INSPEC REGULATIONS – IC MARK Certification Scheme

DEFINITIONS

Within the terms of these Regulations, the following definitions apply:

Governing Board

The Governing Board is an independent body acts as a Mechanism for Safeguarding Impartiality, with overall responsibility for the systems operated and the certificates issued now within the duties of the Certification Manager, along with all day-to-day activities.

Certificate

The Certificate is the document issued by INSPEC which states the right of the certified company to use the mark, and defines the products and standards/specifications covered.

Applicant Company

An Applicant Company is one who has applied to INSPEC and paid the application fee and embarked on the process towards product certification.

Certified Company

A Certified Company is an Applicant Company which satisfies all of the necessary criteria and gives undertakings as required, including continued compliance with the Regulations covering the scheme, to enable the issue of a Certificate by INSPEC.

Quality System

A Quality System is the organizational structure, procedures, processes and resources needed to implement quality management at the Applicant Company, and maintain such quality at the Certified Company.

Certification Mark

The IC Mark is the mark covered by these Regulations and can only be used by companies who have been authorized by INSPEC.

The mark indicates that the goods are certified in respect of their product quality

The goods to be certified in respect of their product quality may be (subject to inclusion in UKAS accreditation):

- Articles of protective headgear including helmets;
- Ear protectors including ear plugs;
- Eye protectors including spectacles, goggles, face shields and visors;
- Respiratory protection apparatus including masks, filters, hoods and breathing apparatus;
- Apparatus for protection against falling including safety harnesses, belts, lifelines and safety rope systems for persons working at heights;
- Articles of protective leg and footwear including boots and shoes;
- Articles of protective hand wear including gloves, mittens and gauntlets;
- Clothing, jackets and trousers.

The mark can be applied directly to certified product, company literature, stationery, advertising etc., in order to demonstrate that the product concerned is covered by independent, product certification.

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REGULATIONS GOVERNING ALL MODULES

1. These Regulations define the prime responsibilities of INSPEC International Ltd, hereinafter referred to as "INSPEC", in the issuing and monitoring of certificates and of the certificate holder in maintaining their certification.

2. The Certification Manager of INSPEC, acting through the Top Management, has responsibility for the issue, maintenance and renewal of certificates. The Certification Manager may delegate these day-to-day responsibilities to specified individuals who will be employed as necessary to undertake such tasks.

3. An applicant company which satisfies all of the necessary criteria and gives undertakings as required shall be entitled to be issued with a certificate demonstrating their status as a certified company, which shall remain the property of INSPEC. Separate certificates shall be issued for each standard and shall be valid for three years from the date of issue. Thereafter, each certificate shall be subject to re-certification cycles based on three years of auditing and fulfilment of Test and Inspection Plans. If a company does not intend to renew its certificate, notification must be given to INSPEC at least three calendar months before the renewal date. Certification is not transferable without the written permission of INSPEC.

4. Each certified company shall:-

a. make claims of certification only in accordance with the certificate(s) issued.
b. comply with these Regulations at all times.
c. only use the certification mark(s) in accordance with the guidance notes to these Regulations.
d. maintain the technical documents assessed as satisfactory and make available copies for the use and retention, if considered appropriate, by INSPEC.
e. maintain the documented quality management system assessed as satisfactory and make available copies for the use and retention, if considered appropriate, by INSPEC.
f. maintain their Test and Inspect Plan by means of testing of samples from production and make available copies of test reports and production documentation for the use and retention, if considered appropriate, by INSPEC.
g. at the request of the Certification Manager cease claims to certification considered unacceptable.
h. give access during normal working hours to INSPEC representatives to all areas subject to the conditions of certification for the purposes of assessing the continued compliance of the quality system and selecting test samples.
i. nominate a company representative and at least one deputy to be responsible for the company's compliance with these Regulations.
j. upon cancellation of certification return all certificates and schedules to INSPEC and immediately cease applying the certification mark to products and claims to certification, including the erasing of certification claims on any company literature, advertising material etc.
k. upon cancellation of certification remove the certification mark(s) from any product in his possession, if requested to do so by the Certification Manager.
l. establish and maintain records of complaints received and related actions to be made available to INSPEC when requested.
m. notify INSPEC without delay of any planned changes to the certified product of quality system which may affect product conformity, before any such change is made.
n. hold a valid and current third-party liability insurance policy relevant to company sites, and provide a copy of such insurance policy if requested to do so.
o. treat any attendee of INSPEC or their Accreditor of Accreditor representative with respect.
p. ensure that the premises and conditions at the sites are suitable and safe, considering all health and safety requirements.
q. advise INSPEC in sufficient time to arrange provision of any personal protective equipment as may be necessary to reduce risks to an acceptable level and meet any legal requirements. If specific personal protective equipment is required, such equipment shall be provided to each attendee.
r. maintain high standards of integrity in the conduct of their business practices and understand that if found not to be fair and equitable, certification may be suspended or withdrawn.

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5. Each company issued with a certificate shall pay:-

a. a certificate issue fee.
b. routine assessment fees.
c. product testing fees, if required.
d. varied additional fees covering certificate amendments, re-issues, renewals, special assessments and administration.
e. a cancellation assessment fee if such a visit is considered necessary by the Certification Manager.
f. any additional costs incurred by INSPEC due to the company's non-compliance with these Regulations.

The fees associated with gaining and maintaining IC mark certification are laid out in Annex A to these regulations.

6. INSPEC shall:-

a. arrange for routine assessments to be carried out at the required frequency but in no case less than one per annum for the purpose of verifying that the conditions of certification are being met by the company.
b. arrange for a Test and Inspection Plan to be established in agreement with the Applicant.
c. arrange for product samples to be selected or purchased for testing against the relevant standard(s) in order to determine continued compliance.
d. give due notice of any serious reported problems or complaints concerning the company providing that confidentiality will not be breached.
e. maintain confidentiality of all information except that which is in the public domain or at the lawful request of the relevant authorities.
f. notify a third-party company or persons when required by law or authorised by contractual arrangements to disclose confidential information, unless prohibited by law.
g. make any necessary amendments to these Regulations. Those companies affected will be given a minimum of 6 months to comply with any changed requirement.
h. maintain a register of certified companies and products, which shall be available for inspection by the general public at the registered office.
i. give at least two months' notice of any intention not to permit a company to renew their certificate(s).
j. notify certificate holders of changes to the standard(s) and give them such time as is considered reasonable to meet the revised requirements.
k. take action to deal with any incorrect references to certification status, misleading use of certification documents, marks, or audit reports. Such action could include requests for correction and corrective action, suspension or withdrawal of certification, publication of the transgression and, if necessary, legal action.

7. INSPEC may make unannounced visits to assess continued compliance.

8. If a company fails to comply with these Regulations, then certification may be:-

i. not granted
ii. reduced
iii. suspended
iv. withdrawn

The company will be notified in writing of any such decisions.

9. If a company goes into receivership, liquidation, becomes the subject of bankruptcy laws, is convicted of breaking the law of the land or acts in a disreputable manner, then certification may be not granted, or withdrawn. The company shall be notified in writing of any such decisions.

10. If a company wishes to appeal against any decision made by the Certification Manager under these Regulations, it shall inform the Quality Manager in writing within 21 days of being informed of such a decision. A meeting of the appeals panel shall be held within 30 days of the receipt of written notice and the appellant company shall be given 14 days' notice of the details of the meeting. These timelines may be adjusted with agreement of all parties. Both the Certification Manager and the appellant shall have the right to be heard in confidence at the meeting. The majority decision of the panel shall be final.

The result of the appeal shall be considered by the Certification Manager for a renewed decision. The Certification Manager's renewed decision will stand.

The appeals panel shall consist of 3 members of the governing board, none of which shall have a vested interest in the outcome of the appeal.

11. Any notice given under these Regulations shall be in writing via email or letter, typically to the last notified email address, else to the last notified physical address.

Any notice served by email or post shall be considered to have been served 48 hours from the time of emailing or posting.