

# CONFORMITY ASSESSMENT PUBLICATION

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**CAB Policy of Peer Assessment Fundamentals**





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## CAB Policy of Peer Assessment Fundamentals

INTERNATIONAL  
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## INTERNATIONAL ELECTROTECHNICAL COMMISSION

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**CAB Policy of Peer Assessment Fundamentals**

## FOREWORD

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

Document(s)	Decision(s)
CAB/1619/R, CAB/1620A/INF	CAB Decision 41/24

## INTRODUCTION

The IEC Conformity Assessment Board (CAB) has a formal policy that requires the IEC Conformity Assessment (CA) Systems/Schemes to utilize peer assessment.

This document sets out the fundamental elements for operating a peer assessment programme among CA Systems/Schemes that are necessary to ensure that the peer assessment process operated by each CA System/Scheme remains credible and robust. These elements shall be included in the assessment programmes operated by each of the CA Systems/Schemes. Throughout this document the terms “CA Systems” and “CA Systems/Schemes” are synonymous.

For certification bodies, testing laboratories and inspection bodies (referred to throughout this document as “CA body/bodies”) to be accepted for participation in Schemes operated by CA Systems, each CA Body must successfully undergo a qualification or acceptance process in accordance with the rules of procedure associated with the relevant CA System.

While each CA System's Rules and operating procedures governing this qualification process cater to the individual needs of the industries and stakeholders associated with the CA System's field of activity, there are common elements, across all CA Systems, of this process which include:

- a) recognition of the certification body at national level where there is a national scheme;
- b) assessment of the CA body's compliance with the Scheme requirements;
- c) determination of the CA body's ability and commitment for mutual recognition, where applicable (e.g., certificates, test reports, inspection reports), concerning the specific CA System's Scheme;
- d) preparedness of the CA bodies to provide qualified resources (assessors) both for assessing others as well as during the assessment.

It is noted that new CA Systems may require time to fully implement the requirements of this document.



## CAB Policy of Peer Assessment Fundamentals

### 1 General requirements for peer assessment in the CA Systems

#### 1.1 Use of peer assessment

Peer assessment in accordance with ISO/IEC 17040 shall be an element of the overall acceptance programme (see Clause 1.2). For peer assessment at the CA System, this is accomplished by compliance with ISO/IEC 17040 (except for identified clauses in Clause 2.1 below) and the CA System rules.

Peer assessment is defined in ISO/IEC 17040, Clause 3.1 and for the purposes of peer assessment within the CA System the term representative is intended as a person nominated by a participating CA body.

#### 1.2 Acceptance Programmes

CA Systems shall develop and maintain rules of procedure for the acceptance of CA bodies (Acceptance Program) in order for such bodies to be accepted into CA Schemes operated by the CA Systems.

Acceptance Programmes operated by CA Systems shall provide criteria for the Management Committees of the CA Systems regarding the acceptance of CA bodies. This shall include:

- a) their initial acceptance;
- b) their ongoing acceptance;
- c) expansion of scope.

The following table provides the principle elements of an Acceptance Programme within a CA System from ISO/IEC 17040 with the **blue text** as the extra elements generally contained within CA Systems rules of procedure:

Application – with Member Body (MB) endorsement where required
Review and acceptance of application
Preparation
Team appointment
<b>Cost estimate accepted</b>
Documentation review
On-site assessment
Analysis
Report(s)
<b>Corrective action reviewed</b>
<b>Updated report(s) independent review</b>
<b>Final report issued for members' acceptance</b>
<b>Surveillance of CA body begins – upon members' acceptance</b>

### **1.3 National accreditation**

Acceptance programmes operated by CA Systems shall clarify how national accreditation is utilized within the System.

National accreditation of CA bodies may be used as a factor in streamlining CA System assessment, noting the following principles:

- a) accreditation shall be against the relevant ISO/IEC 17000 series of Standards;
- b) the scope of accreditation should align with that of the CA System;
- c) accreditation should be done by an accreditation body that is a member of the IAF MLA or the ILAC MRA, or an agency accepted as equivalent by the CA System.

### **1.4 Unified assessments**

The use of a unified assessment programme in which an accreditation body is involved should be documented such that consistent application of the assessment process is maintained.

## **2 Peer assessment requirements**

### **2.1 Application of ISO/IEC 17040**

ISO/IEC 17040 sets out the aspects that need to be addressed when conducting the peer assessment process. While all elements of the peer assessment process specified in ISO/IEC 17040 are considered relevant, some of the general requirements of ISO/IEC 17040 may be tailored to the individual needs of the CA Systems.

For the CA Systems, the following modification to ISO/IEC 17040:2005 applies:

- Clause 5.2 – per IEC Statutes and Rules of Procedure, the official language of the IEC is English.

### **2.2 Assessment types**

It is understood that the different CA Systems may have different forms and types of assessments of CA bodies which may include but are not limited to:

- a) initial assessment;
- b) re-assessment;
- c) follow up assessment;
- d) annual surveillance assessments;
- e) mid-term assessments;
- f) scope extension assessments;
- g) re-location assessments;
- h) special assessments.

### **2.3 Assessors**

Assessors are normally representatives of the CA bodies, either via employment or contracting arrangement. The CA System Secretariat may be a member of the assessment team.

Each CA System shall define criteria and processes for appointing assessors. The Executive Secretary is responsible for the appointment of assessment teams and the management of the assessment process according to this document and the CA System's rules and operating documents.

## **2.4 Funding of assessments**

Each CA System shall define the arrangements for the funding of assessments taking into account the following principles:

- a) Assessors time during assessments, at a minimum, shall be compensated;
- b) sufficient time shall be provided to enable a thorough and meaningful assessment;
- c) within each CA System, daily rates for Assessors shall be established;
- d) travel and living expenses shall be reimbursed based on defined parameters.

CA Systems shall implement procedures to guard against a possible conflict of interest concerning the payment of Assessors' time and travel costs. Compensation is paid to the Assessor's organization.

## **2.5 Recruitment of new Assessors**

Each CA System shall define the process and criteria for the recruitment of new Assessors taking into account the following principles:

- a) each CA System shall require their accepted CA bodies to provide suitable experts as Assessors, and;
- b) persons shall have experience and current knowledge of the certification, inspection, and/or testing practices associated with the relevant CA System.

## **2.6 Appointment of Lead Assessors**

Each CA System shall define the process and actively manage the progression of Assessors to Lead Assessor status, noting the all of following:

- a) Lead Assessors should be persons that are currently engaged in conformity assessment work, in the field of activity of the CA System;
  - b) Lead Assessors must have a thorough knowledge of the CA System's rules and operating documents;
  - c) Lead Assessors shall have proven their assessment capabilities as an Assessor;
  - d) Assessors should only be appointed as a Lead Assessor after successful evaluation, by an existing Lead Assessor that has witnessed them conducting an on-site peer assessment.
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