



Synopsis of Conformity Assessment tools to support public policy by ISO CASCO

Conformity Assessment

1. Conformity assessment involves a set of processes that show your product, service or system meets the requirements of a standard.
2. The main forms of conformity assessment are **testing, certification, and inspection.**
3. It's important to note that ISO doesn't provide certification or conformity assessment. ISO has a committee, **CASCO**, that develops standards and addresses issues related to conformity assessment.
4. Undergoing the conformity assessment process has a number of benefits:
 - It provides **consumers** and other stakeholders with added confidence.
 - It gives your **company** a competitive edge.
 - It helps **regulators** ensure that health, safety or environmental conditions are met

Conformity Assessment bodies (CAB)

5. There are different types of conformity assessment bodies (CABs) that can undertake conformity assessment techniques and activities. They can come in any organisational form and ownership, and can be commercial in focus or not-for-profit entities. They can be government agencies, national standards bodies, trade associations, consumer organisations, or private or publically owned companies. .
6. In most cases CABs can act as first, second or third party that is making the claim of conformity.
7. Where bodies act in a third party capacity, an important feature is that they have to act in an impartial way so that the results of their work can be objective and maintain the highest degree of confidence.
8. Many countries have a competitive market amongst CABs for the provision of conformity assessment activities.
9. However in some countries and markets a monopoly is given to one or more government recognised conformity assessment bodies by statute, regulations or through procurement practices.

| | International standard | First party | Second party | Third party |
|---|-------------------------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|
| Testing laboratories | ISO/IEC 17025 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Inspection bodies | ISO/IEC 17020 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Certification bodies for persons | ISO/IEC 17024 | | | ✓ |
| Certification bodies for products, processes and services | ISO/IEC 17065 | | | ✓ |
| Certification bodies for management systems | ISO/IEC 17021 | | | ✓ |

Recognition of Conformity Assessment bodies

1. There are several ways in which the competence and impartiality of conformity assessment bodies (CABs) can be recognised, **including government recognition, accreditation and peer assessment.**

Government recognition

2. Governments can recognise CABs in two different ways: **administrative recognition**, where no consideration of technical competence is required, or **technical recognition**, where consideration of technical competence is required.
3. Consideration of technical competence should be based on the relevant International Standards, and the persons making the assessment of the CAB should be competent in the relevant International Standard and technical area.
4. Recognition may take the form of a license to operate, admission to an approved list of CABs or a pre-qualification list of suppliers.
5. Where there is an urgent need for a conformity assessment approach to be set up, the regulatory authorities could decide to directly assess and appoint bodies. However, the basis of the assessment might not be clear and it could be difficult for the bodies and their certificates to gain recognition in other countries.

Accreditation

6. **Accreditation** is The formal recognition by an independent body, generally known as an accreditation body, that a certification body operates according to international standards.
7. Accreditation is a specific conformity assessment activity involving the independent third-party assessment of CABs with specified requirements.
8. Accreditation generally involves the use of auditing techniques by assessment teams including experts in the organizational aspects such as management systems and also in the technical activities of the body.
9. For example, for a testing laboratory the team would include one or more experts in the types of measurement and testing being carried out.
10. **The relevant standard for accreditation, ISO/IEC 17011, sets out the requirements for accreditation bodies and the process of accreditation.**
11. **Accreditation bodies around the world have formed several international organisations of which they are the members. These bodies include the International Accreditation Forum (IAF), which focuses on issues related to consistent accreditation of certification bodies;**

Peer assessment

12. Peer assessment, also known as peer evaluation, is a conformity assessment activity used to ascertain the conformity of a person or organization with a set of specified requirements for membership of a group which the person or body wishes to join. The assessment is carried out by other members of the group, in other words the peers of the applicant. **The specified requirements normally include relevant International Standards- ISO/IEC 17040,**
13. **Examples of peer assessment groups are:** Management system certification bodies that are members of the [IQNet](http://www.iqnet.org) certification network;

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link: https://www.iso.org/sites/cascoregulators/01_3_conformity-assessment-bodies.html



The facts about ISO certification

The provision by an independent body of written assurance (a certificate) that the product, service or system in question meets specific requirements Certification can be a useful tool to add credibility, by demonstrating that your product or service meets the expectations of your customers. For some industries, certification is a legal or contractual requirement.

Choosing a certification body

When choosing a certification body, you should:

- Evaluate several certification bodies.
- Check if the certification body uses the relevant CASCO standard
- Check if it is accredited.
- **Accreditation is not compulsory, and non-accreditation does not necessarily mean it is not reputable, but it does provide independent confirmation of competence.**

link : <https://www.iso.org/certification.html>

About ISO(International organization for standardization)

ISO is a non-governmental organization (NGO). Therefore, unlike the United Nations, the national members of ISO are not delegations of the governments of those countries. Our national members are the national standards bodies, or equivalent organizations, in their country. Some of them are wholly private sector in origin, others are private sector organizations but have a special mandate from their governments on matters related to standardization, and others are part of the governmental framework of their countries. In addition, government experts often participate in ISO's standards' development work. So, while ISO is an NGO, it receives input from the public sector as it does from the private sector.