



European Commission

Enterprise and Industry Directorate General

EXPLANATORY PART OF THE “SCREENING” -
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Accreditation

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DG Enterprise and Industry
Legal aspects linked to the internal market

Role of accreditation

- Attestation following assessment that a CAB is technically competent, issued by an authoritative third party (*“accreditation body”*)
- Privileged position under New & Global Approaches:
 - ➔ Role of accreditation to promote confidence in notified bodies through use of transparent assessment procedures and consensus documents
 - ➔ Harmonised standards (EN45000 series) provide presumption of conformity
- Widely used in other Community internal market legislation

Designation of notified bodies

- National designating authorities most often rely on technical assessment performed by their **national accreditation bodies**
- Accreditation is not mandatory, but bodies accredited to relevant harmonised standards are presumed to conform with minimum criteria of Directives (EN 45000 series)
- Need to demonstrate technical capability regarding technical specifications and performance requirements of the relevant Directive

Accreditation policy (1)

- Accreditation should be the last level of control providing confidence in the conformity assessment system:
 - ➔ accreditation is not “just another business”: competition between accreditors would undermine confidence in accreditation
 - ➔ National public authorities have responsibility to ensure the proper functioning of the nationally recognised accreditation body/system

Accreditation policy (2)

- Confidence in accreditation requires:
 - Organised and operated as
 - ⇒ **Public authority activity**
 - national recognition
 - under responsibility and with authority from government
 - ⇒ **Service of general interest**
 - accountability to a broad range of stakeholders

Accreditation policy (3)

- Based on publicly-available, consensus documents
 - ⇒ **ISO Guides/Standards**
- Accreditation bodies should participate in regular peer evaluation
 - ⇒ **Multilateral Agreements/MLAs**
- MLAs should be technically rigorous
 - ⇒ **No “shortcuts” for political reasons**

Accreditation policy (4)

- Accreditation bodies shall be independent of and impartial vis-à-vis their clients :
 - ➔ No competition between accreditors & accredited CABs
- Clear separation between accreditation and other conformity assessment activities
 - ➔ Perceived worth of accreditation as an authoritative instrument
 - ➔ Accreditation bodies should not offer other conformity assessment services