

SSPC: The Society for Protective Coatings

QUALIFICATION PROCEDURE NO. 9

Standard for Evaluating Qualifications of Painting Contractors Who Apply Architectural Paints and Coatings

1. Scope

1.1 This standard procedure contains requirements for evaluating the qualifications of painting contractors who apply architectural coatings on commercial or institutional structures, and defines a minimum standard for qualification.

1.2 The objective of this procedure is to determine if a painting contractor has the management structure; organization structure; qualified personnel; technical capability; quality management system; and safety and environmental compliance programs in order to perform surface preparation and architectural coating application of the required quality under the conditions and restrictions specified by the owner.

1.3 In addition to the evaluation criteria outlined in this procedure, the owner is advised to review items not covered by this procedure. Examples include, but are not limited to, the applicant's financial stability; performance history; bonding capacity; and ability to successfully complete a specific project in the time frame required.

1.4 The procedure encompasses the application of architectural coatings in the commercial and institutional sectors only. Field industrial or marine protective coating applications on steel structures is covered by the requirements of SSPC-QP 1, "Standard Procedure for Evaluating Qualifications of Painting Contractors." Painting of steel and miscellaneous metal parts in the shop is covered by SSPC-QP 3, "Standard Procedures for Evaluating the Qualifications of Shop Painting Applicators." The residential painting and decorating finishing markets are covered by the Painting and Decorating Contractors of America (PDCA) Accreditation Program¹.

2. Description

2.1 DEFINITIONS

Contractor: The individual or entity with which the owner or customer has entered into an agreement to provide surface preparation and architectural paint and coating application services.

¹ For information on PDCA accreditation, contact the Painting and Decorating Contractors of America, 1801 Park 270 Drive, Suite 220, St. Louis, MO 63146, or visit <http://www.pdca.org>.

Architectural Coatings: Paints and coatings applied on-site to new and existing commercial, institutional and industrial buildings.

Auditor: The person technically qualified to perform audits of a contractor's management structure; organization structure; personnel, technical capability; quality management system; and safety, health and environmental compliance programs on behalf of the Qualifying Agency and report findings to the Qualifying Agency's audit program manager.

Owner: The owner (or owner's legal representative) of the building/structure/facility to be painted.

Customer: Entity (e.g., the building owner, developer, property manager or leasing agent, general contractor, or architect/designer) having the agreement with the painting contractor for architectural coating application.

Procedure: The sequence of steps taken to carry out a particular course of action.

Qualification: The objective evidence by which written assurance is given that an applicant conforms to the prescribed set of conditions or requirements of this procedure.

Qualifying Agency: The organization responsible for development, maintenance, sponsorship, and operation of a program to ensure uniform compliance with the provisions of this procedure.

2.2 TYPES OF STRUCTURES: Commercial and institutional structures encompass a wide range of building types and interior and exterior configurations. Architectural coatings are normally applied for aesthetic purposes, protection, or signage. Examples include but are not limited to: retail stores, shopping centers; office buildings; schools, colleges and universities; libraries, institutional buildings, public and military housing; apartment buildings; warehouses and product storage and distribution centers, medical and dental facilities; sports and recreational facilities; airports, rail and bus stations. Although the required evaluation functions are similar for all commercial and institutional structures, the specific skills (e.g., scaffolding; hazardous paint removal) are often quite different for painting a particular office building and painting a particular military or public housing project.

2.3 FUNCTIONS TO BE EVALUATED: There are four qualification categories to be evaluated: Management Procedures, Technical Capabilities, Job Quality Procedures, and Safety, Health and Environmental Compliance. General



Documents

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requirements for each of these categories are presented in Section 3.

2.4 EVALUATION CRITERIA: The Qualifying Agency shall develop criteria or rating plans to initially evaluate and monitor each applicant against the established criteria. The Qualifying Agency shall also determine which of the specific evaluation items within the four categories are to be reviewed during follow-up audits, ensuring the items evaluated are the same for all applicants.

2.5 QUALIFICATION CATEGORIES: This standard is composed of four qualification categories described below. Where no Category is specified in a contracting document, requirements for Category 1 shall apply. Contractors who are qualified to Categories 4, 3 or 2 are expected to progress to the next highest qualification category within a time frame established by the qualifying agency.

Category 1: Contractor has demonstrated a minimum of five years of successful experience applying architectural paints and coatings in the commercial or institutional property markets and is found to be in compliance with all requirements of this procedure. Category 1 qualification requires both an office and a jobsite audit.

Category 2: Contractor has demonstrated a minimum of three years of successful experience applying architectural paints and coatings, in the commercial or institutional property markets and is found to be in compliance with all requirements of this procedure with the exception of full implementation of a Job Quality Monitoring System in the field. Category 2 qualification requires an office audit only.

Category 3: Contractor has a minimum of two years of successful experience applying architectural paints and coatings in the commercial or institutional property markets

and is found to be in compliance with all requirements of this procedure with the exception of development and implementation of a Job Quality Monitoring System and an Environmental Compliance Program in accordance with requirements of Sections 3.3.3 and 3.4.2. No site audit is required to qualify for this Category.

Category 4: Contractor has minimal experience (0-2 years) but has established programs to comply with the Management requirements of this procedure as a result of a review and acceptance of submittals by the Qualifying Agency. No site audit is required for this Category.

A comparison of the requirements for each of the categories is shown in Table 1.

To qualify for any category in the leftmost column, the contractor shall meet all of the requirements listed in the corresponding row. For example, to qualify for Category 1, the contractor shall: 1) have greater than five years experience; 2) have implemented a formal Quality Monitoring (QM) program; 3) have implemented formal Safety and Environmental Compliance programs; 4) have submitted an application for certification accepted by the qualifying agency; and 5) have passed an external audit at both its headquarters and one or more representative job sites.

In another example, a contractor who has 10 years experience in the commercial painting industry and a written and field-implemented Safety and Environmental Compliance program but who lacks a written QM program will not qualify for Category 1. That contractor shall enter the program in Category 3, and cannot move into Category 2 until a written QM program has been developed and an on-site audit has been passed. To move into Category 1, the contractor shall be able to demonstrate field implementation of the written QM program and pass a field and headquarters audit.

**TABLE 1
SUMMARY OF REQUIREMENTS FOR COMMERCIAL PAINTING CONTRACTOR
QUALIFICATION CATEGORIES**

Category	Minimum Years Experience	Formal QM Program	Formal Safety/ Environmental Compliance Program	Application & Submittal	Pass On Site External Audit
Category 1	5	Implemented	Implemented	Yes	Yes (Headquarters and Jobsite)
Category 2	3	On Paper	On Paper	Yes	Yes (Headquarters Only)
Category 3	2	No	No	Yes	No audit required
Category 4	2	No	No	Yes	No audit required

3. General Qualification Requirements

3.1 MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES: The applicant shall demonstrate adequate procedures for disseminating company policies and procedures to workers, administrative and financial staff as follows:

3.1.1 Company Policy:

- a. General mission statement with separate declarations on quality, safety, and environmental protection goals and commitments is made available to all employees.
- b. There are implemented procedures for disseminating company policies to personnel employed by the organization and any workers under its direction.

3.1.2 Organization and Personnel:

- a. There exists an organizational chart showing division of responsibility within the company. The chart reflects actual practice and is reviewed and signed by the President or CEO annually.
- b. The contractor maintains a list of names, titles, duties, and job descriptions for key personnel (management, technical, quality management, safety and environmental compliance) involved in purchasing and handling of materials needed for painting or surface preparation, as well as personnel directly involved in surface preparation and painting operations.
- c. There is a list of in-house or external training courses and written career advancement programs available to and attended by key personnel.

3.1.3 Administrative and Management Procedures:

The contractor shall implement the following:

- a. Procedures for maintaining financial recordkeeping consistent with generally accepted accounting practice.
- b. Procedures to review job specifications, contract documents and other related bid documentation.
- c. Procedures for complying with federal, state, and local environmental, health, and safety regulations, wage and hour and other applicable regulations.
- d. Procedures for management review of regulatory violations including determination of root cause and implementation of policies and practices to avoid repeat violations.
- e. Procedures for obtaining and maintaining required business licenses in locales where work is done.
- f. Procedures for obtaining and maintaining required insurances (e.g. General Liability; Workers Compensation; vehicle insurance).
- g. Procedures for filing tax returns and other IRS (or equivalent organization outside the USA) financial reporting requirements.
- h. Procedures for filing proper business documents (e.g. incorporation papers; Employment eligibility verifications, vehicle registrations, building permits, etc).

3.2 TECHNICAL CAPABILITIES: The applicant shall show evidence of having qualified craft workers, adequate technical resources, suitable job conversion procedures, and appropriate equipment, facilities, and experience as follows:

3.2.1 Production Personnel Qualifications:

- a. The contractor shall provide documented evidence that technicians/craft workers are trained and qualified and their performance evaluated according to the requirements of Appendix A.
- b. The contractor shall provide evidence that all technicians/craft workers are either formally trained or are in the process of being formally trained in the interpretation and use of standard industry specifications and standards acceptable to the Qualifying Agency.

3.2.2 Technical Resources:

- a. The contractor shall provide a list of technical societies, trade associations, or other industry groups (e.g., universities, major manufacturers, consultants) with which contractor is associated in order to keep abreast of industry standards, technology, product information, etc.
- b. The contractor has current or specified versions of technical standards and references (e.g., manufacturer's product data sheets and manufacturer's material safety data sheets-MSDS; PDCA standards; MPI Standards) applicable to the work it performs. Project-specific references and standards shall be available to production personnel at the job site.

3.2.3 Procedures: Description of implemented procedures that are used to convert job specifications into field work orders, job plans, etc., including:

- a. Written records of receipt and internal processing of job specifications and revisions.
- b. Procedures for formally clarifying ambiguous, erroneous, omitted, or conflicting specification and contract requirements.
- c. Procedures for communicating specifications and work procedures, revisions and change orders to quality control personnel and production supervisors.
- d. Procedures for requesting and obtaining approval from the owner for deviations from contract requirements, including technical or logistical justification for the request to deviate.

3.2.4 Experience, Equipment, and Facilities (Certification Categories 1, 2, 3 only)

Experience: The contractor maintains a list of examples of current and recently completed projects performed under the applicant's name which support company's capabilities to perform work for the category of certification sought. List shall include the following:

