

SSPC: The Society for Protective Coatings

Qualification Procedure No. 9

Standard Procedure for Evaluating the Qualifications of Commercial Painting and Coating Contractors

1. Scope

1.1 This standard procedure contains requirements for evaluating the qualifications of painting contractors who apply architectural paints and coatings on commercial or institutional structures, and defines a minimum standard for qualification. This procedure encompasses surface preparation and architectural coating application of the required quality under the conditions and restrictions specified by the owner.

1.2 The purpose of this procedure is to determine whether a commercial painting and coating contractor:

- a. Has a corporate organization that clearly defines the authority and responsibilities of positions typically required for operation of a commercial coating contracting firm;
- b. Employs qualified management and utilizes qualified craft personnel and other workers;
- c. Has established and implemented a quality management system meeting requirements of Sections 3.3.2 and 3.3.3;
- d. Has established and implemented a written worker safety and health program meeting requirements of Section 3.4.1 and 3.4.2 and any project-specific requirements;
- e. Has established and implemented environmental protection procedures meeting requirements of Section 3.4.3 and any project-specific requirements;
- f. Demonstrates knowledge of industry technical standards and good painting practice.

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 This standard procedure is limited to evaluation of the qualifications of painting contractors applying architectural paints and coatings in the commercial and institutional sectors.

2. Description

2.1 DEFINITIONS

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

Auditor: 1) The person or persons performing audits on behalf of the Qualifying Agency. 2) The person(s) possessing the necessary technical and quality system auditing skills to review painting contractor submittals, conduct on-site audits of applicants, and report findings to the Qualifying Agency's program administrator in compliance with the requirements of this procedure and the written requirements of the formal audit program.

Commercial Painting and Coating Contractor (hereafter "painting contractor"): A firm whose primary business is provision of surface preparation and architectural paint application to commercial structures as defined in Section 2.2 of this standard.

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 paint and coating application.

Loss Control: Multidisciplinary approach in which human, engineering, and risk management practices are employed to reduce the frequency or severity of losses

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

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 standard.

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

Quality Control Inspectors: Persons designated to perform quality control inspections in accordance with any contract requirements and the painting contractor's quality program (see Section 3.3.1 b).

Quality Control Supervisor: A qualified employee designated by executive management who is responsible for implementation and maintenance of the firm's quality management system for painting operations (see Section 3.3.1 a).

Safety Manager: A qualified employee designated by executive management who is responsible for management, maintenance, and enforcement of the contracting company's plans for compliance with applicable safety, health and environmental regulations.

2.2 TYPES OF STRUCTURES: Commercial and institutional structures encompass a wide range of building types and interior and exterior configurations. Architectural paints

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.

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

2.4 EVALUATION PLANNING: The Qualifying Agency must develop criteria and rating plans to evaluate each painting contractor against this standard. The Qualifying Agency shall also determine which of the specific items deemed critical within the four functional areas are to be evaluated for subsequent follow-up evaluations, ensuring the items evaluated are the same for all painting contractors. The sequence of steps for conducting an evaluation within a certification program is outlined in Section 4. The initial evaluation, in each instance, will be performed by the auditor and must include observation of the painting contractor's operational capability on one or more active commercial painting projects under contract.

3. General Qualification Requirements

3.1 MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES: Procedures shall exist for disseminating company policy and for personnel, administrative and financial management as follows:

3.1.1 Company Policy:

- a. Written policies stating its commitment to quality work, worker safety and health and environmental compliance.
- b. Written procedures for disseminating company policies to employees and those personnel working under its direction, including subcontractors. The painting contractor shall show that procedures are followed.

3.1.2 Organization and Personnel: The painting contractor shall have:

- a. A company-approved organization chart (updated as changes occur, signed, and dated by the responsible company executive (RE) showing division of responsibility within the contracting firm by name of person and title. Documentation and observation must show that responsibilities are carried out in accordance with the organization chart. Key management personnel (e.g., production manager, quality control supervisor, and safety manager) shall be full-time employees of the contracting firm and report to the RE.
- b. The painting 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 paints, 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 painting contractor shall provide:

- a. A brief written description of the painting contractor's method of financial record keeping.
- b. Written confirmation by a CPA firm or equivalent accounting professional that the painting contractor's operating accounting systems and procedures follow established and accepted accounting practices and principles.
- c. Documentation of review of contract specifications.
- d. Procedures implemented by management to review and distribute specifications to all employees who manage and effect projects.
- e. Written procedures that have been established and implemented for learning about and complying with federal, state and local administrative, environmental protection, worker health and safety regulations applicable to projects performed by the painting contractor. A person in the organization shall be assigned the task of keeping track of new, revised and withdrawn regulations and informing the CEO and/or other management personnel of the impact of regulatory changes on the company's operations.
- f. Information that it is a legally viable entity in the locations in which it operates. Examples include: filing of appropriate company ownership/incorporation papers; filing of federal tax returns in a timely manner; Federal Tax ID/EIN statement; holding current state and/or local business licenses and maintaining valid insurance coverage; and other evidence as required.
- g. Documentation that approved subcontractors are selected on the basis of their ability to assist the painting contractor in meeting project requirements and any specific inspection requirements. A painting contractor certified to SSPC-QP 9 has overall and ultimate responsibility to maintain all QP 9 requirements when delivered directly by subcontractors (see Mandatory Appendix B).
- h. Keep records of citations or fines concerning any and all federal, state, and local worker safety and health, wage and hour, tax, and other applicable code or governing regulations, and document that actions are taken to avoid repeat violations.

3.2 TECHNICAL CAPABILITIES: The applicant shall provide documented history of successfully performing application of architectural paints and shall provide evidence that it utilizes qualified personnel and appropriate technical

resources, equipment, and facilities. Evidence, at a minimum, shall include the following:

3.2.1 Craft Worker Qualifications: The painting contractor shall have a written craft worker assessment and proficiency monitoring program that defines procedures the company uses to initially qualify, train and at least annually evaluate and document the proficiency of all craft workers (i.e., persons performing surface preparation and application) under its supervision. The worker assessment program must meet the performance requirements of Mandatory Appendix C and evidence of its implementation must be documented.

3.2.2 Technical Resources:

- a. The painting contractor shall provide a list of technical societies, trade associations, or other industry groups (universities, major manufacturers, consultants) with which it is associated. Current membership certificates or correspondence shall be available at the home office location(s) to verify these associations.
- b. The painting contractor shall maintain a library of current versions of technical standards and references (e.g., manufacturer's product data sheets and manufacturer's safety data sheets (SDS; 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: The painting contractor shall have written procedures that it uses to convert job specifications into field work orders, job plans, instructions to craft workers, etc. These include procedures for:

- a. Logging receipt of specifications and revisions and recording recipients, as well as removing obsolete or superseded documents from the workplace.
- b. Procedures for formally clarifying ambiguous, erroneous, omitted, or conflicting specification and contract requirements.
- c. 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.
- e. Quality control programs. Work procedures shall specifically define quality control methods and criteria.

3.2.4 Experience, Equipment, and Facilities

3.2.4.1 Experience:

- a. The painting contractor shall provide a list of examples of current and completed projects, performed under the applicant's name, demonstrating a minimum of 18 months experience¹ that supports the painting

contractor's suitability for certification. The list shall include the following:

- Name, address, and principal contact(s) of facility owners, general contractors, or other clients, including specific contact information (e.g., cell phone, landline phone, email address, mailing address).
 - Description of work performed, including: generic types of architectural paints/thinners applied with name and address of manufacturers; equipment used; project and shift supervisor's name(s) and number of painters required per shift; special safety or environmental requirements or provisions; approximate volume of paint applied.
- b. The painting contractor shall provide evidence of successful completion of the company's three most recent commercial painting projects. Examples of evidence include: copies of current facility owner evaluations; letters of commendation; statements confirming final payment and acceptance of work or equivalent documentation.
 - c. The painting contractor shall notify the Qualifying Agency of any contracts that it failed to complete due to default, or cause, and explain the cause.
 - d. The painting contractor shall notify the Qualifying Agency of any project that has entered litigation or arbitration and explain the cause.
 - e. The painting contractor shall notify the Qualifying Agency of any disbarments, disqualifications due to defective work, termination for cause, unsatisfactory performance, regulatory non-compliance, fraud, illegal activities, or any legal actions concerning alleged business operation violations.

3.2.4.2 Equipment: The painting contractor shall provide written description of preventive maintenance (PM) and repair procedures for equipment used (e.g., compressors, paint pumps; pressure washing units; spray equipment; ventilation equipment) and evidence of use of such plans, including PM and repair logs.

3.2.4.3 Facilities: The painting contractor shall maintain proper storage of paints and thinners in accordance with manufacturer's requirements, governing safety regulations and contract specifications. At a minimum, flammable materials shall be stored in approved containers; storage area temperature shall be maintained in accordance with manufacturer's recommendations or overriding safety regulations; smoking shall be prohibited; mixing of paints shall be prohibited in the storage area; paint with expired shelf life shall be stored separately; storage area is to be kept neat and orderly, free of accumulation of empty paint cans, combustibles, and other debris.

3.3 JOB QUALITY MONITORING: The painting contractor shall demonstrate the existence of inspection equipment and qualified personnel within the organization who are used

¹ Contractors having less than 18 months experience have the option to apply for SSPC-QP 7 qualification.