

Issuing of the UIC seal of approval/UIC label for vehicle components

Attribution d'un label de qualité UIC aux éléments constitutifs des matériels roulants
Vergabe des UIC-Gütesiegels / UIC-Labels für Fahrzeug-Komponenten



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The person responsible for this leaflet is indicated in the UIC Code

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Summary

This document describes the procedure applied by UIC to assess the conformity of railway products.

The conformity of products is assessed against the TSIs, ENs and UIC leaflets in which the product requirements are detailed.

If a product passes the conformity assessment it is awarded the "UIC seal of approval" (or "UIC label").

The present document defines the requirements for the parties involved in the procedure, in particular:

- the applicant for the "UIC seal of approval",
- the UIC body responsible for the product (referred to hereafter as "UIC body"),
- the UIC experts,
- the laboratories and test centres.

1 - Introduction

Conformity assessments at European level are performed by Notified Bodies when conducted against binding regulations, or by accredited bodies for product certification when conducted against voluntary standards.

Conformity assessment requires specialist railway expertise of railway products of the kind possessed by UIC for many years and used to issue "UIC product approval".

The UIC approval procedure serves to preserve the added value provided by UIC experts in the assessment of rail products via a "UIC seal of approval", and enable notified or accredited bodies to use the UIC certification in their own work, thus avoiding duplication of the same tasks.

Benefits of a "UIC seal of approval" compared to a simple "evaluation against the TSI":

1. For railway operators ...
The products identified and assessed not only meet the safety requirements of the TSIs and ENs (see [List of abbreviations - page 22](#)) but also display features relevant to operators described in UIC leaflets concerning:
 - fitness for service
 - maintainability
 - Life Cycle Costs (LCC)
2. For the component manufacturer ...
Their products, which are particularly useful for railway operators, receive a seal of quality acknowledged by all UIC railways, serving, inter alia, as a *reference*: "Approved and recommended by UIC".

2 - Purpose

This document describes the procedure used by UIC to assess the conformity of railway products.

Conformity is assessed against the TSIs, ENs and UIC leaflets containing the product requirements.

The result of the procedure is a "UIC seal of approval" for the product. The present document defines the requirements to be met by:

- the applicant for a "UIC seal of approval",
- the UIC body,
- the UIC experts,
- the laboratories and test centres.

3 - Documents

3.1 - Reference documents

3.1.1 - Quality management

Depending on their tasks, the parties involved in the assessment process must draw on the following reference documents:

- Parties acting for UIC: *EN 45011* (see Bibliography - page 23),
- Laboratories and test centres: *EN ISO/IEC 17025* (see Bibliography - page 23).

3.1.2 - Product requirements

The reference documents for all products to be issued with a UIC seal of approval are the following:

- the relevant TSIs,
- the ENs,
- the UIC leaflets or,
- other standards.

These documents concern the features of the product and the assessment method (testing, product markings, verification).

The list of vehicle components awarded a UIC seal of approval in accordance with the present leaflet is mentioned in Appendix E - page 24 and published on the UIC website.

3.2 - Assessment documents

The documents to be supplied or produced for the assessment procedure (application, test reports, drawings, test certificates), must be provided in at least one of the three official UIC languages.

The expert report (appraisal) of the assessment procedure must be produced in all three UIC languages (English, French and German).

As documentary evidence of conformity, the expert report must contain all the information and measurements needed for the assessment, including all characteristic curves and tables from test reports.

4 - Assessment procedure

To clarify the overall procedure, a flow chart is contained in Appendix A - page 13.

Appendix A contains detailed implementation guidelines for the individual steps in the process.

4.1 - Initiating the assessment procedure

In order to initiate the assessment procedure for a product, the applicant must submit an application for a seal of approval to UIC Headquarters (UIC HQ).

UIC HQ (see [List of abbreviations - page 22](#)) and the applicant then conclude a contract specifying that the costs of assessment are to be borne by the applicant.

In the absence of a special agreement, the applicant has six months from the date of the quote being sent by UIC HQ to reach an agreement relating to the execution of the evaluation process.

If the contract is not concluded by the recipient within six months of the quote being sent by UIC HQ, then the application for component assessment automatically expires and must be re-submitted, if required.

If so decided by the UIC body on reasonable grounds, the UIC HQ may end an assessment process prior to the label being issued, in which case the applicant's costs will be refunded on a pro rata basis depending on the stage of the process reached.

Possible reasons for premature termination:

- non-adherence to contract conditions,
- necessary documentation not being provided within the agreed time period following repeated requests,
- the contents of the submitted documentation being incorrect or not representing reality,
- the components under evaluation constituting a significant operational hazard,
- agreed rectification of defects not being undertaken or being insufficient.

4.2 - Performing the assessment procedure

Vehicle components with more than one area of use must be subject to separate assessment procedures, as they must be compliant with several sets of rules.

An overview is given in Appendix [E - page 24](#).

The assessment procedure, depending on the type of use, must meet the requirements of *EN 45011* and *EN ISO/IEC 17025*.

The procedure is performed by a team of UIC experts, selected as described in point [6.2 - page 10](#). One expert may be sufficient, depending on the product to be assessed and the reference documentation. For ease of expression, the term "team of experts" is used throughout the leaflet.

The team of experts must declare their independence from the applicant in the appraisal.

One of the experts in the team is nominated as the assessment coordinator. The expert must be able to communicate in one of the three official UIC languages, to be agreed with the applicant.

In order to pinpoint areas of weakness (development support) and obtain data on operational performance and wear (ongoing development), service testing is to be conducted in accordance with Appendix [G - page 17](#). The requirements set forth in that appendix are only obligatory if the relevant leaflet does not contain provisions that exceed or differ from those in the appendix.

4.3 - Defining an assessment plan

Before work begins, an assessment plan must be prepared by the manufacturer. The assessment plan must contain the following information:

- The features to be assessed,
- how those features are assessed,
- which laboratories/test centres have already been used and could potentially be used again,
- all reference documents.

The assessment plan must be approved by the UIC team of experts. The UIC body also reserves the right to approve the assessment plan by majority decision, e.g. when the assessment procedure applies to an entirely new product.

4.4 - Producing an appraisal

The team of experts assesses the conformity of the product and/or the components in accordance with the approved assessment plan.

The team of experts compiles its assessments and all relevant information in the form of a report (expert appraisal). If, in the course of the procedure, inconsistencies with the reference documents are observed, these will be mentioned in the report, along with the responses provided by the applicant.

At the end of the assessment procedure, the team of experts submits a recommendation to the UIC body stating whether the product or component should:

- be issued the UIC seal of approval or
- not be issued the UIC seal of approval or
- be issued the UIC seal of approval subject to specific conditions, e.g.:
 - once the recognised defects have been corrected,
 - only preliminary approval,
 - subject to compliance with special additional requirements.

4.5 - Issuing the UIC seal of approval

The report (expert appraisal) is sent to all members of the UIC body for examination. The relevant reference documents for the assessment are to be made available to members of the UIC body.

The expert appraisal is then examined by the members of the UIC body. An official decision on issuing the certificate is subsequently taken at a plenary session.

UIC HQ is to organise the plenary session and send the relevant documents to the UIC body at least 4 weeks in advance of that session.

Following a plenary meeting of the UIC body, depending on the product and the contents of the report, members may use other forms of communications (e.g. post, email, etc.) in view of reaching an official decision. All members of the UIC body must agree to this beforehand.

UIC informs the applicant of the decision taken; in the event that the certificate has not been issued or has been issued conditionally, it is to explain the reasons. If the product has been successfully certified, UIC HQ issues the applicant with a UIC seal of approval as per [Appendix D - page 22](#).

The UIC label shall remain valid for the period specified by the reference documents used for the assessment.

All UIC certificates are allocated a document number in accordance with the following classification criteria:

Letter according to Appendix E - page 24

Numbers 01 - xx: Sequence number

Numbers xx - xx: Calendar year

Numbers xx - xx: Month

e.g. B-02/2008-04

Brakes, second certificate of the year (2008), issued in April.

4.6 - Issuing a provisional UIC seal of approval

For components which have to demonstrate their compliance in revenue service before the end of the assessment procedure, once these have fully and successfully completed the bench and/or line tests, manufacturers may request the issue of a provisional UIC seal of approval to simplify the service tests. This provisional certificate may prescribe limited use of the certified components in terms of time or quantity.

If within the period of provisional approval the component is demonstrated to be compliant, the provisional certificate becomes a definitive UIC seal of approval as provided for by point 4.5 - page 7.

4.7 - Withdrawal of the UIC seal of approval

In the event of characteristics becoming evident in service which differ from those of the certified components or which result in safety-relevant deficiencies, the responsible UIC body may decide to withdraw the UIC seal of approval.

The seal of approval may only be re-issued by decision of the UIC body if the defect or deviating characteristics of the components have demonstrably been corrected.

5 - Publication of assessment results

The list of products to have been awarded a UIC seal of approval is published on the UIC website: www.uic.org/catalog.

The "assessment dossier" for the seal of approval consists of:

- all the documents used by the UIC team of experts for the assessment (test report, analysis, calculations, drawings, etc.),
- the expert appraisal according point 4.4 - page 7,
- the decision of the UIC body.

UIC archives this file for a period of 40 (forty) years.

The file may be consulted by any UIC member on request.

6 - Parties involved in the process

6.1 - Applicant for assessment

The applicant is generally the company which manufactured the product, or the legal or commercial representative thereof.

Alongside its application for a seal of approval, the applicant supplies UIC with the documents accompanying the product to be assessed.

If so decided by the responsible UIC body, the team of assessors may inspect the manufacturer's production facilities and, where appropriate, those of his suppliers. In this event it must be ensured that the manufacturer has sustained control over production processes and is in a position to ensure a consistent level of quality. This also applies to products or work provided by third parties. A report is to be compiled on this inspection, which will form part of the appraisal.

6.2 - Members of the UIC team of experts

6.2.1 - Selection of experts

The UIC body to be assessed selects the members of the team of experts from a list of competent experts prepared in advance by the same UIC body.

UIC HQ may select the experts itself from a list if time pressure requires. In such instances, the UIC body must be informed rapidly.

6.2.2 - Requirements of the experts

In order to be entered onto a list as an expert, candidates must meet the following four requirements:

- represent a UIC member company or be a UIC staff member,
- they must be an expert recognised by a supervisory authority or their company must be an associate partner of a Notified Body (Candidates from non-EU members must provide an equivalent qualification),
- have participated in a European Working Group,
- have been involved in a conformity assessment within his/her own company in the two years preceding the application. Proposals for candidates are to be submitted by the candidate's company. Approval of the candidate as a new expert is to be given, following examination of the proposal, by the UIC body.

The list of experts is contained in Appendix C - page 21.

Experts' competence against the aforementioned criteria is assessed every three years; recognition as an expert assessor must be confirmed in every case by the UIC body. However, experts shall be immediately removed from the list if they cease to be a representative of a UIC member company or a member of UIC staff. In such cases, assessment procedures that have begun but not been completed may still be completed, in consultation with the UIC body.