

Australian/New Zealand Standard™

**Conformity assessment—Requirements
for the operation of various types of
bodies performing inspection**



AS/NZS ISO/IEC 17020:2013

This Joint Australian/New Zealand Standard was prepared by Joint Technical Committee QR-010, Conformity Assessment. It was approved on behalf of the Council of Standards Australia on 10 April 2013 and on behalf of the Council of Standards New Zealand on 16 May 2013.

This Standard was published on 30 May 2013.

The following are represented on Committee QR-010:

Association of Accredited Certification Bodies
Australasian Procurement and Construction Council
Australian Information Industry Association
Certification Interests (Australia)
Consumer Federation of Australia
International Accreditation Forum
International Accreditation New Zealand
Joint Accreditation System of Australia and New Zealand
National Association of Testing Authorities Australia
New Zealand Organisation for Quality

Keeping Standards up-to-date

Standards are living documents which reflect progress in science, technology and systems. To maintain their currency, all Standards are periodically reviewed, and new editions are published. Between editions, amendments may be issued. Standards may also be withdrawn. It is important that readers assure themselves they are using a current Standard, which should include any amendments which may have been published since the Standard was purchased.

Detailed information about joint Australian/New Zealand Standards can be found by visiting the Standards Web Shop at www.saiglobal.com.au or Standards New Zealand web site at www.standards.co.nz and looking up the relevant Standard in the on-line catalogue.

For more frequent listings or notification of revisions, amendments and withdrawals, Standards Australia and Standards New Zealand offer a number of update options. For information about these services, users should contact their respective national Standards organization.

We also welcome suggestions for improvement in our Standards, and especially encourage readers to notify us immediately of any apparent inaccuracies or ambiguities. Please address your comments to the Chief Executive of either Standards Australia or Standards New Zealand at the address shown on the back cover.

Australian/New Zealand Standard™

**Conformity assessment—Requirements
for the operation of various types of
bodies performing inspection**

Originated as part of HB 1839:1991 and HB 1857:1992.
Previous edition AS/NZS ISO/IEC 17020:2000.
Second edition 2013.

COPYRIGHT

© Standards Australia Limited/Standards New Zealand

All rights are reserved. No part of this work may be reproduced or copied in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, without the written permission of the publisher, unless otherwise permitted under the Copyright Act 1968 (Australia) or the Copyright Act 1994 (New Zealand).

Jointly published by SAI Global Limited under licence from Standards Australia Limited, GPO Box 476, Sydney, NSW 2001 and by Standards New Zealand, Private Bag 2439, Wellington 6140.

PREFACE

This Standard was prepared by the Joint Standards Australia/Standards New Zealand Committee QR-010, Conformity Assessment, to supersede AS/NZS ISO/IEC 17020:2000, *General criteria for the operation of various types of bodies performing inspection*.

The objective of this Standard is to promote confidence in bodies performing inspections. Through standardization, the common needs of clients, supervisory bodies and other stakeholders are identified. This Standard provides requirements specific to bodies performing inspections. Stakeholders may accept inspection services with confidence in cases where the body performing inspections meets the requirements of this Standard.

This Standard is identical with, and has been reproduced from ISO/IEC 17020:2012, *Conformity assessment—Requirements for the operation of various types of bodies performing inspection*.

As this Standard is reproduced from an International Standard, the following applies:

- (a) Its number appears on the cover, title page and text pages while the International Standard number appears only on the cover.
- (b) In the source text ‘this International Standard’ should read ‘this Australian/New Zealand Standard’.
- (c) A full point substitutes for a comma when referring to a decimal marker.

References to International Standards should be replaced by references to Australian or Australian/New Zealand Standards, as follows:

<i>Reference to International Standard</i>	<i>Australian/New Zealand Standard</i>
ISO/IEC	AS ISO/IEC
17000 Conformity assessment—Vocabulary and general principles	17000 Conformity assessment—Vocabulary and general principles

The terms ‘normative’ and ‘informative’ have been used in this Standard to define the application of the annex to which they apply. A ‘normative’ annex is an integral part of a Standard, whereas an ‘informative’ annex is only for information and guidance.

CONTENTS

1	Scope	1
2	Normative references	1
3	Terms and definitions	1
4	General requirements	3
4.1	Impartiality and independence	3
4.2	Confidentiality	4
5	Structural requirements	4
5.1	Administrative requirements	4
5.2	Organization and management	4
6	Resource requirements	5
6.1	Personnel	5
6.2	Facilities and equipment	6
6.3	Subcontracting	8
7	Process requirements	8
7.1	Inspection methods and procedures	8
7.2	Handling inspection items and samples	9
7.3	Inspection records	9
7.4	Inspection reports and inspection certificates	9
7.5	Complaints and appeals	10
7.6	Complaints and appeals process	10
8	Management system requirements	11
8.1	Options	11
8.2	Management system documentation (Option A)	11
8.3	Control of documents (Option A)	12
8.4	Control of records (Option A)	12
8.5	Management review (Option A)	13
8.6	Internal audits (Option A)	13
8.7	Corrective actions (Option A)	14
8.8	Preventive actions (Option A)	14
	Annex A (normative) Independence requirements for inspection bodies	15
	Annex B (informative) Optional elements of inspection reports and certificates	17
	Bibliography	18

INTRODUCTION

This International Standard has been drawn up with the objective of promoting confidence in bodies performing inspection.

Inspection bodies carry out assessments on behalf of private clients, their parent organizations, or authorities, with the objective of providing information about the conformity of inspected items with regulations, standards, specifications, inspection schemes or contracts. Inspection parameters include matters of quantity, quality, safety, fitness for purpose, and continued safety compliance of installations or systems in operation. The general requirements with which these bodies are required to comply in order that their services are accepted by clients and by supervisory authorities are harmonized in this International Standard.

This International Standard covers the activities of inspection bodies whose work can include the examination of materials, products, installations, plants, processes, work procedures or services, and the determination of their conformity with requirements and the subsequent reporting of results of these activities to clients and, when required, to authorities. Inspection can concern all stages during the lifetime of these items, including the design stage. Such work normally requires the exercise of professional judgement in performing inspection, in particular when assessing conformity with general requirements.

This International Standard can be used as a requirements document for accreditation or peer assessment or other assessments.

This set of requirements can be interpreted when applied to particular sectors.

Inspection activities can overlap with testing and certification activities where these activities have common characteristics. However, an important difference is that many types of inspection involve professional judgement to determine acceptability against general requirements, for which reason the inspection body needs the necessary competence to perform the task.

Inspection can be an activity embedded in a larger process. For example, inspection can be used as a surveillance activity in a product certification scheme. Inspection can be an activity that precedes maintenance or simply provides information about the inspected item with no determination of conformity with requirements. In such cases, further interpretation might be needed.

The categorization of inspection bodies as type A, B or C is essentially a measure of their independence. Demonstrable independence of an inspection body can strengthen the confidence of the inspection body's clients with respect to the body's ability to carry out inspection work with impartiality.

In this International Standard, the following verbal forms are used:

- “shall” indicates a requirement;
- “should” indicates a recommendation;
- “may” indicates a permission;
- “can” indicates a possibility or a capability.

AUSTRALIAN/NEW ZEALAND STANDARD

Conformity assessment—Requirements for the operation of various types of bodies performing inspection**1 Scope**

This International Standard contains requirements for the competence of bodies performing inspection and for the impartiality and consistency of their inspection activities.

It applies to inspection bodies of type A, B or C, as defined in this International Standard, and it applies to any stage of inspection.

NOTE The stages of inspection include design stage, type examination, initial inspection, in-service inspection or surveillance.

2 Normative references

The following referenced documents are indispensable for the application of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO/IEC 17000, *Conformity assessment — Vocabulary and general principles*

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO/IEC 17000 and the following apply.

3.1 inspection

examination of a **product** (3.2), **process** (3.3), **service** (3.4), or installation or their design and determination of its conformity with specific requirements or, on the basis of professional judgment, with general requirements

NOTE 1 Inspection of processes can include personnel, facilities, technology or methodology.

NOTE 2 Inspection procedures or schemes can restrict inspection to examination only.

NOTE 3 Adapted from ISO/IEC 17000:2004, definition 4.3.

NOTE 4 The term “item” is used in this International Standard to encompass product, process, service or installation, as appropriate.

3.2 product

result of a process

NOTE 1 Four generic product categories are noted in ISO 9000:2005:

- services (e.g. transport) (see definition in 3.4);
- software (e.g. computer program, dictionary);