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Conformity assessment — Guidelines for validation and verification programmes

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Foreword

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The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular, the different approval criteria needed for the different types of document should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see www.iso.org/directives or www.iec.ch/members_experts/refdocs).

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For an explanation of the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) see www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html. In the IEC, see www.iec.ch/understanding-standards.

This document was prepared by the ISO Committee on Conformity Assessment (CASCO).

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at www.iso.org/members.html and www.iec.ch/national-committees.

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Introduction

This document is aligned with ISO/IEC 17029 which provides principles and requirements for bodies providing validation/verification services. ISO/IEC 17029 is a generic standard that can apply to validation/verification bodies in any economic sector or industry. It is distinct from other standards for conformity assessment bodies in that it requires the object of conformity to be a claim, and for this to be validated and/or verified in accordance with a validation or verification programme. Validation/verification bodies operating in accordance with ISO/IEC 17029 can provide services as first-, second- or third-party activities.

This document is also aligned with sector-specific applications of ISO/IEC 17029, such as ISO 14065 which references the requirements of ISO/IEC 17029 and includes specific requirements related to bodies that validate or verify environmental information.

To validate or verify a claim, validation/verification bodies must often review large amounts of data and information, including aspects such as the suitability of the boundaries of the claim; the way data has been defined, collected and recorded; how quantification and calculation methods that support the claim have been undertaken; and provision of a professional judgement on matters that are material or significant to the claim.

The resulting validation or verification statement will normally be a one-off attestation based on the information available at that point in time. Validation or verification statements normally do not have a period of validity associated with them. Each subsequent validation/verification is a new separate conformity assessment and is not considered to be a surveillance activity that supports an original or previous validation/verification statement.

The result of validation or verification activities will frequently be a validation or verification statement. These statements normally provide an opinion from the validation or verification body on the plausibility of a claim that is made about the future based on projected data (validation), or the truthfulness of the claim based on historical data (verification). The results from a validation and verification programme can sometimes be combined to support a claim (e.g. a mixed engagement or in the management of similar or related programmes). Validation/verification bodies can also be asked to undertake a validation/verification process and issue a report of their findings, but without any formal statement or opinion on the plausibility or truthfulness of the claim being made.

NOTE This is often referred to undertaking validation or verification activities on the basis of Agreed Upon Procedures (AUP).

Within ISO/IEC 17029, there is a requirement for validation/verification bodies to operate within the context of at least one validation or verification programme. Within ISO/IEC 17029 requirements, there are many references to validation/verification programmes, and it is expected that validation/verification programmes give direction to the validation/verification body. The importance of appropriate validation/verification programmes when undertaking validation/verification activities in accordance with ISO/IEC 17029 is critical to the correct operation of this type of conformity assessment.

ISO/IEC 17029:2019, Annex A also provides a comprehensive informative list of elements to be considered in the development and operation of validation/verification programmes. The content of ISO/IEC 17029:2019, Annex A has been included and amplified in this document.

To assist in the development, operation and recognition of validation/verification programmes suitable for use with ISO/IEC 17029, this document covers the following:

- a) an overview of validation/verification programmes in the context of ISO/IEC 17029;
- b) development of validation/verification programmes;
- c) recognition of validation/verification programmes.

Conformity assessment — Guidelines for validation and verification programmes

1 Scope

This document provides guidance to validation/verification programme owners and to validation/verification bodies on the development, content and operation of validation/verification programmes.

When implemented by validation/verification bodies, this document is intended to be used in conjunction with ISO/IEC 17029 and sector-specific applications of ISO/IEC 17029.

2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes requirements of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO/IEC 17000, *Conformity assessment — Vocabulary and general principles*

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO/IEC 17000 and the following apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminology databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

— ISO Online browsing platform: available at <https://www.iso.org/obp>

— IEC Electropedia: available at <https://www.electropedia.org/>

<https://standards.iteh.ai/catalog/standards/iso/127f8185-736c-49aa-9a3b-478dada1fa5c/iso-iec-dts-17035>

3.1

claim

information declared by the client

Note 1 to entry: The claim is the object of conformity assessment by *validation* (3.2)/*verification* (3.3).

Note 2 to entry: The claim can represent a situation at a point in time or could cover a period of time.

Note 3 to entry: The claim should be clearly identifiable and capable of consistent evaluation or measurement against specified requirements by a *validation body* (3.4)/*verification body* (3.5).

Note 4 to entry: The claim can be provided in the form of a report, a statement, a declaration, a project plan, or consolidated data.

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC 17029:2019, 3.1]

3.2

validation

confirmation of a *claim* (3.1), through the provision of objective evidence, that the requirements for a specific intended future use or application have been fulfilled

Note 1 to entry: Objective evidence can come from real or simulated sources.

Note 2 to entry: Validation is considered to be a process to evaluate the reasonableness of the assumptions, limitations, and methods that support a claim about the outcome of future activities.

Note 3 to entry: Validation is applied to claims regarding an intended future use based on projected information (confirmation of plausibility).

Note 4 to entry: In this document, the expression “validation/verification” means either validation or *verification* (3.3), or both.

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC 17029:2019, 3.2, modified – The original Note 4 to entry has been deleted and a new Note 4 to entry has been added.]

3.3

verification

confirmation of a *claim* (3.1), through the provision of objective evidence, that specified requirements have been fulfilled

Note 1 to entry: Verification is considered to be a process for evaluating a claim based on historical data and information to determine whether the claim is materially correct and conforms with specified requirements.

Note 2 to entry: Verification is applied to claims regarding events that have already occurred or results that have already been obtained (confirmation of truthfulness).

Note 3 to entry: In this document, the expression “validation/verification” means either *validation* (3.2) or verification, or both.

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC 17029:2019, 3.3, modified – The original Note 3 to entry has been deleted and a new Note 3 to entry has been added.]

3.4

validation body

body that performs *validation* (3.2)

Note 1 to entry: A validation body can be an organization, or part of an organization.

Note 2 to entry: In this document, the expression “validation/verification body” means either validation body or *verification body* (3.5), or both.

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC 17029:2019, 3.4, modified – Note 2 to entry has been added.]

3.5

verification body

body that performs *verification* (3.3)

Note 1 to entry: A verification body can be an organization, or part of an organization.

Note 2 to entry: In this document, the expression “validation/verification body” means either *validation body* (3.4) or verification body, or both.

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC 17029:2019, 3.5, modified – Note 2 to entry has been added.]

3.6

validation statement

declaration by the *validation body* (3.4) of the outcome of the *validation* (3.2) process

Note 1 to entry: Validation statements can be referred to using specific programme terminology, such as “decisions”, “opinions” or “reports”.

Note 2 to entry: The validation statement reflects only the situation at the point in time it is issued.

Note 3 to entry: The validation statement can be confirming or not confirming the *claim* (3.1), with or without comments, according to the programme requirements.

Note 4 to entry: In this document, the expression “validation/verification statement” means either validation statement or *verification statement* (3.7), or both.

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC 17029:2019, 3.6, modified – Note 4 to entry has been added.]

3.7

verification statement

declaration by the *verification body* (3.5) of the outcome of the *verification* (3.3) process

Note 1 to entry: Verification statements can be referred to using specific programme terminology, such as “decisions”, “opinions” or “reports”.

Note 2 to entry: The verification statement reflects only the situation at the point in time it is issued.

Note 3 to entry: The verification statement can be confirming or not confirming the *claim* (3.1), with or without comments, according to the programme requirements.

Note 4 to entry: In this document, the expression “validation/verification statement” means either *validation statement* (3.6) or verification statement, or both.

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC 17029:2019, 3.7, modified – Note 4 to entry has been added.]

3.8

validation programme

rules, procedures and management for carrying out *validation* (3.2) activities in a specific sector

Note 1 to entry: Validation programmes can be operated at international, regional, national, sub-national or sector-specific level.

Note 2 to entry: A programme can also be called a “scheme”.

Note 3 to entry: A set of standards able to cover all the requirements of ISO/IEC 17029 can serve as a programme.

Note 4 to entry: In this document, the expression “validation/verification programme” means either validation programme or *verification programme* (3.9), or both.

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC 17029:2019, 3.8, modified – Note 4 to entry has been added.]

3.9

verification programme

rules, procedures and management for carrying out *verification* (3.3) activities in a specific sector

Note 1 to entry: Verification programmes can be operated at international, regional, national, sub-national or sector-specific level.

Note 2 to entry: A programme can also be called a “scheme”.

Note 3 to entry: A set of standards able to cover all the requirements of ISO/IEC 17029 can serve as a programme.

Note 4 to entry: In this document, the expression “validation/verification programme” means either *validation programme* (3.8) or verification programme, or both.

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC 17029:2019, 3.9, modified – Note 4 to entry has been added.]

3.10

programme owner

person or organization responsible for developing and maintaining a specific *validation programme* (3.8) or *verification programme* (3.9)

Note 1 to entry: The programme owner can be the *validation body* (3.4)/*verification body* (3.5) itself, a governmental authority, a trade association, a group of validation bodies/verification bodies, an external programme owner or others.

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC 17029:2019, 3.10]

3.11

normative document

document that provides rules, guidelines or characteristics for activities or their results

Note 1 to entry: The term “normative document” is a generic term that covers such documents as standards, technical specifications, codes of practice and regulations.

Note 2 to entry: A “document” is to be understood as any medium with information recorded on or in it.

Note 3 to entry: The terms for different kinds of normative documents are defined considering the document and its content as a single entity.

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC Guide 2:2004, 3.1]

4 Validation/Verification programmes

4.1 General

4.1.1 In accordance with ISO/IEC 17029, validation/verification are always undertaken within the context of a validation/verification programme. The operated validation/verification programme cannot exclude any of the requirements specified by ISO/IEC 17029.

4.1.2 Programmes can be legal frameworks, a set of international, regional or national standards, global initiatives and sector applications, as well as individual agreements with clients of the validation/verification body.

4.1.3 Conformity assessment schemes in general comprise the full set of rules and procedures:

- describing the object of conformity assessment (claim),
- identifying the specified requirements, and
- providing the methodology for performing conformity assessment (validation/verification).

NOTE The specified requirements to be identified can apply to the object (i.e. relate to describing the claim) and can apply to performing the conformity assessment (i.e. relate to the methodology of validation/verification) or the conformity assessment body (i.e. relate to the methodology of validation/verification).

4.1.4 ISO/IEC 17029:2019, 3.11 defines the scope of validation/verification as the identification of the claim as the object of conformity assessment and the applicable specified requirements.

4.1.5 ISO/IEC 17029:2019, Clause 8 lists the following elements as content of programmes:

- a) scope of validation/verification;
- b) specific competence criteria for the validation/verification team and body;
- c) process for validation/verification;
- d) evidence gathering activities of validation/verification ;
- e) reporting of validation/verification.

NOTE ISO/IEC 17029:2019, Annex A also provides additional elements.

4.1.6 The content of the programme (see [4.2](#)) is specified by the programme owner (see [4.3](#)).

4.1.7 The result or deliverable of a full validation/verification process is a validation/verification statement (see ISO/IEC 17029:2019, 9.7). A validation/verification programme can specify other deliverables which do not require the full completion of the validation/verification process, such as a validation/verification plan, an evidence report or a findings report.

4.1.8 The deliverables associated with validation/verification programmes can be used as inputs to other conformity assessment activities.