



GUIDE 65

General requirements for bodies operating product certification systems

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Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) and IEC (the International Electrotechnical Commission) form the specialized system for worldwide standardization. National bodies that are members of ISO or IEC participate in the development of International Standards through technical committees established by the respective organization to deal with particular fields of technical activity. ISO and IEC technical committees collaborate in fields of mutual interest. Other international organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO and IEC, also take part in the work.

Draft Guides adopted by the responsible Committee or Group are circulated to national bodies for voting. Publication as a Guide requires approval by at least 75 % of the national bodies casting a vote.

ISO/IEC Guide 65 was prepared by the ISO Committee on Conformity Assessment (CASCO).

This first edition cancels and replaces ISO/IEC Guide 40:1983.

Introduction

Certification of a product (a term used to include a process or service) is a means of providing assurance that it complies with specified standards and other normative documents. Some product certification systems may include initial testing of a product and assessment of its suppliers' quality systems, followed by surveillance that takes into account the factory quality system and the testing of samples from the factory and the open market. Other systems rely on initial testing and surveillance testing, while still others comprise type testing only.

This Guide specifies requirements, the observance of which is intended to ensure that certification bodies operate third-party certification systems in a consistent and reliable manner, thereby facilitating their acceptance on a national and international basis and so furthering international trade.

The requirements contained in this Guide are written, above all, to be considered as general criteria for organizations operating product certification systems; they may have to be amplified when specific industrial or other sectors make use of them, or when particular requirements such as health and safety have to be taken into account.

Assertion of conformity to the appropriate standards or other normative documents will be in the form of certificates or marks of conformity. Systems for certifying particular products or product groups to specified standards or other normative documents will, in many cases, require their own explanatory documentation.

While this Guide is concerned with third-parties providing product certification, many of its provisions may also be useful in first- and second-party product conformity assessment procedures.

The diversity in certification systems may at first seem unnecessary and even confuse newcomers in the field, clients and operators alike. The ISO/IEC publication *Certification and related activities* is available for background reading and will help to answer questions regarding the practices of the worldwide conformity assessment community.