

1. INTRODUCTION

One of the service provided by NBE is the assessment and accreditation of the inspection bodies. For this reason, the inspection bodies applying to be accredited shall provide the necessary information about their activities, equipments and personnel to NBE together with the application form. The competency assessment of an inspection body is performed with the processes such as the documentation review, visiting the central office and branches of the body and if any, witnessing of the inspection activities. The aim of the assessment is to control whether the inspection body works in accordance with the provisions of the standard ISO/IEC 17020, Guideline ILAC P15, relevant ILAC documents and the rules within the guidelines of NBE.

NBE, assigns assessors and technical experts who have expertise in the related field in order to assess the competence of the inspections for which accreditation is requested. The assessors and technical experts sign the forms and contracts prepared by NBE in compliance with the confidentiality of the information obtained during the assessment process and in line with the ethical values. The activities of the assessors and technical experts are limited to the assessment of the compliance of the inspection body to the related conditions and reporting of the findings to NBE.

This document determines the issues related with the planning and performing the accreditation assessments, surveillance assessments and re-accreditation assessments to be carried out by NBE during an accreditation cycle (48 months) for inspection bodies at service in accordance with the provisions of the standard ISO/IEC 17020. Besides, it provides technical reference to the assessment methods normally used.

The accreditation procedures are carried out parallel to the PR-7-01 Procedure on Accreditation of Conformity Assessment Bodies by taking the issues stated within this guideline into consideration.

Also, additional requirements included in NBE Documents/Guidelines which are drawn up on the basis of accreditation for notification purposes and applied inspection field shall also apply in addition to this Guideline.

2. DEFINITIONS

Accreditation Cycle Program: Provides necessary information on the assessment of a specific conformity assessment body during an accreditation cycle in accordance with accreditation schemes implemented by NBE.

Witness Assessment: Witnessing by NBE of conformity assessment activities carried out by the inspection body within the scope of accreditation.

Multiple branch organization: This is an entire organization including the central office where the

important activities are carried out or the central office which manages the other networks of branches where the important activities are carried out partly or completely. All branches are dependent on the central office legally or by means of a contract and perform their activities under the common quality system.

3. APPLICATION

When the application of an inspection body which is giving service in accordance with the standard ISO/IEC 17020 is received, the Head of NBE Product, Service and Inspection Accreditation Department assigns a case officer (technical officer) who will be responsible for the accreditation process. As well as the described evaluations in Section 3.1.3 of "PR-7-01 Procedure on Accreditation of Conformity Assessment Bodies", relevant case officer;

- a) Confirms the inspection types and fields requested to be accredited by the applicant inspection body (by contacting the institution).
- b) Evaluates whether the requested scope can be accredited. This evaluation includes the following stages though not limited to them;
 - Is requested scope a inspection activity?
 - Is requested scope demanded in the market, is the market in need of such an activity?
 - Has the relevant inspection body carried out any activity in relation to the requested scope (excluding special conditions such as, initiating activity by taking approval from relevant ministries with granted accreditation certificate)?
 - Is domestic/overseas accreditation practice available in the requested scope?

Where applicable, it is required that inspection body currently performs its activities in the scopes it requested with initial accreditation application and it shall have already performed inspection activity in the requested scopes.

NBE confirms different branches providing inspection service and confirms which of those branches carry out important activities.

The important activities for the inspection bodies are; policy formulation, process and/or procedure development, process of initial selection of inspectors, contract review, planning inspections and review and approval of inspections.

While the locations where the important activities are performed or not performed are being determined, the matters which affect the result of the examination shall be taken into consideration.

The matters which shall be taken into consideration concerning the locations where the important

activities are performed or not performed may include the following:

- Contract review by not being dependent on the central office,
- Keeping of the records by not being dependent on the central office,
- Maintaining of the system documentation by not being dependent on the central office,
- Calibration of the specific equipments by not being dependent on the central office

4. ASSESSMENT PROCESS

4.1 Initial Accreditation Assessment and Scope Extension Assessment

The inspection body shall notify TUTKAK of available inspection personnel prior to assessment. This notice shall minimum include: inspection fields and inspection types which the current inspection personnel are competent in (competency matrix), years of experience, profession, starting date of employment, and position. This notice and the CVs of inspection body's personnel including their certificate(s) for the authorized areas shall be sent to NBE e-mail.

Inspection body shall prepare a list according to ANNEX I electronically of all inspections it did in all scopes it requested, including the information about the inspector, inspection type, inspected item, customer name/code and inspection location and send the prepared list to NBE e-mail.

Also, when applicable, inspection body shall inform NBE about possible inspection locations in accordance with its current work program.

The case officer and NBE team leader/assessor who is assigned for assessment will plan the assessment and take all the factors into consideration which are required for the assessment of the inspection body in a reliable way based on the examinations which will be carried out under the scope for which the application has been made. Selection of the sample locations and inspection personnel related with the inspection body for witness assessment and the requirement for additional technical assessor will be decided during the planning process.

The content of the initial assessment is dependent on the accreditation scope demanded by the inspection body as well as the complexity of the quality system operated. However the initial assessment will cover the points which are given below;

- Central office,
- All branches where the important activities take place
- The witness assessments of the inspection personnel and inspections for different inspection types and fields.

All types and fields of the inspection will be subject to technical review and office assessment. The assessment team will assess the technical competency of the inspection personnel in each main field or type in accordance with the matters defined below;

- Examination of the records obtained as a result of the inspection activity,
- Interview with the technical manager
- Evaluation of the performance of the personnel while the inspection is carried out.

4.1.1. Accreditation of the Multiple Branch Organizations

Within the application form, the inspection body shall provide information on the scales and numbers of the branches which are performing activities under its management system.

NBE assessment team investigates the points stated below by using objective evidences and various methods;

- Whether all branches are operated under the same managementsystem,
- Whether all branches are included within the internal audit program and Management Review,

The branches where are temporary, mobile or where no important activities are carried out shall also work under the same conditions. These branches may be included within the assessment process, in accordance with the sampling method, as a part of the accreditation procedure in order to provide evidences for the competency of the system as well as the activities performed in there.

During the assessment of the branches where important activities are performed, NBE may request the examination of the records of the certain activities carried out in different locations.

On condition that NBE detects any nonconformity within the central office of the body or within more than one branch of the organization during the mentioned assessment, the corrective action procedure shall be applied in a manner to involve all branches. If the results of the assessment of any branch reveal an important weakness or inconsistency on the management system, NBE may increase the number of the branches to be assessed by reviewing the assessment program.

The branch may be excluded from the scope of the accreditation due to an important finding detected in that branch. If the mentioned nonconformity is caused by the incompetency of the central office control, the accreditation may be reviewed as a whole and may be suspended or withdrawn.

The branches/locations of the organization in which the important activities are performed will be visited at least once during an accreditation cycle (48 months) and in addition to this the central office will be visited every year.

NBE shall be informed of any address and activity change within the branches. Before bringing the

new branches into service, the inspection body shall provide information to NBE that these new branches may be included under the scope of the accreditation. NBE will review the requirement of assessment for the new branch and will include the branch within surveillance or re-accreditation plan.

4.1.2. Witness Assessments

Witness assessments of the inspections are the most important part of the assessment of the inspection bodies by NBE in accordance with the provisions of the standard TS EN ISO/IEC 17020. The performed activities are examined especially in the locations where the result of the inspection is finalized by the professional decree of the personnel of the inspection body.

NBE shall take the risk aspects stated below into consideration while deciding about witnessing of the inspections;

- Inspection types and fields
- Selection, training, authorization and monitoring of the inspection personnel of the inspection body required for different inspection types and field by considering their experiences and qualities,
- Internal audit regulations of the inspection body,
- The branches where inspection personnel provides service in,
- Legal conditions,
- The level of requirement for the implementation of professional decree
- The number of inspection personnel
- The frequency of inspections
- The conditions of competency for the inspection personnel (For example; Personnel certificate (ndt, welder etc.), official qualifications)
- Organizational changes
- Procedural (provisions, standards etc.) changes.

One or more inspection personnel who is carrying out an inspection, where possible, will be witnessed during witness assessments for the inspection types and fields which take part under the scope of the accreditation. If technical managers are authorized to perform inspection, they will be considered as an inspection personnel.

The aspects such as new employment and authorization, qualification and experience; branch(es) if any, legal requirements, level at which professional judgement is required, total number of inspectors of the inspection body, total number of inspections performed by inspector will be taken into consideration in selection of the inspection personnel to be witnessed.

On condition that the whole scope cannot be performed by a single inspection personnel within an inspection field, more than one inspection personnel will be assessed in this field. When certain evidences are collected which arouse suspicion about the competency of the inspection

personnel, the sampling scale of the inspection personnel to be assessed may be increased.

The documents including the procedures, directives, records, reports and planning orders and also the equipments will be examined. The recording system established by the inspection body must at least include the information on which measurement results and/or comments are based together with the reference values relating to measurement in order to avoid loss of observations performed during inspection and/or collected data and relevant information.

NBE assessors shall assure that they will only act as an observer of the **witness** assessment process carried out within the field and shall not have an effect on the inspections executed.

The team shall at least verify the followings and record the observations and assessments in the “FR-7-01-56 Recording Form for Objective Evidence of Witness Assessment for Inspection Bodies” with the required details:

- Competency of the inspection personnel for the inspections executed,
- Compliance of the competency of the inspection personnel to the competency criteria;
- Whether the inspection personnel have been provided all required documented procedures, methods and equipments,
- Up-to-dateness of the procedures;
- Whether the inspection personnel implements the procedures in a proper manner (for example, there are no personal practices that do not comply with the inspection body's procedure)
- Whether the records of all observations are kept as prescribed within the procedure during the inspection,
- Whether the records clearly explain what was inspected when and by using which method and procedure,
- Where applicable, whether all findings entailing immediate and compulsory actions are reported to the customer during inspection as required,
- Whether the reports are in compliance with the provisions of inspection body and the provisions of the standard TS EN ISO/IEC 17020, ILAC P15, other relevant EA and ILAC documents and if any, the provisions of related laws.
- Conformity of the systems and equipments for utilization.
- Appropriateness of conditions of agreement made with the customer for the inspection service provided.

For all scopes it operates, where applicable inspection body, within its documentation, shall be capable of determining the minimum duration for performing an inspection activity in a safe manner for each inspection activity and the number of maximum inspections that could be performed in one day by one inspector for relevant scopes and submit them to NBE when it is demanded. Inspections durations shall comply with standards and/or provisions, if any. The maximum duration calculation that an inspector can work in 1 day shall also comply with 4857 Labor Law.

In cases of witnessing inspection activity, witnessing of an inspector who has not been witnessed before is preferred. It is avoided that witnessed assessments are performed at the same customer (witnessed before) of the inspection body. When it comes to situations like that, inspection body informs NBE about it before planning the assessment. When possible, the agreement executed between the inspection body and the customer should be submitted to NBE assessment team for the witnessed inspection activity.

Planned witnessing assessments are performed during the first accreditation assessments. Also, planned witnessing assessments are regularly performed during surveillance, re-accreditation and scope extension assessments of accredited inspection bodies.

NBE assessment team's role is witnessing the inspection activity for evaluating inspector's performance and competency during planned witnessing assessments. NBE assessment team will not mention any comment or opinion about the company which is going to be inspected.

When it is applicable, NBE assessment team will share their opinions with inspection body's personnel after the closing meeting of witnessed assessment. If it is not applicable, findings (non-conformities, observation etc.) about witnessed assessment are explained during closing meeting.

4.1.3. Scope Extension

Whenever possible, attention is paid to combine assessments related to the application for scope extension with surveillance or re-accreditation assessments.

Inspection body shall submit its request for combining scope extension assessment with surveillance assessment at least 2 months earlier than surveillance assessment date.

For the scopes requested in the scope extension, relevant documents of the Requested Documents for Application shall be sent to NBE e-mail before the application date.

If related documents are not sent to NBE e-mail before the application date, scope extension applications will not be taken into consideration until the related documents are sent to NBE e-mail.

Where applicable, it is required that inspection body currently performs its activities in the scopes it requested with scope extension application and it shall have already performed inspection activity in the requested scopes.

Pursuant to the receipt of the scope extension application, NBE will decide whether central office assessment and/or witness assessment will be needed or not. The matters stated below will be taken into consideration while deciding on this issue;

- (i) Current accreditation scope,
- (ii) Competencies of the inspection personnel within the scope;
- (iii) Size of the scope,
- (iv) The branches for which the extension of scope has been requested,

If possible, the additional studies will be made in the following surveillance assessment or reaccreditation assessment. If necessary, follow-up assessment will be organized.

4.2. Accreditation Cycle

An accreditation cycle program is developed for the inspection bodies for which accreditation decision is granted, as described in the 'P701 Procedure for Accreditation of Conformity Assessment Bodies. The accreditation cycle program is developed based on the risk factors listed under the headings surveillance and re-accreditation assessments in this guidance.

4.2.1. Surveillance Assessment

Surveillance assessments will be planned in a manner to include the whole scope within an accreditation cycle (48 months) and to be routinely 2 surveillance assessments during the accreditation cycle. The witness assessment will normally be conducted during each surveillance assessment. Any change to be occurred in the management system and organization will be reviewed. Important changes may require additional assessment periods.

Inspection body shall prepare a list electronically of all domestic inspections it did in all scopes it requested, including the information about the inspector, inspection type, inspected item, customer name/code and inspection location and send the prepared list to "Customer List" to NBE e-mail by the end of December each year.

This list is prepared separately for overseas activities and sent to NBE e-mail by December of each year and 3 months before routine surveillance assessments.

Conformity Assessment Body, by using the prepared lists above, shall establish an up-to-date Personnel Competence Matrix which includes information about inspectors' authorized inspection fields and inspection types (scopes), years of experience, profession, date of employment and position and send this list to NBE e-mail by the latest 45 days before the planned date of the assessment. This notice and the CVs of inspection body's personnel including their certificate(s) for the authorized areas shall be sent to e-mail. Also, when applicable, possible inspection locations in relation to current work programme shall be submitted to NBE.

Inspection Body is responsible for sending the above-mentioned lists to NBE e-mail in the specified periods. NBE, if deems necessary, may request those lists anytime from the inspection body. When applicable, the assessment team may verify an inspection activity performed by the organization on site with approval of the team leader and technical officer.

In cases where inspection body does not provide that above-mentioned information in the specified periods, sanctions can be performed by NBE including suspension, not extending the scope of accreditation, not re-accrediting or withdrawal of accreditation.

Sample lists for above mentioned lists are available in annexes of this Guideline.

In the determination of accreditation cycle program and in the selection of inspection activities and inspection personnel to be witnessed during witness assessments, the data generated after the accreditation assessment or the previous accreditation cycle, the list of personnel sent by the inspection body to NBE e-mail, and inspection list will be taken into account. The risk factors to be considered shall minimum include:

- Type and number of locations where important activities are performed,
- Type of scopes, and level at which a professional judgement is required,
- Number of personnel and changes in personnel in the respective scope,
- Number of inspections performed by the inspection personnel and the results of such inspections,
- Frequency of inspections/certifications and number of generated reports/certificates in the respective scope,
- Personnel witnessed during the previous assessment, non-conformities identified, and the areas to be reviewed as recommended by the observation and/or assessment team,
- Changes in the locations,
- Changes in the organization,
- Subcontracting and changes in the information of subcontractors,
- Revised standards, internal methods etc. related to CAB's scopes.
- Amendments to legislation and legal requirements,
- Corrective/Preventive actions taken by the CAB for the non-conforming works,
- Feedbacks or complaints submitted by the related parties

4.2.1. Re-accreditation Assessment

Re-accreditation assessments will include the comprehensive re-assessment of the inspection activities as well as the quality system of the inspection body and office assessment will have the same content and form as in the initial accreditation. The criteria which are used in surveillance assessment will also be taken into consideration in selection of the inspection personnel and in determination of the inspection types and fields.

Scope (extent) of re-accreditation assessment is determined as indicated in 'PR-7-01 Procedure on Accreditation of Conformity Assessment Bodies'.

5. OTHER REQUIREMENTS

5.1. Fields with no Activity

As well as evaluating independence and impartiality of inspection body, determination of its competency is fundamental for accreditation. In this regard, one cannot be sure that inspection body's competency is sustainable, because no records can be submitted as evidence of competency in the main fields for which no activities are performed by inspection body for a particular period.

In accordance with this, withdrawal of accredited scopes that inspection body hasn't done any activity and couldn't organize witness assessments in its main activity fields (dummy **witness** assessments are not acceptable) during an accreditation cycle is suggested by assessment team at the end of the relevant surveillance and re-accreditation assessments. Team leader reports the fields with no activities of inspection body at his/her assessment report and prepares his/her scope proposal without including these scopes.

5.2. Requirements for Type A Inspection Bodies

According to ISO/IEC 17020, the third-party organizations providing inspection services are referred to as Type A. As they are a third-party organization, a type A inspection body;

- shall not engage in any activities that may conflict with their independence of judgment and integrity in relation to their inspection activities. For example, thermal treatment constitutes an obstruction to be type A for the non-destructive inspection bodies.
- The purpose and subject in Trade Registry Gazette must not contain any activity that may cause a conflict with their independence of judgment and integrity in relation to activities performed by the type A inspection body. (e.g., design, production, supply, installation, purchase, possession, use, maintenance of items inspected by it, or providing consultancy for the items inspected by it)
- Shall not provide consultancy for the inspection activities performed, or special training to a legal entity, party or customer.

An inspection body having or associated with a Health and Safety Corporation (HSC) will be considered a type A inspection body if it separates its inspection personnel and resources from the administrative structure, personnel and resources of HSC, separates the serviced addresses and parties, does not provide services to the same customer, and can demonstrate that it has analyzed and eliminated the indicated risks.

5.3. Personnel Requirements

The inspection body must employ sufficient number of employees with required competence, including delivery of professional judgement when required, in order to ensure sustainability and safety of activities and to perform inspection activities in terms of type, diversity and volume. In this direction, the inspection areas subject to this clause are identified as follows

based on the level at which use of professional judgement is required during the inspection and the past experience of inspection.

- a) Periodic inspections under the Regulation on Requirements for Health and Safety in Use of Operating Equipment (lifting and conveying machines, pressure vessels, boilers, fire protection systems, electrical installation, etc.)
- b) Clean rooms and ventilation systems of related controlled environment
- c) Inspection for compliance of chimneys

An inspection body that operates in the inspection areas listed as “a) - c)” above

- is required to employ a full-time technical manager (it may not always be called a technical manager) and an inspector other than the technical manager. The person with required competency may be appointed as technical manager to multiple areas.

- The full-time technical manager and inspector employed by the inspection body shall not be employed by another inspection body that operates in the same scope. The inspection body semi-annually obtains the Social Security Institution service scheme with report for the full-time technical manager and inspector from state department in accordance with the Law on Protection of Personal Data, and stores the records in the electronic environment. The records that have been received maximum 1 week before the date of assessment must be submitted to the assessment team during NBE assessment.
- The inspection body is obliged to send the personnel competency matrix, including the details of the inspection personnel that leaves job and is recruited and the information referred to in this Guideline, to NBE e-mail no later than 15 days, and to report it to the Technical Officer by e-mail. The CVs of newly employed personnel of inspection body including their certificates for the authorized areas shall be sent to NBE e-mail together with competency matrix.
- The date of transition is 1 year for the inspection bodies that have been assessed for initial accreditation but have not been accredited yet and the inspection bodies that have already been accredited for these areas. The respective scopes of inspection bodies that fail to meet the requirements in this clause as of such date shall be suspended.

5.4. Outsourcing and Subcontracting

An inspection body may declare that none of its accredited inspection activities or activities to be accredited are subcontracted, and be exempted from development of procedures under clause “6.3 Subcontracting” of ISO/IEC 17020:2012. In this case, the inspection body shall prepare a waiver notice to indicate that it shall not use any subcontractors unless it submits the procedures on how to evaluate the compliance of selected subcontractor to the accreditation agency.

For the outsourced services subject to a conformity assessment, when applicable, the inspection body should initially choose accredited conformity assessment bodies under the

ILAC/IAF arrangement or regional arrangements recognized by ILAC/IAF in accordance with applicable accreditation standard. Otherwise, the inspection body shall maintain and submit to NBE upon request the records that outsourced services are assessed according to applicable accreditation standard.

NOTE 1: *e.g. When personnel certification is required for the personnel to perform inspection activities (e.g., non-destructive test certificate, auditor certificate, etc.) it is preferable that required certificate is issued by an accredited certification body according to ISO/IEC 17024. If the inspection method to be accredited requires in-house training, exam and personnel certification (non-destructive testing ASNT SNTC 1a), the training and exam records shall maintained by the inspection body. When applicable, it is shall be preferable as a prerequisite*

that personnel that is subject to internal certification has the required certificate issued by an accredited certification body according to ISO/IEC 17024.

NOTE 2: *e.g. If testing activity is carried out as part of inspection, it is preferable that testing is conducted by an accredited laboratory according to ISO/IEC 17025. Otherwise, the inspection body shall verify and assess the competence of laboratory used in accordance with the requirements of clauses 6 and 7 of ISO/IEC 17025:2017.*

ANNEX I

SAMPLE CUSTOMER/INSPECTION LIST TO BE FILLED IN BY CAB FOR THE SCOPES IN THE VOLUNTARY FIELD

Inspection Field	Inspected Item	Inspection Type	Standard/Regulation used for Inspection	Inspection Date	Customer (where inspection is done)	CITY	County	Inspector
LIFTING EQUIPMENTS	CRANE	PERIODIC INSPECTION	EN XXX	XX/X/20XX	XYZ INC.	SKOPJE	N. MACEDONIA	INSPECTOR X