

Australian/New Zealand Standard™

**Conformity assessment—Requirements
for the operation of various types of
bodies performing inspection**



AS/NZS ISO/IEC 17020:2013

This Joint Australian/New Zealand Standard was prepared by Joint Technical Committee QR-010, Conformity Assessment. It was approved on behalf of the Council of Standards Australia on 10 April 2013 and on behalf of the Council of Standards New Zealand on 16 May 2013.

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Australian/New Zealand Standard™

Conformity assessment—Requirements for the operation of various types of bodies performing inspection

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PREFACE

This Standard was prepared by the Joint Standards Australia/Standards New Zealand Committee QR-010, Conformity Assessment, to supersede AS/NZS ISO/IEC 17020:2000, *General criteria for the operation of various types of bodies performing inspection*.

The objective of this Standard is to promote confidence in bodies performing inspections. Through standardization, the common needs of clients, supervisory bodies and other stakeholders are identified. This Standard provides requirements specific to bodies performing inspections. Stakeholders may accept inspection services with confidence in cases where the body performing inspections meets the requirements of this Standard.

This Standard is identical with, and has been reproduced from ISO/IEC 17020:2012, *Conformity assessment—Requirements for the operation of various types of bodies performing inspection*.

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<i>Reference to International Standard</i>	<i>Australian/New Zealand Standard</i>
ISO/IEC	AS ISO/IEC
17000 Conformity assessment—Vocabulary and general principles	17000 Conformity assessment—Vocabulary and general principles

The terms ‘normative’ and ‘informative’ have been used in this Standard to define the application of the annex to which they apply. A ‘normative’ annex is an integral part of a Standard, whereas an ‘informative’ annex is only for information and guidance.

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INTRODUCTION

This International Standard has been drawn up with the objective of promoting confidence in bodies performing inspection.

Inspection bodies carry out assessments on behalf of private clients, their parent organizations, or authorities, with the objective of providing information about the conformity of inspected items with regulations, standards, specifications, inspection schemes or contracts. Inspection parameters include matters of quantity, quality, safety, fitness for purpose, and continued safety compliance of installations or systems in operation. The general requirements with which these bodies are required to comply in order that their services are accepted by clients and by supervisory authorities are harmonized in this International Standard.

This International Standard covers the activities of inspection bodies whose work can include the examination of materials, products, installations, plants, processes, work procedures or services, and the determination of their conformity with requirements and the subsequent reporting of results of these activities to clients and, when required, to authorities. Inspection can concern all stages during the lifetime of these items, including the design stage. Such work normally requires the exercise of professional judgement in performing inspection, in particular when assessing conformity with general requirements.

This International Standard can be used as a requirements document for accreditation or peer assessment or other assessments.

This set of requirements can be interpreted when applied to particular sectors.

Inspection activities can overlap with testing and certification activities where these activities have common characteristics. However, an important difference is that many types of inspection involve professional judgement to determine acceptability against general requirements, for which reason the inspection body needs the necessary competence to perform the task.

Inspection can be an activity embedded in a larger process. For example, inspection can be used as a surveillance activity in a product certification scheme. Inspection can be an activity that precedes maintenance or simply provides information about the inspected item with no determination of conformity with requirements. In such cases, further interpretation might be needed.

The categorization of inspection bodies as type A, B or C is essentially a measure of their independence. Demonstrable independence of an inspection body can strengthen the confidence of the inspection body's clients with respect to the body's ability to carry out inspection work with impartiality.

In this International Standard, the following verbal forms are used:

- “shall” indicates a requirement;
- “should” indicates a recommendation;
- “may” indicates a permission;
- “can” indicates a possibility or a capability.

AUSTRALIAN/NEW ZEALAND STANDARD

Conformity assessment—Requirements for the operation of various types of bodies performing inspection**1 Scope**

This International Standard contains requirements for the competence of bodies performing inspection and for the impartiality and consistency of their inspection activities.

It applies to inspection bodies of type A, B or C, as defined in this International Standard, and it applies to any stage of inspection.

NOTE The stages of inspection include design stage, type examination, initial inspection, in-service inspection or surveillance.

2 Normative references

The following referenced documents are indispensable for the application 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.

3.1 inspection

examination of a **product** (3.2), **process** (3.3), **service** (3.4), or installation or their design and determination of its conformity with specific requirements or, on the basis of professional judgment, with general requirements

NOTE 1 Inspection of processes can include personnel, facilities, technology or methodology.

NOTE 2 Inspection procedures or schemes can restrict inspection to examination only.

NOTE 3 Adapted from ISO/IEC 17000:2004, definition 4.3.

NOTE 4 The term “item” is used in this International Standard to encompass product, process, service or installation, as appropriate.

3.2 product

result of a process

NOTE 1 Four generic product categories are noted in ISO 9000:2005:

- services (e.g. transport) (see definition in 3.4);
- software (e.g. computer program, dictionary);

- hardware (e.g. engine, mechanical part);
- processed materials (e.g. lubricant).

Many products comprise elements belonging to different generic product categories. Whether the product is then called service, software, hardware or processed material depends on the dominant element.

NOTE 2 Products include results of natural processes, such as growth of plants and formation of other natural resources.

NOTE 3 Adapted from ISO/IEC 17000:2004, definition 3.3.

3.3 process

set of interrelated or interacting activities which transforms inputs into outputs

NOTE Adapted from ISO 9000:2005, definition 3.4.1.

3.4 service

result of at least one activity necessarily performed at the interface between the supplier and the customer, which is generally intangible

NOTE 1 Provision of a service can involve, for example, the following:

- an activity performed on a customer-supplied tangible product (e.g. automobile to be repaired);
- an activity performed on a customer-supplied intangible product (e.g. the income statement needed to prepare a tax return);
- the delivery of an intangible product (e.g. the delivery of information in the context of knowledge transmission);
- the creation of ambience for the customer (e.g. in hotels and restaurants).

NOTE 2 Adapted from ISO 9000:2005, definition 3.4.2, Note 2.

3.5 inspection body body that performs **inspection** (3.1)

NOTE An inspection body can be an organization, or part of an organization.

3.6 inspection system rules, procedures, and management for carrying out inspection

NOTE 1 An inspection system can be operated at international, regional, national or sub-national level.

NOTE 2 Adapted from ISO/IEC 17000:2004, definition 2.7.

3.7 inspection scheme inspection system (3.6) to which the same specified requirements, specific rules and procedures apply

NOTE 1 Inspection schemes can be operated at international, regional, national or sub-national level.

NOTE 2 Schemes are sometimes also referred to as “programmes”.

NOTE 3 Adapted from ISO/IEC 17000:2004, definition 2.8.

3.8**impartiality**

presence of objectivity

NOTE 1 Objectivity means that conflicts of interest do not exist or are resolved so as not to adversely influence subsequent activities of the inspection body.

NOTE 2 Other terms that are useful in conveying the element of impartiality are: independence, freedom from conflict of interests, freedom from bias, lack of prejudice, neutrality, fairness, open-mindedness, even-handedness, detachment, balance.

3.9**appeal**

request by the provider of the item of inspection to the inspection body for reconsideration by that body of a decision it has made relating to that item

NOTE Adapted from ISO/IEC 17000:2004, definition 6.4.

3.10**complaint**

expression of dissatisfaction, other than appeal, by any person or organization to an inspection body, relating to the activities of that body, where a response is expected

NOTE Adapted from ISO/IEC 17000:2004, definition 6.5.

4 General requirements**4.1 Impartiality and independence**

4.1.1 Inspection activities shall be undertaken impartially.

4.1.2 The inspection body shall be responsible for the impartiality of its inspection activities and shall not allow commercial, financial or other pressures to compromise impartiality.

4.1.3 The inspection body shall identify risks to its impartiality on an ongoing basis. This shall include those risks that arise from its activities, or from its relationships, or from the relationships of its personnel. However, such relationships do not necessarily present an inspection body with a risk to impartiality.

NOTE A relationship that threatens the impartiality of the inspection body can be based on ownership, governance, management, personnel, shared resources, finances, contracts, marketing (including branding), and payment of a sales commission or other inducement for the referral of new clients, etc.

4.1.4 If a risk to impartiality is identified, the inspection body shall be able to demonstrate how it eliminates or minimizes such risk.

4.1.5 The inspection body shall have top management commitment to impartiality.

4.1.6 The inspection body shall be independent to the extent that is required with regard to the conditions under which it performs its services. Depending on these conditions, it shall meet the minimum requirements stipulated in Annex A, as outlined below.

- a) An inspection body providing third party inspections shall meet the type A requirements of Clause A.1 (third party inspection body).
- b) An inspection body providing first party inspections, second party inspections, or both, which forms a separate and identifiable part of an organization involved in the design, manufacture, supply, installation, use or maintenance of the items it inspects and which supplies inspection services only to its parent organization (in-house inspection body) shall meet the type B requirements of Clause A.2.