



Specific Accreditation Guidance

Manufactured Goods

Product conformity evaluation

July 2018

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Product conformity evaluation

This document only serves as guidance and does not include accreditation criteria for facilities conducting product conformity evaluations covered by their scope of accreditation.

This document is included as a reference in the NATA Accreditation Criteria (NAC) package for Manufactured Goods.

Product standards and statements of conformity

The tests performed on manufactured goods, including most consumer products, present certain challenges in terms of accreditation scope expression due to the prominence of product standards within the conformity assessment space.

While some areas of testing are well suited to a form of scope expression comprising a listing of test methods, in other areas a listing of product standards is more suitable. There are yet other areas where it is appropriate to list both types of documents (to suit the needs of different groups of customers, for instance). The situation is made more complicated in that some product standards contain test methods and some test methods contain conformity information.

Depending on the particular standards for which an individual facility is accredited and how that facility's scope of accreditation has been expressed, the following may be relevant where aspects of conformity are to be reported.

- 1) Factual statements involving a comparison of the results of accredited test methods with threshold values defined within a nominated product standard may be reported as statements of conformity. Such statements must include reference to the specific sections/clauses of the document from which the conformity criteria have been obtained (refer ISO/IEC 17025 Clause 7.8.6.2b)).
- 2) Statements of conformity which extend beyond a simple comparison of individual test results with defined thresholds may only be reported where accreditation has been granted for such activity.

- to be regarded as forming part of a facility's accredited activities, relevant determinations (i.e. outcomes of testing and/or examining the product) which contribute to any such statement of conformity must be covered by the accreditation scope and the source of the conformity criteria (i.e. product standard or other reference) must be listed within the accreditation scope without any restrictions affecting the relevant determinations.

Regardless of any such coverage, the constraints regarding the expression of opinion (ISO/IEC 17025 Clause 7.8.7) still apply.

- accreditation coverage is not offered for activities involving statements of conformity with a product approval 'scheme' (such would constitute a product certification activity, which is outside the range of activities for which NATA offers accreditation) or for any other conformity assessment activities which extend beyond testing and examination of the product.

Referencing test procedures

When reporting statements of conformity of the type described in item 2 above, quoting the applicable clause/section from the (accredited) product standard may be regarded as an adequate means of referencing the applicable test methods (i.e. those methods referenced from within the quoted product standard), except where it is necessary to additionally clarify the extent of testing conducted (for example, where alternative options may be allowed within a product standard).

However, where reporting statements of conformity of the type described in item 1 above (pertaining to a product standard which is not listed within the facility's scope of accreditation), certain additional obligations apply.

Where statements of conformity are made with respect of a product standard which is not listed within the scope of accreditation, all of the following apply:

- claims of NATA accreditation is limited to those test procedures (and sampling procedures if applicable) covered by the scope of accreditation and any associated statement of conformity which is to be covered by the accreditation must be based solely on the outcomes of those accredited procedures.
- all test procedures (and sampling procedures if applicable) carried out, even where referenced within a quoted product standard, must be identified within the report (refer ISO/IEC 17025 Clause 7.8.2.1f)) since these provide the only transparent means by which an end-user is able to verify accreditation coverage based on the report itself.
- additional criteria specified within the product standard pertaining to the application of those procedures (such as defined testing conditions) must also be reported (refer ISO/IEC 17025 Clause 7.8.2.1n)).

Note: An explicit statement indicating that testing was undertaken 'in accordance with' the listed product standard may, in some circumstances, be an acceptable means of specifying such additional criteria. However, it is unacceptable to reference in this way such information that may itself be regarded as comprising a test (or sampling) procedure, or which includes parameters that have to be established by the facility as a result of another test process which is not explicitly covered by the scope of accreditation.

Type testing

Tests on manufactured goods are frequently commissioned in order to demonstrate the typical performance of a design, model or version (often to support recognition under a product certification scheme).

While the test facility may not always be informed of the intended use of a test report, the reporting of testing on finished goods is expected to include the following information, where relevant and to the extent possible (refer ISO/IEC 17025 Clause 7.8.2.1g)):

- description of the item under test in sufficient detail to distinguish it from possible variants (the use of photographs, blueprints, drawings or electronic files is recommended, preferably annexed to the test report).
- notation as to whether manufacturer's drawings were supplied with the item and whether conformity of the item with these drawings was established.

- the stated provenance of the item (e.g. 'supplied by importer').

References

This section lists publications referenced in this document. The year of publication is not included as it is expected that only current versions of the references shall be used.

Standards

ISO/IEC 17025 General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories

NATA publications

NATA Accreditation Criteria (NAC) package for Manufactured Goods

Amendment Table

The table below provides a summary of changes made to the document with this issue.

Section or Clause	Amendment
Whole document	Clauses have been aligned with ISO/IEC 17025:2017. Information on type testing has been included which was previously relocated in the <i>Specific Accreditation Criteria: ISO/IEC 17025 Application Document, Manufactured Goods - Annex, Physical performance testing - General</i>