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Conformity assessment — General requirements for third-party marks of conformity

Évaluation de la conformité — Exigences générales pour les marques de conformité par tierce partie

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Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) and IEC (the International Electrotechnical Commission) form the specialized system for worldwide standardization. National bodies that are members of ISO or IEC participate in the development of International Standards through technical committees established by the respective organization to deal with particular fields of technical activity. ISO and IEC technical committees collaborate in fields of mutual interest. Other international organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO and IEC, also take part in the work. In the field of conformity assessment, the ISO Committee on conformity assessment (CASCO) is responsible for the development of International Standards and Guides.

International Standards are drafted in accordance with the rules given in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2.

Draft International Standards are circulated to the national bodies for voting. Publication as an International Standard requires approval by at least 75 % of the national bodies casting a vote.

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights.

ISO/IEC 17030 was prepared by the ISO Committee on conformity assessment (CASCO).

This second edition cancels and replaces the first edition (ISO/IEC 17030:2003), which has been technically revised.

The main changes compared to the previous edition are as follows:

- [Annex A](#) (informative) has been included as guidance for the use of third-party marks of conformity issued based on a defined object of conformity through conformity assessment standards;
- clarification of the requirement of surveillance;
- clarification of logo/symbol/mark;
- restructuring;
- alignment of language with the CASCO toolbox.

ISO/IEC Guide 23:1982 and ISO Guide 27:1983 have been taken into account during the revision of this standard and these guides have been withdrawn following the publication of this standard.

The content related to examples of possible misuse of third-party marks of conformity have been considered in a brochure available on iso.org.

It was circulated for voting to the national bodies of both ISO and IEC, and was approved by both organizations.

Introduction

The prime purpose of this document is to enable a uniform approach to the use of third-party marks of conformity, to fill relevant gaps in existing ISO, IEC, ISO/IEC Standards and Guides, to address potential problems arising from different uses of third-party marks of conformity, to provide a clear and rational basis for their use, and to set out general requirements. This document concentrates on third-party marks of conformity but may also be used as guidance for other applications of marks of conformity.

Marks of conformity have different uses and can take different forms in various media such as employing QR codes, public ledger technology (e.g. blockchain) or other electronic means. They are found on products, certificates and publications denoting the conformity to specified requirements of a product, management system, service, process, person or an organization. Marks of conformity used on product convey to the user that the product fulfils the requirements for characteristics such as its safety, quality, performance, reliability or impact on the environment. Most important for all marks of conformity is to gain the confidence of the market, including consumers, in products and other objects of conformity assessment to which these marks have been applied. The use of this document should lead to improved market confidence, international recognition and consumer acceptance of third-party marks of conformity.

In order to achieve this, the following questions should be considered and addressed:

- What is the object of conformity assessment?
- Which conformity assessment body is providing the third-party mark of conformity?
- Who requires the third-party conformity assessment activity?
- Why is this third-party mark of conformity required?
- How is the information of conformity best transmitted to the interested parties, e.g. customers, users, government authorities?

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Conformity assessment — General requirements for third-party marks of conformity

1 Scope

This document provides general requirements for third-party marks of conformity, including their issue and use.

This document covers third-party marks of conformity issued and used in different forms and various media including digital representation employing electronically stored and displayed marks, machine readable code, blockchain (distributed ledger) or other electronic means.

NOTE 1 This document can also be used as guidance in using marks of conformity in other than third-party conformity assessment activity.

NOTE 2 Third-party marks of conformity according to this document include symbols of recognition such as accreditation symbols. For consistency of terminology in this document they are referred to as accreditation marks.

NOTE 3 Third-party marks of conformity according to this document can include logos (e.g. the sign of a conformity assessment body or trademarks), symbols (e.g. the representation of recognition in an accreditation agreement or the depiction of the applicable programme) or a combination thereof.

NOTE 4 Third-party marks of conformity as a graphic representation of demonstrated conformity according to this document can be a combination of multiple marks (e.g. indications of compliance with several sets of specifications, codes for individually fulfilled specifications).

NOTE 5 This document does not apply to markings, which provide indication of a designation, a code, or a classification only. Furthermore, it does not apply to graphic representations (e.g. of conformity assessment systems or schemes/programmes), logos (e.g. association of accreditation bodies and association of conformity assessment bodies).

NOTE 6 third party mark of conformity are based on a conformity assessment scheme that include the function of surveillance

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 terminological databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

- ISO Online browsing platform: available at <https://www.iso.org/obp>
- IEC Electropedia: available at <http://www.electropedia.org/>

**3.1
third-party mark of conformity**

protected mark issued by a body performing third-party conformity assessment, indicating that an object of conformity assessment fulfils the applicable specified requirements

Note 1 to entry: A protected mark is a mark legally protected against unauthorized use.

Note 2 to entry: Specified requirements can be stated in normative documents such as regulations, standards and technical specifications. Specified requirements can be detailed or general.

**3.2
owner of a third-party mark of conformity**

person or organization that has legal rights to a third-party mark of conformity

**3.3
issuer of a third-party mark of conformity**

body that grants the right to use a third-party mark of conformity

Note 1 to entry: The issuer may not be the owner of the third-party mark of conformity, and may be authorized to sub-licence other bodies.

4 General requirements

4.1 The owner of a third-party mark of conformity shall be responsible for protecting the mark legally against unauthorized use.

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4.2 The owner and/or issuer of the third-party mark of conformity shall:

- a) have rules governing the use of the third-party mark of conformity, including communicating on these rules;
- b) take measures to minimize misunderstandings and lack of clarity regarding the third-party mark of conformity that could lead to a reduction in its effectiveness;
- c) have rules to ensure that the third-party mark of conformity and any accompanying information are not misleading and take action against their use in a misleading way;
- d) have measures to protect and monitor the use of the third-party mark of conformity;
- e) take actions to resolve misuse of the third-party mark of conformity, including withdrawal of the mark or appropriate legal action; and
- f) take action on and keep a record of all complaints relating to the use of the third-party mark of conformity.

4.3 When the owner or issuer of the third-party mark of conformity grants a licence for the use of that mark by others, a legally enforceable agreement shall be made according to the rules referred to in 4.2 a).

5 Third-party marks of conformity and their use

5.1 A third-party mark of conformity shall be designed and developed to minimize the risk, as appropriate, of counterfeiting or other forms of misuse.

NOTE Appropriate design and development can include employing QR codes, public ledger technology (e.g. blockchain), Information Communication Technology (ICT) or other electronic means.

5.2 Third-party marks of conformity, including accompanying information or publicly available information, shall identify the issuer and the aspects covered by the mark (e.g. quality, safety, environmental, performance, ethics) in a way that avoids any potential misunderstanding.

5.3 A third-party mark of conformity may be accompanied by additional information to make the meaning of the mark more clearly understood. Such information shall not be misleading for the relevant interested parties.

5.4 A third-party mark of conformity shall be traceable to the specified requirements to which the object of conformity assessment conforms.

5.5 A third-party mark of conformity shall be used only where it relates to all the specified requirements.

5.6 Only a third-party mark of conformity issued in accordance with a product conformity assessment scheme may be displayed on the product or product packaging. All other third-party marks of conformity, such as those relating to management systems and services, shall not be displayed on a product, product packaging, or in a way that may be interpreted as denoting product conformity.

5.7 When a third-party mark of conformity relates to a tangible product, the mark shall be directly applied to each product, except where the physical size of the product does not permit this or when the application is not appropriate for the type of product, in which case it may be applied on the package or other accompanying information. If a third-party mark of conformity only relates to certain parts of a product, the rules governing its use shall include requirements to minimize any misunderstanding that the mark applies to the entire product.

5.8 A reference to third-party marks of conformity may also be used on other media such as letter heads, business cards, company vehicles, promotional materials, Internet websites, social media.

NOTE [Annex A](#) provides guidance for the use of third-party marks of conformity issued for an object of conformity assessment.

6 Issuing third-party marks of conformity

6.1 Issuing third-party marks of conformity shall be based on a conformity assessment scheme that contains at least the elements of the functional approach according to ISO/IEC 17000 and the following elements:

- surveillance, systematic iteration of conformity assessment activities as a basis for maintaining the validity of the statement of conformity in order to assure continued confidence in the third-party mark of conformity unless covered by [6.2](#).

6.2 In conformity assessment schemes for products for which the issuer evaluates each product (100% sampling) produced prior to the application of the third-party mark of conformity, licensing and surveillance are not required.

6.3 The third-party mark of conformity shall only be applied under the rules laid down in a publicly available conformity assessment scheme.

6.4 An appropriate maximum period of time for applying a third-party mark of conformity after the specified standard or other normative document is revised or becomes obsolete shall be established by the rules of the conformity assessment scheme.