



## Standard Terminology Relating to Conformity Assessment<sup>1</sup>

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### 1. Scope

1.1 This standard defines terms related to conformity assessment.<sup>2</sup> It includes terms used in those standards under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee E-36. When definitions are those used by other ASTM committees, the committee designation is given in parentheses after the definition. When definitions are based on those used by other organizations, the symbol or abbreviation of the name of the organization is given. In either case, a postscript letter is used to indicate the degree of correspondence between the definition given herein and that in the citation. Postscript “A” indicates the definition is identical to the definition cited by the organization indicated. Postscript “B” indicates the given definition is a modification of that cited, though the essential meaning differs little. Postscript “C” indicates the given definition differs substantially from the one cited.

1.2 Since conformity assessment is being carried out by many accrediting bodies in several fields of testing and numerous product areas, usage of descriptive terms varies considerably. There is no attempt to include all conformity assessment terms in this standard, but to concentrate on those most commonly encountered.

### 2. Referenced Documents

#### 2.1 ASTM Standards:

- E 10 Test Method for Brinell Hardness of Metallic Materials<sup>3</sup>
- E 18 Test Methods for Rockwell Hardness and Rockwell Superficial Hardness of Metallic Materials<sup>3</sup>
- E 92 Test Method for Vickers Hardness of Metallic Materials<sup>3</sup>
- E 384 Test Method for Microhardness of Materials<sup>3</sup>
- E 699 Practice for Criteria for Evaluation of Agencies Involved in Testing, Quality Assurance, and Evaluating

Building Components in Accordance with Test Methods Promulgated by ASTM Committee E-16<sup>4</sup>

E 1267 Guide for ASTM Standard Specification Quality Statements<sup>5</sup>

2.2 ANSI Standard:

A3-1987 Quality Systems Terminology<sup>6</sup>

2.3 ISO Standard:

ISO/Guide 2 General Terms and Their Definitions Concerning Standardization, Certification and Testing Laboratory Accreditation<sup>7</sup>

2.4 Other Document:

Laboratory Accreditation—Principles and Practice, Collected Reports 1979-1983 (ILAC Task Force C Reports)<sup>8</sup>

### 3. Terminology : Terms and Their Definitions

**accreditation**—procedure by which an authoritative body gives formal recognition that a body or person is competent to carry out specific tasks, (ISO Guide 2).

**accreditation criteria**, *for laboratory accreditation*, *n*—set of requirements used by an accrediting body which a testing laboratory must meet to be accredited, (ISO Guide 2, A).

**accredited laboratory**—testing laboratory to which accreditation has been granted, (ISO Guide 2, A).

**accredited laboratory test report**—test report that includes a statement by the testing laboratory that it is accredited for the test reported and that the test has been performed in accordance with the conditions prescribed by the accrediting body, (ISO Guide 2, A).

**accrediting body**—governmental or non-governmental body that conducts and administers a laboratory accreditation system and grants accreditation, (ISO Guide 2, A).

**assessment**, *of a laboratory*—the activity of evaluating a laboratory’s compliance with accreditation criteria.

<sup>1</sup> This terminology is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee E-36 on Criteria for the Evaluation of Testing and Inspection Agencies and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee E36.50 on Support Operations.

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<sup>2</sup> There were numerous other sources consulted, but not specifically used, to formulate definitions for the above terms.

<sup>3</sup> *Annual Book of ASTM Standards*, Vol 03.01.

<sup>4</sup> *Annual Book of ASTM Standards*, Vol 04.07.

<sup>5</sup> *Annual Book of ASTM Standards*, Vol 14.02.

<sup>6</sup> Available from American National Standards Institute, 1430 Broadway, NY, NY 10018.

<sup>7</sup> Available from ISO, 1 rue de Varembe, Case Postale 56, Crt 1221. Geneve 20, Switzerland.

<sup>8</sup> Available from American Association for Laboratory Accreditation, 656 Quince Orchard Rd.-704, Gaithersburg, MD 20878.

**assessor, of a laboratory**—an individual who carries out some or all functions related to laboratory assessment, (ISO Guide 2, B).

**assurance of conformity**—procedure resulting in a statement giving confidence that a product, process or service fulfills specified requirements, (ISO Guide 2).

DISCUSSION—For a product, the statement may be in the form of a document, a label or other equivalent means. It may also be printed in or applied on a communication, a catalog, an invoice, a user instructions manual, etc. relating to the product.

**authority**—body that has legal powers and rights, (EN 45020).

**bilateral agreement**—recognition arrangement that covers acceptance of each other's results by two parties, (ISO Guide 2).

**calibration**—the set of operations that establishes, under specified conditions, the relationship between values indicated by a measuring instrument or measuring system, or values represented by a material, and the corresponding known values of measurement, (ISO Guide 25).

**calibration laboratory**—laboratory that performs calibration, (ISO Guide 25).

**calibration method**—defined technical procedure for performing a calibration, (ISO Guide 25).

**certificate of competence**—document issued under the rules of a certification system indicating that adequate confidence is provided that the named person is competent in performing specific services, (EN 45020).

**certificate of conformity**—document issued under the rules of a certification system, indicating that adequate confidence is provided that a duty identified product, process or service is in conformity with a specific standard or other normative document, (ISO Guide 2).

**certification body**—body that conducts certification of conformity, (ISO Guide 2).

DISCUSSION—A certification body may operate its own testing and inspection activities or oversee these activities carried out on its behalf by other bodies, (ISO Guide 2).

**certification scheme**—certification system as related to specified products, processes or services to which the same particular standards and rules, and the same procedure, apply, (ISO Guide 2).

**certification system**—system that has its own rules of procedure and management for carrying out certification of conformity, (ISO Guide 2).

**conformity**—fulfillment by a product, process or service of specified requirements, (ISO Guide 2).

**conformity surveillance**—evaluation for conformity to determine the continuing conformity with specified requirements, (ISO Guide 2).

**conformity testing**—evaluation for conformity by means of testing, (EN 45020).

**consensus**—general agreement, characterized by the absence of substantial issues by any important part of the concerned interests and by a process that involves seeking to take into account the views of all parties concerned and to reconcile

any conflicting arguments, (ISO Guide 2).

**deficiency**—departure from, or noncompliance with, specified accreditation criteria.

**entity**—that which can be individually described and considered.

DISCUSSION—An entity may be, for example: an activity or process, a product, an organization, a system or a person, or any combination thereof.

**field of testing**—broad sphere of science, engineering, or technology used to describe a general area of testing for classification purposes only. (For accreditation purposes, fields of testing are subdivided into specific tests, groups of tests, or product areas.)

**generic criteria, for laboratory accreditation, n**—accreditation criteria expressed in general terms which address organization, human and material resources, operating procedures, calibration and quality assurance practices of a laboratory.

**inspection**—process of measuring, examining, testing, gaging, or using other procedures to ascertain the quality or state, detect errors or defects, or otherwise appraise materials, products, services, systems, or environments to a pre-established standard.

**inspection agency**—see *inspection body*, (ISO Guide 2).

**inspection body**—body that performs inspection services on behalf of a certification body, (ISO Guide 2).

**interlaboratory test comparison**—organization, performance and evaluation of tests on the same or similar items or materials by two or more laboratories in accordance with predetermined conditions, (ISO Guide 2).

**laboratory accreditation**—formal recognition that a testing laboratory is competent to carry out specific tests or specific types of tests, (ISO Guide 2, B).

**laboratory accreditation system**—system having its own rules of procedure and management, for carrying out laboratory accreditation, (ISO Guide 2, A).

**laboratory assessor**—person who carries out some or all functions related to laboratory assessment, (ISO Guide 2).

**mark of conformity, (for certification)**—protected mark, applied or issued under the rules of a certification system, indicating that adequate confidence is provided that the relevant product, process or service is in conformity with a specific standard or other normative document, (ISO Guide 2).

**multilateral arrangement**—recognition arrangement that covers the acceptance of each other's results by more than two parties, (ISO Guide 2)

**nonconformity**—the nonfulfillment of specified requirements, (ISO 8402).

**proficiency testing**—determination of laboratory testing performance by means of interlaboratory test comparisons, (ISO Guide 2).

**quality**—totality of characteristics of an entity that bear on its ability to satisfy stated or implied needs.