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

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Foreword

This translation has been made based on the original Japanese Industrial Standard revised by the Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry through deliberations at the Japanese Industrial Standards Committee in accordance with the Industrial Standardization Law.

Consequently **JIS Q 17020:2000** has been replaced with this Standard.

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

Introduction

This Japanese Industrial Standard has been prepared based on the second edition of **ISO/IEC 17020** published in 2012 without any modifications of technical contents.

The portions with dotted underlines are the matters not given in the corresponding International Standard and supplemented to facilitate understanding of this Standard.

This 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 Standard.

This 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 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.

1 Scope

This 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 Standard, and it applies to any stage of inspection.

NOTE 1 The stages of inspection include design stage, type examination, initial inspection, in-service inspection or surveillance.

NOTE 2 The International Standard corresponding to this Standard and the symbol of degree of correspondence are as follows.

ISO/IEC 17020:2012 *Conformity assessment—Requirements for the operation of various types of bodies performing inspection* (IDT)

The symbols which denote the degree of correspondence in the contents between the relevant International Standard and **JIS** are IDT (identical), MOD (modified), and NEQ (not equivalent) according to **ISO/IEC Guide 21-1**.

2 Normative reference

The following standard contains provisions which, through reference in this text, constitute provisions of this Standard. The most recent edition of the standard (including amendments) indicated below shall be applied.

JIS Q 17000 *Conformity assessment—Vocabulary and general principles*

NOTE : Corresponding International Standard: ISO/IEC 17000 *Conformity assessment—Vocabulary and general principles* (IDT)

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this Standard, the terms and definitions given in **JIS Q 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 judgement, 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 **JIS Q 17000:2005**, definition **4.3**.

NOTE 4 The term “item” is used in this 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 **JIS Q 9000:2006**:

- services (e.g. transport) (see definition in **3.4**);
- software (e.g. computer programme, 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 **JIS Q 17000:2005**, definition **3.3**.

3.3 process

set of interrelated or interacting activities which transforms into outputs

NOTE : Adapted from **JIS Q 9000:2006**, 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 **JIS Q 9000:2006**, 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 **JIS Q 17000:2005**, 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 **JIS Q 17000:2005**, 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 **JIS Q 17000:2005**, 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 **JIS Q 17000:2005**, 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**.
- c) An inspection body providing first party inspections, second party inspections, or both, which forms an identifiable but not necessarily a separate part of an organization involved in the design, manufacture, supply, installation, use or maintenance of the items it inspects and which supplies inspection services to its parent organization or to other parties, or to both, shall meet the type C requirements of clause **A.3**.

4.2 Confidentiality

4.2.1 The inspection body shall be responsible, through legally enforceable commitments, for the management of all information obtained or created during the performance of inspection activities. The inspection body shall inform the client, in advance, of the information it intends to place in the public domain. Except for information that the client makes publicly available, or when agreed between the inspection body and the client (e.g. for the purpose of responding to complaints), all other information is considered proprietary information and shall be regarded as confidential.

NOTE : Legally enforceable commitments can be, for example, contractual agreements.

4.2.2 When the inspection body is required by law or authorized by contractual commitments to release confidential information, the client or individual concerned shall, unless prohibited by law, be notified of the information provided.

4.2.3 Information about the client obtained from sources other than the client (e.g. complaint, regulators) shall be treated as confidential.