

SAUDI ARABIAN STANDARDS ORGANIZATION
(SASO)

TECHNICAL DIRECTIVE
PART THREE:
CONFORMITY ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES

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Introduction:

By developing and applying the conformity assessment procedures, Saudi Arabian Standards Organization does not aim at creating unnecessary technical barriers to international trade. However, by doing so, SASO shall ensure that the product, manufacturing conditions process, or the service fulfills specified conditions and standards, as well as observes the rulings of Islamic Sharia, hygiene and safety of man, animals, plants, and environment, national security protection and prevention of fraudulent practices. SASO depends in its work on conformity assessment procedures which were prepared in accordance with the relevant international standards, guides, and recommendations issued by international organizations such as the International Organization for Standardization (ISO).

To achieve this goal, this part of SASO technical work manual is developed to present the conformity assessment procedures adopted by SASO, which include:

- Quality Mark regulations
- Conformity Certificate regulations

I. Definitions:

The definitions mentioned in Part One of SASO's Technical work manual: 'Standardization and relevant activities – General Terms' apply, with observation of the following definitions for the purpose of this Part of the Manual.

1.1 SASO

Saudi Arabian Standards Organization.

1.2 Quality Mark

A mark approved by SASO that indicates the product's conformance to its relevant Saudi standard.

1.3 Quality Assurance

All the planned and regulatory activities implemented in the quality system to furnish sufficient confidence that an entity will abide by quality requirements.

1.4 Conformity Certificate

A document issued pursuant to the rules of conformity certificate system so as to furnish confidence that the product complies with specific relevant standard or any other standard document.

II. General Provisions

- 1.** Upon setting and application of conformity assessment to ensure conformity of the local and imported products with the Saudi mandatory standards (Saudi technical regulation) and Saudi voluntary standards, the following shall be observed:

- 1.1** SASO accepts that conformity assessment procedures shall be equally available to suppliers and national firms, including the possibility of conducting the assessment activities at the site of the conformity assessment applicant.

- 1.2** SASO undertakes that the procedures of conformity assessment approved or applied shall not be barriers to international trade, and shall not be more vigorous than required to ensure sufficient confidence that the products conform to technical regulations or standards, observing the hazards that may be caused by nonconformity.

- 2.** To implement II.1, SASO undertakes to:

- 2.1** Conformity assessment procedures are undertaken and completed as expeditiously as possible and in a no less favourable order for products originating in the territories of other Members than for like domestic products;

- 2.2** Check the documents submitted to it requesting conformity assessment without delay, and inform the applicant of deficiencies, if any. SASO also shall be committed to notify the applicant of the assessment procedures results as soon as possible to take the necessary corrective actions;

- 2.3** The documents and information required to be submitted with the conformity assessment procedure application shall be within the actual requirements for conformity assessment;

- 2.4** Ensure confidentiality of the information of submitted conformity assessment application;
 - 2.5** Unify conformity assessment charges inside Saudi Arabia and abroad, and add travel and communication expenses if conformity assessment is requested from outside Saudi Arabia; and
 - 2.6** Set procedures to look unto complaints on conformity assessment procedures and take corrective actions when the complaint is justifiable, without contradiction to Islamic Sharia tenets, national security, environmental protection, health and safety maintenance requirements.
- 3.** Nothing in paragraphs 1 and 2 shall prevent Saudi Arabia from carrying out reasonable spot checks within the Kingdom.
- 4.** In the event, SASO develops a conformity assessment procedure not based on international guide or recommendation, or the contradiction between the technical content of conformity assessment procedure with the relevant international guides and recommendations, and when there is a remarkable effect of conformity assessment procedure on international trade, SASO has to:
 - 4.1** promulgate the notice in a publication at a proper early stage to inform the concerned parties that SASO intends to apply a certain conformity assessment procedure;
 - 4.2** notify the concerned bodies and member states of the products and services covered by the conformity assessment procedure together with a brief statement on its purpose and justification at any early and proper stage;
 - 4.3** provide the concerned bodies and member states (if they request) with details of the conformity assessment procedure or a copy thereof, in addition to specifying the procedures, as much as possible, that are far away in essence from the concerned international guides and recommendations; and
 - 4.4** give 60-day period to the concerned bodies and member states without bias to submit their written remarks to SASO. These remarks should be discussed and considered.

5. If pressing conditions that are repugnant to Islamic Sharia or contradictory to safety, health, environment or national security protection emerge, SASO may omit what it sees necessary of the steps of item (4), and shall perform the following upon approval of the conformity assessment procedure:
 - 5.1 inform the concerned bodies and member states of the conformity assessment procedure, the products and services covered by it, together with a brief statement of its purpose, justification and the circumstances that lead to its implementation;
 - 5.2 provide the concerned bodies and member states of a copy of the conformity assessment procedures upon their request; and
 - 5.3 allow, without bias, the concerned bodies and member states to submit their written remarks, and to discuss them when requested, and to take them into consideration.
6. Publication of all conformity assessment procedures that SASO adopted or being made available so as to allow all concerned bodies and member states to go through them.
7. Except for the urgent conditions indicated in item (5), an appropriate period shall be allowed between the declaration of the requirements for conformity assessment procedures and the commencement of application.
8. SASO shall answer all enquiries raised on the conformity assessment procedures and provide all concerned bodies and member states with these procedures upon request at the same prices inside the Kingdom along with actual delivery charges.
9. SASO shall not refuse entering into mutual recognition agreement programmes within the field of conformity assessment with any other member state according to agreed and specified restrictions and limitations in a way that is not contrary to the relevant international regulations and systems.

10. SASO shall participate, as per its capacity, at the technical committees of the international standardization organizations so as to study and discuss the topics and subjects pertaining to standards and conformity assessment procedures.
11. The competent bodies at the Kingdom shall be entitled to inspect the imported and locally produced products that may contradict the Islamic Sharia, national security, public health, environment or consumer safety and shall also prevent fraudulent and deceptive practices.
12. SASO shall ensure that any body adopted by SASO to carry out procedures of conformity assessment abides by all general rulings of this guide.

III. Conformity Assessment Procedures

SASO adopted and applied the following conformity procedures:

1. SASO adopted the international standards series ISO 9001/2000 on “Quality Management Systems”.
2. “The accreditation of Certification bodies” regulations has been adopted according to ISO/IEC Guide 61 that the certification bodies are accredited according to ISO/IEC Guide 61 and the international standards relevant to the field of registration.
3. “The laboratory accreditation” regulations has been approved according to ISO Guide 58 so as to accreditate laboratories meeting the requirements of Saudi standard SASO 17025 (ISO 17025).

4. Quality Mark Regulations:

The Quality Mark regulations is optional and shall be applied on establishments producing products that are conforming to relevant Saudi standards whether these establishments are inside or outside the Kingdom. The bodies wishing to obtain the Saudi Quality Mark are licensed to use it pursuant to the provisions and procedures

stipulated in the regulations of the Saudi Quality Mark that complies with ISO/IEC Guides 65 and 28.

Among the most essential requirements that should be met in the organization wishing to obtain a license for the use of the quality mark are the following:-

- 4.1** A Saudi standard for the product shall be available.
- 4.2** The availability of adequate testing capabilities to ensure the continuity of the quality of the product.
- 4.3** There should be a section responsible for production quality control.

Besides, all products bearing the mark are subject to SASO control, by performing periodical inspection visits to organizations having license to use the Mark, and taking samples from their products to analyse them and check its conformity where the organization pays specified costs to SASO for using the Mark. The license to use the Mark shall be for one year, and it shall be renewable if requested by the organization.

* The Quality Mark Regulation is shown in Annex (A).

5. The Conformity Certificate Regulation:-

The Conformity Certificate Regulation is optional and applicable to specified consignments of certain products when the organization submits application for obtaining a conformity certificate according to standards pertaining to such product where this regulation may be applied to domestic, exported and imported products. This will help in the implementation of such standards and facilitating the commercial exchange. This certificate is granted for consignment conforming to standards when the following conditions are met:-

- 5.1** The availability of a standard for the product requiring a certificate.
- 5.2** The organization shall be officially registered and allowed to deal in matters related to the consignment according to the applicable international rules so that they do not contradict with the Islamic Law and the national security requirements, public health protection, the consumer's safety, environment protection and preventing fraud and swindling.

5.3 The organization shall provide SASO with any information it requires on the product which is the subject of the certificate.

5.4 The organization shall pay the specified costs and expenses.

* The Conformity Certificate Regulation is shown in Annex (B).