

CONFORMITY ASSESSMENT PUBLICATION

CAB Policy for IEC Conformity Assessment





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INTERNATIONAL
ELECTROTECHNICAL
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INTERNATIONAL ELECTROTECHNICAL COMMISSION

CAB Policy for IEC Conformity Assessment

FOREWORD

The text of this publication is based on the following documents and decisions:

Document(s)	Decision(s)
CAB/1414A/INF	
CAB/1531A/RM CAB/1530/DL	CAB Decisions 39/18 & 39/21

INTRODUCTION

The IEC is an international organization defined and governed by its Statutes and Rules of Procedure. The IEC is a membership organization, whose members are the National Committees of countries. The members exercise authority and control over the IEC through the Council and the Council Board.

The object of the IEC is to promote international co-operation on all questions of standardization and related matters, such as the verification of conformity to standards in the fields of electricity, electronics and related technologies, and thus to promote international understanding. This object, *inter alia*, is achieved by issuing publications, including International Standards, and by offering conformity assessment services.

The two main activities of the IEC are standards development (SD) and conformity assessment (CA). Both activities function in a similar manner. The IEC does not develop standards itself, but provides a framework in which technical experts from around the world participate to develop those standards. The ISO/IEC Directives serve as the guide for the principles and procedures for SD.

The IEC CA activities are, currently, third party testing and certification activities. But, similarly to its SD activities, IEC does not perform testing or certification itself, but rather provides a framework in which professional Certification Bodies and Testing Laboratories, from around the world, participate. It is those professional Certification Bodies and Testing Laboratories that do the testing and issue the certificates.

The IEC Statutes and Rules of Procedure, in its Article 12, indicate that the Council, through the Council Board, delegates to the Conformity Assessment Board (CAB) the overall management of the IEC CA activities.

This document is the current reference for CAB Policy for IEC Conformity Assessment.

IEC Vision

“IEC Standards and conformity assessment programmes – the key to international trade.”

Mission

“The IEC's mission is to be globally recognized as the leading provider of standards, conformity assessment systems and related services needed to facilitate international trade and enhance user value in the fields of electricity, electronics and associated technologies.”

CAB Policy for IEC Conformity Assessment

1 Statement of strategic direction

Statement of strategic direction in support of the IEC Vision and Mission.

Strategic Goal

To be the leading internationally recognized provider for global conformity assessment (CA) Systems and Schemes.

Strategic Assignment

The IEC's CA strategic assignment is to use and enhance the IEC's international standing and reputation, through the efficient development and management of practical global CA Systems and Schemes that are market driven and create, and are recognized as creating, market stakeholder value.

2 About the CAB

The CAB is a policy-making body of the IEC, and is responsible to Council, through the Council Board, for the overall management of the IEC's conformity assessment (CA) activities, including oversight of the IEC conformity assessment systems (CA Systems). The CAB represents the IEC conformity assessment (CA) community.

The authority and responsibilities of the CAB are set out in the IEC Statutes Articles 12 and 13 and the Rules of Procedure Clauses 12 and 13, together with Appendices 2 and 3 to the Rules of Procedure.

3 Role of the CAB

The specific responsibilities of the CAB include the following:

3.1 Establishing the CA policy of the IEC to serve the present and future needs of international trade consistently and efficiently.

3.2 The overall direction of the IEC CA activities:

- a) Facilitating the operation of IEC CA activities and systems and, where appropriate, providing means of addressing policy-related problems.
- b) Ensuring that the IEC CA Systems comply with the relevant clauses of the IEC Statutes and Rules of Procedure.
- c) Ensuring the financial viability of the CA Systems through approval of their accounts and budgets developed and approved by the CAB.
- d) Examining the continued relevance of the IEC's CA activities and systems.

3.3 Liaison with ISO/CASCO on the development and approval of joint ISO/IEC standards on conformity assessment.

3.4 Promoting and maintaining relations with international, regional and national organizations on CA matters – in particular ISO/CASCO, ILAC and IAF.

3.5 Providing advice to the Standardization Management Board (SMB) and to Technical Committees on CA issues in accordance with the ISO/IEC Directives.

3.6 Promoting the wider acceptability of the existing IEC CA Systems, and establishing new CA Systems to address the market needs.

3.7 Approving proposals to set up, modify or disband CA Systems and Schemes.

4 CAB Membership

The CAB Chairman (and IEC Vice President) is elected by the Council for a three year term and is eligible for re-election for one additional term. There are fifteen members appointed by Council on nomination from fifteen member National Committees elected by Council and fifteen alternates nominated by the respective National Committees. Individual members may serve up to two three-year terms but there are no term limits on alternates. The Chairman and Secretary of each of the IEC CA Systems also serve on the CAB.

5 General Principles in IEC Conformity Assessment

5.1 The CAB ensures that the IEC CA activities comply with the following principles of the WTO Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade relating to CA procedures:

- a) Non-discrimination.
- b) Avoidance of unnecessary obstacles to trade.
- c) Harmonization of CA procedures through the use of international standards and guides.
- d) Transparency to build confidence and stability within the CA community.
- e) Mutual recognition of conformity assessment results.

5.2 Peer Assessment

Peer Assessment, as defined by ISO/IEC 17040, is considered a fundamental pillar of the IEC CA Systems/Schemes and shall be included into all IEC CA Systems/Schemes rules.

Peer assessment leads to mutual confidence among certification bodies and is intended to demonstrate that the participating Certification Bodies and Testing Laboratories comply with the IEC CA System/Scheme rules and have the required level of:

- Impartiality and objectivity
- Confidentiality
- Technical expertise (skill and experience)
- Test and measurement equipment and measurement traceability
- Understanding of normative documents used
- Organizational structure and management

Peer assessment also provides the basis for stakeholder confidence in the marketplace.

5.3 The CAB promotes the principle of neutrality related to methods of conformity assessment (as defined in ISO/IEC 17000) and considers proposals for the provision of services and facilities to the market for the first, second and third-party conformity assessment.

5.4 The CAB focuses its initiatives where a clear market need has been identified to the benefit of suppliers and users.

5.5 The CAB encourages the CA Systems and their Members to initiate appropriate action to prevent the submission of counterfeit or pirated products for testing and certification.

5.6 The CA Systems and stand-alone Schemes are generally based on the use of International Standards, namely those published by IEC and ISO.

The use of non-IEC or non-ISO Standards or Specifications within a CA System or stand-alone Scheme may be possible under the following circumstances:

- There is no IEC or ISO Standard to cover this scope of activity.
- Prior approval of CAB has been obtained.

6 Management of CA Activities, including the CA Systems

6.1 Non-IEC member countries are permitted to participate in the IEC CA Systems under the conditions specified in the CA Systems' Basic Rules.

6.2 The CAB documents are made available to all IEC National Committees, except where the CAB Chairman decides to provide them to CAB members and alternates only.

6.3 The IEC CA Systems report to the CAB at least annually.

6.4 IEC CA Systems, proposing to utilize a specific document which is not an IEC or ISO Standard, shall request approval from the CAB for such use.

6.5 CAB Criteria for New CA Systems and for Scope Extensions.

The CAB will apply the following criteria when considering entering a new field of technology, establishing a new CA System or dealing with a proposal from an existing CA System to extend its scope:

- a) A clearly identified market need
- b) No overlap in the scopes of the IEC CA Systems
- c) No adverse effect on the financial viability of the IEC CA Systems
- d) No unacceptable risks of liability for the IEC
- e) Consistency with the IEC's policies, including the CAB Policy
- f) No damage to the IEC's reputation or image

6.6 Systems should make use of the available best practices and tools already developed by other IEC CA Systems (the toolbox approach) and should offer the flexibility to work together where needed to provide a one-stop service – with the objective to eliminate duplication and provide cost effective solutions for the customer.

7 Cooperation with External Organizations

7.1 The CAB supports active cooperation with agencies in the field of regulations, and expects regular reporting of these activities to the CAB by the CAB Secretariat (in addition to the CA Systems' reporting).

7.2 The CAB supports and encourages the cooperation between the IEC and ILAC and IAF that aims to reduce duplication between accreditation assessment and IEC CA Systems' peer assessment through the CAB participation on the IEC-CAB/ILAC/IAF Steering Committee, and other CAB-sponsored activities.

7.3 The CAB adopts the procedure for IEC representation and coordination in ISO/CASCO working groups, and requests each of the IEC coordinators in CASCO groups to provide a report for the next meeting of the CAB.

7.4 The CAB supports the CABPUB procedure for the handling of CASCO documents within the IEC and encourages the IEC National Committees to actively participate in the development of CASCO Standards and Guides.

7.5 The CAB maintains a close relationship with International Legal Metrology Organization OIML, as stated in a MoU between IEC and OIML.

7.6 The CAB shall be proactive in monitoring and identifying opportunities and potential competitive CA activities that may impact on the IEC position as a Leader in CA Services.

The CAB should be proactive in proposing global CA solutions to other organizations and encourage them to join in collaborative work when there is a market demand.

8 IEC Marks and Labels

8.1 Voluntary status of the IECEx Mark

The CAB resolves as a matter of policy that the IECEx Mark will be voluntary.

8.2 Traceability of marks used in the Schemes

The CAB resolves as a matter of policy that, for the purposes of traceability, if a mark administered by a Scheme is used, appropriate identification of the certification body granting the use of the mark must be either on the approved product, when size permits, or on the packaging of the product if the product is too small.

9 Protection of the IEC Intellectual Property

9.1 The CAB utilizes the following mechanism for continuous monitoring of reported misuse of certificates authorized by the IEC and issued within the IEC CA Systems, and misuse of marks owned by the IEC, with changes. The mechanism is:

- a) The CA Systems prepare, at each Management Committee meeting, an agenda item on this matter. The report under this agenda item shall include known incident(s) of misuse of marks owned by the IEC and certificates within the IEC CA Systems, where the IEC's brand or name is adversely impacted.

NOTE In the case of the IECEx, the Ex Mark Committee, as identified in the IECEx Basic Rules, fulfills this role for the IECEx Mark.

- b) The annual report from the Chairman of each IEC CA System to the CAB shall include the relevant cases. If there were no cases, the Report shall state this.
- c) The CAB report to the Council Board after the CA System Chairmen's annual reports have been approved shall include the IEC CA Systems' operations and other relevant cases reported in the CA System Chairmen's annual reports.

Annex A

Guideline – Use of non-IEC or non-ISO Standards or Specifications within a CA System or stand-alone Scheme

If the CA System or stand-alone Scheme wishes to use non-IEC or non-ISO Standards or Specifications within its scope of activities, it shall provide to CAB the relevant rationale and justification. Additionally, a request may be made to the relevant IEC technical committee or subcommittee to prepare as quickly as possible the required standard. Alternatively, the CA System or stand-alone Scheme may propose that the CAB request the SMB to initiate the preparation of the required standard or, IEC to initiate negotiation with the relevant organization.

Addendum

The following CAB decisions are added in this addendum in accordance with CAB Decision 37/14, Recommendation 8 stating:

CAB recognized that review of new CAB decisions for policy aspects was the task of the CAB Chairman and Secretariat and agreed that such new policy should be accumulated at the end of the IEC CA Policy document, circulated after each CAB meeting allowing the opportunity for any member of CAB to comment, and then integrated into the policy document every few years (e.g. 5) or immediately if warranted by the situation.

CAB decisions with policies impact that have not yet been integrated into the Policy document		
<i>Date Meeting no.</i>	<i>Title Contents</i>	<i>Ref.</i>
2013-10-22 Meeting 34 New Delhi	<p>Decision 34/12 – Report on time-limits for non-IEC member participation in IEC CA Systems</p> <p>The CAB thanks WG 11 for its report, CAB/1182/R, and approves the proposal given therein, namely to allow non-IEC members to specify the timeframe within which they apply for at least Associate membership of the IEC after they have been permitted to become a member of an IEC CA System.</p> <p>The CAB also approves the proposed changes to the three sets of the Basic Rules.</p>	1230A/RM
2014-06-16 Meeting 35 Geneva	All relevant decisions are already integrated.	1282A/RM
2014-11-10 Meeting 36 Tokyo	There were no decisions of a policy nature.	1342A/RM
2015-06-15 Meeting 37 Geneva	There were no decisions of a policy nature.	1401A/RM
2015-10-12 Meeting 38 Minsk	There were no decisions of a policy nature.	1471A/RM
2016-06-06 Meeting 39 Geneva	<p>CAB Decision 39/21 part A.1: 3) approved the proposed CA statement of strategic direction and requested that they be added to the CAB Policy document (this document), which they have.</p> <p>There were no other decisions of a policy nature.</p>	1531A/RM

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