

Accreditation of Inspection Bodies

IS-6

INAB accredits Inspection Bodies to the standard **ISO/IEC 17020:1998** "General criteria for the operation of various types of bodies performing inspection". These Inspection Bodies have functions which include the examination of product design, product, services, processes or plant, and the determination of their conformity with specific requirements or, on the basis of professional judgement, general requirements and the subsequent reporting of results of these activities. These organisations perform inspections of, for example, inspection of pressurised gas cylinders, inspection of buildings for the presence of asbestos, lifts, hoists, cranes, electrical installations, escalators etc.

The requirement for the independence of inspection bodies may vary according to legislation and market needs. There may be a requirement to have inspections carried out by an Inspection Body having third party status i.e. that are independent relative to the seller/producer and purchaser. They generally perform inspection of facilities, equipment, installations etc. in respect of which the authorities have special regulations for safety reasons.

INAB, in cooperation with the EPA and the Dept of Environment, Heritage and local Government (DOELG), established a national accreditation programme for prospective Accredited Inspection Contractors (AIC's) under the Emission of Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC) Directive, Council Directive 1999/13/EC which is being implemented in Ireland as per Statutory Instrument No. 543 of 2002, "Emissions of Volatile Organic Compounds from Organic Solvents Regulations 2002". EC Directive 2004/42/CEI implemented by Statutory Instrument 199 of 2007 "Limitation of emissions of volatile organic compounds due to the use of organic solvents in certain paints, varnishes and vehicle refinishing products regulations 2007". The Solvents Regulations require that specified activities not requiring an IPPC licence should be registered and operate in accordance with a certificate of compliance issued by the competent authority. The competent authority is the local authority (County Council or City Council) in whose functional area the specified installation is located. A certificate of compliance will be issued by the local authority on the basis of an annual inspection and report by an Accredited Inspection Contractor (AIC) confirming that the installation is in compliance with the Regulations. Installations requiring an AIC/VOC inspection to demonstrate compliance with the Directive should have the inspection conducted by one of the Accredited Inspection Contractors (AIC).

INAB applicant and accredited Inspection Bodies are required to implement in full the requirements of ISO 17020 and associated EA¹, IAF², ILAC³ and INAB mandatory documents, which may be accessed from the INAB website at www.inab.ie

¹ EA is the European Co-operation for Accreditation

² IAF is the International Accreditation Forum

Inspection Bodies are accredited in compliance with ISO 17020 for a defined range of activities and these are detailed in a scope of accreditation which is annexed to the organisation's accreditation certificate. Inspection Bodies accredited by INAB perform inspections in areas such as: engineering equipment: asbestos: food: and volatile organic compounds.

A directory of these scopes of accreditation is maintained by INAB and is available from the INAB website.

The process for the accreditation of Inspection Bodies is fully described in INAB Publication P7, also available from the INAB website.

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