before any invoice is raised.

06 Authority and recognition

Prospective applicants are entitled to a clear statement of the basis on which ASCB operates. The following is ASCB's published position, from ASL(G)32, ASCB Authority, International Guidance:

The authority under which Accreditation Service for Certifying Bodies LLC (ASCB) operates arises solely from the contractual relationship between ASCB and the organizations that engage its accreditation services.

ASCB operates independently of all governments and statutory authorities. It is not established, appointed, licensed, or endorsed by any national government, state agency, or intergovernmental organization, unless expressly stated in writing by ASCB. Accordingly, no statutory, legislative, or governmental authority is implied or claimed beyond that which ASCB holds under private commercial law.

ASCB-accredited organizations offer services to both public- and private-sector clients worldwide. The legal and regulatory recognition of accreditation differs across countries and sectors, so it is the responsibility of every ASCB-accredited organization, and of their own clients or contracting authorities, to verify that ASCB accreditation is acceptable for its intended purpose and complies with any applicable local or national requirements.

ASCB recommends that all parties seek confirmation from the relevant regulatory or contracting bodies in the jurisdiction where services are to be delivered before relying on ASCB accreditation for statutory or procurement purposes. That is not a formality; it is the same check a prudent buyer performs on any accreditation, and we would rather you performed it before applying than discovered a constraint afterwards. Where your market is one in which ASCB accreditation serves your clients' purposes, the relationship is built on exactly that verified footing.

The full ASL(G)32 document, and ASL(G)30 on ASCB's affiliations, are available on request.

CE and UKCA marking. As a general rule, only Notified Bodies may authorize the placing of a CE mark on a product, and only UK Approved Bodies the UKCA mark. There are neither Notified Bodies nor UK Approved Bodies within the ASCB regime, and it is a matter of ASCB policy, clarified in Advisory Notice ASL(AN)01, to abstain from authorizing CE and UKCA marking. An ASCB-accredited product certifier does not authorize either mark under its accreditation, however strong its records, and should ensure its clients understand this before accepting work.

07 Next steps

If accreditation with ASCB may serve your organization, the next step is the application form, ASL(F)56, available from ascb.com or by request from admin@ascb.com. The fee position is set out in section 05, and the terms of engagement accompany the application invitation. Applicants are expected to be familiar with ASL(G)15 and Advisory Notice ASL(AN)01 on CE marking, both available on request.

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Your accreditation, once granted, is publicly searchable at ascb.com, and this pack's companion, the ASCB welcome pack, sets out the practical detail of the relationship from day one: describing your accreditation, using the mark and logos, and the accreditation cycle.

This document is introductory guidance for prospective applicants. Where it differs from ASCB's controlled documents, procedures or terms of engagement, those documents prevail.