Summary procedure for product certification accreditation

1 Make a formal application for accreditation. Together with application fee as defined in ASL(G)72. Use form ASL(F)56.

2 The applicant organisation is required to comply with the requirements of ISO/IEC 17065 and to maintain a Quality Management System that meets ISO 9001 (latest version).

3 The applicant sends to ASCB the Manuals and procedures for operation as a product certifier.

4 ASCB shall review and comment. If necessary, ASCB will require the applicant to amend and respond before the next step.

5 ASCB shall issue a provisional accreditation certificate when satisfied that the document structure is adequate. The applicant is listed on ASCB website as “PROVISIONAL BODY”.

6 The applicant conducts the product certification activities. The applicant sends ASCB photocopies or scanned or electronic records of all the documents related to that work. These shall be in accordance with the documents that ASCB had earlier reviewed.

7 ASCB will as soon as is convenient conduct site witness of the applicant’s product certification activity. The applicant is required to pay ASCB travel and accommodation expenses.

8 The applicant’s accreditation becomes firm. Applicant is listed on ASCB website without caveat.

9 The applicant continues to conduct product activities but does not need to send paperwork.

10 All certificates have to be registered at www.irqao.com which is the contracted agent of ASCB. IRQAO will calculate and charge the appropriate certificate fee at the time of approval.

11 ASCB will monitor the level of the product certification activity and conduct accreditation reviews to suit.

12 The product certifier must inform ASCB of all invoice-able activity.

NOTES

1 Organisations seeking accreditation as product certifiers shall demonstrate awareness, knowledge and intimacy with relevant product standards and legal requirements of the nations that such products may be distributed to. Predominantly, this applies to the European Union and the various documents published by the European Parliament and Commission with regard to Conformity Assessment.

2 Organisations shall be aware of the role of Notified Bodies and their sole role and authority within the European Union with regard to the authorisation of CE Marks to defined products. See Advisory Notice ASL(AN)01 for more information.

3 As a general rule only Notified Bodies may authorise the placing of a CE Mark on a product.

Some products however, have several categories and the very low risk products may be 'self-certified' by producers who may prefer to employ the services of independent third party organisations. Such organisations should be wary, especially in view of the UK (and probably other European states), initiative in this area. (See Advisory Notice ASL(AN)01.1).

4 It is most important that the applicant clients are given the opportunity to understand the relationship between ASCB and government etc. The product certifier is therefore instructed not to imply or cause to be inferred that ASCB act with the approval of the government. That is why Terms and Conditions are so important. ASCB guide ASL(G).16 is also useful and ASCB has no objection to the applicant issuing one to each of the applicant clients.

5 ASCB revenue comes from a levy on the income of the product certifier. This is defined in contract between ASCB and the product certifier. The arrangement is designed to enable the product certifier to achieve initial accreditation at minimal cost and to budget ongoing costs of accreditation in proportion to the test and calibration laboratory's own revenue and growth.

6 Currently ASCB accredit product certifiers with regard to ISO/IEC 17065 who may also meet other standards.

Product certification is indicative of a product's ability to meet (i) the general safety requirement and (ii) the specific requirements of a product standard. In order to issue a certificate there shall be evidence of the following:

- Adequate design
- Adequate manufacture & manufacturing environment
- Adequate inspection and test

The demonstration of adequacy is via the following means:

- Design evaluation: Technical Construction File for the product.
- Manufacturing assurance: Quality assurance records of manufacture and quality management system (typically ISO 9001 but also other standards depending upon the product)
- Inspection and Test: Certification that the product meets a documented product standard and the requirements of applicable directives and regulations. Typically, this will be achieved via meeting the requirements of ISO/IEC 17065 but, depending upon the regulatory regime, may invoke other standards as well such as ISO 17021 or ISO 17025.

Unless the above three activities, as a minimum, are demonstrated then conformity assessment cannot be assured, and product certification can not follow. Moreover, even if these three activities are assured, and even with the very best of available records, a CE mark may still not be applied under the auspices of ASCB. This is because the European Commission has defined restrictive measures for CE Marking such that as a general rule, only Notified Bodies may authorise the placing of a CE mark on a product. There are no Notified Bodies within the ASCB regime and whilst Notified Bodies are not essential in all cases it is a matter of policy that ASCB abstain from authorising CE Marking and this is clarified in its Advisory Notice ASL(AN)01.

END