

Product Certification System

Introduction

Product certification (PC) is a process in which a third party certification body (CB), after undertaking the specified procedures, issues a certificate of conformity (CoC) (also known as product certificate) to a supplier confirming that its product satisfies the requirements of a specified Product Conformity Certification Scheme (PCCS). PC can enhance the product quality through upstream control and ensure the consistency in production quality through continuous surveillance of production process in the factory. There are various PCCSs for construction products and a list of such PCCSs is available at the website of the Hong Kong Council for Testing and Certification¹. CBs accredited under Hong Kong Certification Body Accreditation Scheme (HKCAS) of Hong Kong Accreditation Service² (HKAS) or its Multilateral Recognition Arrangement/Mutual Recognition Agreement partners are qualified to issue a CoC in accordance with the respective PCCS.

Quality Assurance of Product Certification System

2. The certification process of products starts with the submission of product information to CB selected by a supplier for application for a CoC. CB will make an evaluation including factory audit of production and on-site selection for testing of one or more samples of products representative of the production by an independent accredited laboratory³. CB may issue a CoC to confirm that a product of a given supplier satisfies the requirements set out in the specified PCCS.

3. To ensure the continuous compliance with the conditions of certification, CB will carry out periodic surveillance audit to the plant and the Quality System Management Office in accordance with the respective PCCS including audit compliance test of randomly selected samples. A CoC is usually valid for 3 years. Re-certification audit will be carried out as if it is an initial certification audit upon the expiry of the CoC. In the event that the manufacturer or product fails to comply with the requirements of the certification scheme (e.g. fails in the periodic surveillance audit), the CoC may be suspended or withdrawn by CB. In this connection, authorized persons (APs) should require the supplier to provide the relevant test reports of the products described in paragraph 2 above for record and submission to the Buildings Department (BD) if necessary.

/Submission ...

¹ https://www.hkctc.gov.hk/en/tcsector/ba/construction_product_cert_c.html.

² Particulars of these accredited CBs under HKCAS are available in https://www.itc.gov.hk/en/quality/hkas/conformity_assessment_bodies/hkas.html.

³ The laboratory is accredited under the Hong Kong Laboratory Accreditation Scheme by Hong Kong Accreditation Service or its Mutual Recognition Arrangement partners.

Submission of CoCs

4. To enhance the quality of buildings by means of better quality control of the building products used, the Building Authority will accept valid CoCs of fire rated doorsets and non-loadbearing fire partition walls under PCCS for Passive Fire Protection Products (Fire Door and Non-loadbearing Fire Partition) (Issue 3)⁴ issued by accredited CBs as an alternative to the test or assessment reports prepared by accredited laboratories, to demonstrate compliance with the Buildings Ordinance (BO).

5. Upon completion of the building works, APs/registered contractors may submit relevant CoCs together with the Certificate and Schedule of Building Materials and Products (Schedule) as stipulated in Practice Note for Authorized Persons, Registered Structural Engineers and Registered Geotechnical Engineers (PNAP) APP-13 to certify that the building products used are in compliance with the BO. Submission of the test or assessment reports for these products will not be required.

6. BD will randomly select building materials/products with CoCs from the Schedule received for audit check so as to verify the relevance of the CoCs. Relevant information of the CoCs will then be transferred to the Central Data Bank as stipulated under PNAP ADM-20.

Other PCCSs

7. To promote wider adoption of PC for other building products or PCCSs, BD is prepared to advise scheme owners on their PCCSs regarding compliance with the BO as well as keeping in view the availability of suitable PCCSs for other building products.

8. A similar practice note has been issued to registered contractors.

(YU Tak-cheung)
Building Authority

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⁴ The Hong Kong Institute of Steel Construction is the scheme owner of the PCCS for Passive Fire Protection Products.