



Timber Products Inspection, Inc.

Product Certification Public Document

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2.0 SCOPE

The Timber Products Inspection, Inc. (TP) Certification Program is designed to ensure that participating organizations can meet all requirements of the most recent versions of the standards that apply to their particular discipline.

This manual provides these organizations with the procedures to apply for certification as well as the respective program requirements and procedures which must be met in order to declare and/or label products as being compliant with those standards.

3.0 REFERENCES

- a) ISO/IEC 17065:2012 *Conformity Assessment – Requirements for Bodies Certifying Products, Processes, and Services*
- b) ISO 17020 *General Criteria for the Operations of Various Types of Bodies Performing Inspections*
- c) ISO/IEC Guide 28 *Conformity Assessment – Guidance on a Third-Party Certification System for Products*
- d) ISO/IEC Guide 53 *Conformity Assessment – Guidance on the Use of an Organization's Quality Management System in Product Certification*
- e) ISO/IEC Guide 17007 *Guidelines for Drafting of Normative Documents Suitable for Use for Conformity Assessment*
- f) ISO 19011 *Guidelines for Auditing Management Systems*
- g) Applicable technical standards

4.0 DEFINITIONS

- 4.1 Definitions of terms can be found in the references listed above.

5.0 APPLICATION PROCESS

5.1 Application

Organizations seeking product certification must complete and sign the *Application for Program* for which the organization is seeking TP recognition. TP will process the application form and inform the organization of acceptance or additional requirements within 10 days from the date the application was received.

By entering into the application process, it is understood that the organization seeking product certification will:

- a) Always comply with the relevant provisions of the certification program.
- b) Make all necessary arrangements for the conduct of the evaluation, including provision for examining documentation and access to all areas, records (including internal audit reports) and personnel for the purposes of evaluation and resolution of complaints.
- c) Make claims regarding certification only in respect to the scope for which certification has been granted.
- d) Not use its product certification in such a manner as to bring the certification body into disrepute and not make any statement regarding its product certification which the certification body may consider misleading or unauthorized.
- e) Upon suspension or cancellation of certification, discontinue its use of all advertising material that contains any reference thereto and return any certification documents as required by the certification body.
- f) Use certification only to indicate that products are certified as being in conformity with specified standards.
- g) Endeavor to ensure that no certificate or report or any part thereof is used in a misleading manner.
- h) In making reference to its product certification in communication media such as documents, brochures or advertising, complies with the requirements of the certification body.
- i) Comply with any requirement that may be prescribed in the TP standard relating to use of marks of conformity.
- j) Keep a record of all complaints made known to themselves relating to compliance with TP standards and make these records available to TP when requested.
 1. Take appropriate action with respect to such complaints and any deficiencies found in products that affect compliance with the requirements for certification.
 2. Document the actions taken.
- k) Inform TP, without delay, of changes that may affect its ability to conform to the requirements of the TP standards.

Upon request by the organization seeking product certification, TP will provide any information or answer any questions pertinent to the certification process.

5.2 Initial Assessment

Upon acceptance of the application, TP will immediately request more specific information from the organization in order to perform an initial assessment prior to visiting the production facility. TP will require (at a minimum) the following:

- a) A copy of the organization's quality systems manual.
- b) Written description of the organization's production process or scheme.

TP may request additional information not noted above in order to conduct the initial assessment.

TP will acknowledge receipt of all information within 10 days. TP will respond within those 10 days if any missing, incomplete or additional information is required. TP will await receipt of complete information before conducting the initial assessment.

Once complete information is received, TP will evaluate the information and establish, confirm or modify the production scheme under consideration. The initial assessment will take approximately 30 days and may involve communications between TP and the organization requesting certification.

If corrective action is necessary with regard to the documents or production scheme, TP will notify the organization and await submittal of corrected documents or scheme outline. Once corrective action has been completed, submitted and approved, TP will schedule an on-site assessment of the organization's facility.

5.3 On-Site Assessment

TP will schedule an on-site assessment within 30 days of completion of the initial assessment. TP will conduct an on-site assessment of the organization's quality system, production process and testing procedures. After the on-site assessment is complete, TP will notify the organization of corrective actions required (if necessary) prior to leaving the site. A full report of the on-site assessment will be issued as described below in Section 5.4.

If reassessment is required, the organization will notify TP when the nonconformities have been corrected and a follow-up assessment will be scheduled within 30 days of this notification.

If a major nonconformity is found, a certificate of conformance shall not be issued until TP verifies that corrective action approved by the lead auditor has been implemented. A revisit may be required to verify implementation of corrective action.

If a minor nonconformity is found, a certificate of conformance may be issued only after the lead auditor approves a corrective action plan that addresses the nonconformity within an agreed-upon period, not to exceed one year. Verification that the corrective action has been effectively implemented shall occur during the next surveillance audit.

For the initial and recertification on-site assessments, all non-conformances relative to the successful implementation of the product certification must be resolved before certification can be granted. The organization will have 30 days from the receipt of their official report to correct any non-conformances.

5.4 Evaluation and Decision

Upon completion of the on-site assessment, TP will evaluate the execution of the organization's production and testing procedures against the applicable standard requirements. TP will issue a full report of findings as to the conformity with all of the requirements. The report will identify nonconformities, where found, that must be corrected in order to comply with all of the requirements and the extent of further evaluation or on-site assessment. If the organization can show that remedial action has been taken to meet all the requirements within a specified time limit, TP will only repeat the necessary parts of the assessment procedure affected by the nonconformities. TP will render a decision on the certification status of the organization in the report and the decision may be subject to correction of nonconformities.

6.0 LICENSING

When the decision has been made to grant certification to the organization, TP will provide the contract agreement for all approved products to the organization. The organization shall sign the contract agreement between TP and client that outlines the fees and commitment to time of service.

7.0 EXTENSION OR REDUCTION OF SCOPE

An organization wishing to extend or reduce the scope of their product certification to additional products must apply to TP in writing before new products will be inspected and tested. In such cases, TP will evaluate the extent of assessment necessary for certification. If the program requirements are met, the scope of certification can be extended and the license agreement may be modified.

If the organization wishes to apply the certification to additional types of products, but to different standard requirements, or if the organization wishes to apply for certification to be used in an additional facility that is not covered by the earlier license, it will be necessary for the organization to carry out those parts of the original application procedure which do not cover the new circumstances.

TP shall be notified should the organization intend to make changes such as modification to the product, manufacturing process, or if relevant, its quality system, which affect the conformity of the product. TP shall determine whether the announced changes require further investigations. If such is the case, the organization shall not be allowed to release certified products resulting from such changes until TP has notified the supplier accordingly.

Furthermore, TP will notify the organization when there are changes to the standards that effect their certification requirements. TP will provide the organization with an appropriate amount of time to adjust to the revised requirements. The organization shall make every effort to implement the necessary changes into their program to maintain compliance with the applicable standard requirements.

8.0 SURVEILLANCE

TP will conduct periodic, on-site conformity assessments of the organization's quality system and production process to ensure continual compliance with the applicable standards. The number of conformity assessments conducted by TP will be determined by TP and the organization, depending upon the program requirements. Conformity assessments will be conducted at least annually as required by the applicable standard.

Procedures and requirements for conformity assessments shall be in accordance with the TP auditing policies and the standards listed within the "References" section of this document. Assessment shall include a review of the organizations quality management system, implementation of the certification scheme, labeling processes, and internal records at a minimum.

Upon completion of the conformities assessment, TP shall provide a copy of the surveillance report and notify the organization of its findings -- including a discussion of corrective actions necessary for any non-conformities noted. TP reserves the right to perform follow-up assessment should it be deemed necessary. Corrective actions requiring written verification shall be submitted to TP's office within 15 days of the conformity assessment. Organizations failing to adequately address corrective actions are subject to suspension or withdrawal from the certification program.

9.0 USE OF TP LABELS

Upon receiving labels from TP, organizations may apply the TP label to indicate certification and compliance with the certified standards. TP labels shall be applied to products in accordance with TP policies and shall not imply certification outside of the audited scope. TP labels shall be applied to certified products only. The TP trademark may be used on marketing materials as long as a copy of the marketing material is provided to TP in advance for approval. No TP labels shall be applied to materials outside the certified product scope.

10.0 MISUSE OF TP LABELS

TP will take action when unauthorized, incorrect, or misleading use of TP labels is found. TP retains the right to remove or obliterate inappropriate marks. If inappropriate labeling uses are identified, TP will furnish the organization with written notice specifying the inappropriate use(s). The organization will then need to make a correction by sanding or blacking out the incorrect

labels and replacing with the correct information. Failure to make correction will result in revocation of the right to use the TP labels. In the event the organization should observe misuse of any of the TP labels, the organization shall immediately report such improper use to TP.

11.0 SUSPENSION OR WITHDRAWAL OF A TP LABEL

TP reserves the right to suspend or withdraw a TP label from an organization for non-compliance with certification requirements. In the event of suspension or withdrawal, the organization shall immediately cease the use of any TP label, and TP stamps may be removed from the organization's possession.

TP may suspend certification in cases when, for example:

-) The client's certification system has persistently or seriously failed to meet the applicable standard requirements.
-) The certified client does not allow surveillance or recertification audits to be conducted at the required frequencies, or
-) The certified client has voluntarily requested a suspension.

Under suspension, the client's certification system is temporarily invalid. Failure to resolve the issues that have resulted in the suspension within six months of the suspension notification date shall result in withdrawal or reduction of the scope of certification.

TP may reduce the client's scope of certification to exclude the parts not meeting requirements when the client has persistently or seriously failed to meet the certification requirements for those parts of the scope certification.

In the event of suspension or withdrawal, the organization shall immediately cease the use of any TP labels and references to certification within its organization. This includes letterhead and marketing material.

12.0 CONFIDENTIALITY, INDEPENDENCE, & OBJECTIVITY

Except as required by law, information gained in the course of certification about a particular product or organization shall not be disclosed to a third-party without the written consent of the organization or a court order. Where the law requires information to be disclosed to a third-party, the organization shall be informed of the information provided as permitted by law.

TP shall ensure that the services it provides are impartial and free from conflict of interest and that all information gathered as part of these services is maintained in strict confidence. TP shall require all personnel involved in certification activity (including staff, auditors, and technical experts) to sign a confidentiality and non-conflict of interest statement. This statement and TP's Statement of Independence are available upon request to TP's Director of Engineering/Quality.

13.0 COMPLAINTS, DISPUTES, AND APPEALS

The organization shall have procedures to handle complaints and disputes with its customers. All complaints and disputes as well as any action taken to handle them must be documented and maintained on file. The organization shall provide TP with these records upon request.

Complaints, disputes, and appeals directed towards TP shall be provided to TP's office via written communication. The TP certification program manager shall review the communication and respond appropriately in writing via an initial response. Should the organization choose to dispute TP's initial response, the organization may issue an appeal within 15 days via written communication. Appeals will be reviewed by TP's Certification Oversight Committee and a final decision will be issued on the matter.

14.0 RECORDS

Quality records shall be maintained by the organization for a minimum of three years for TP and shall be made readily available to TP upon request. Records shall be kept confidential, maintained by designated personnel and stored in a secure manner at all times.

Records include but are not limited to the following:

- a) Certification records (testing and inspections)
- b) Surveillance reports
- c) Certification marks
- d) Complaint records

15.0 FEES

Fees may be changed or modified at any time. Please check with the TP application representative for accurate and up-to-date fees. Some fees may be negotiated based on the organization's scope of certification.

The following fees are applicable for certification:

On-Site Assessment Fee..... See Contract Agreement
Surveillance Fee.....See Contract Agreement

*Fees do not include travel and lodging expenses. Organizations seeking certification shall reimburse TP for travel and lodging expenses associated with on-site assessments.