

RADIO SPECTRUM AND TECHNICAL STANDARDS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

**Update on Standard
For Accreditation of Certification Bodies**

Purpose

This paper updates Members on the standard for accreditation of certification bodies which conduct certification for type-approval of telecommunications equipment for use in Hong Kong.

Background

2. The Office of the Communications Authority (OFCA) operates a Hong Kong Telecommunications Equipment Evaluation and Certification (HKTEC) Scheme. It is a scheme for the evaluation and certification of telecommunications equipment and Industrial, Scientific and Medical equipment against specifications prescribed by the Communications Authority (CA). Equipment which has been evaluated to be in compliance with the relevant technical specifications may be granted a type-approval certificate by a Local Certification Body (LCB) or by a Foreign Certification Body (FCB) (hereafter collectively referred to as “Certification Body (CB)”).

3. Under section 32E of the Telecommunications Ordinance, the CA may accredit organisations or institutions for the purpose of carrying out testing and certifying equipment or installations against prescribed specifications issued by the CA. Currently, three LCBs are accredited by the CA to provide equipment certification service. With the implementation of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Mutual Recognition Arrangement for Conformity Assessment of Telecommunications Equipment ¹ (APEC Tel

¹ APEC Tel MRA is a voluntary arrangement which streamlines the conformity assessment procedures for a wide range of telecommunications equipment. APEC Tel MRA includes two phases: Phase I for mutual acceptance of test reports and Phase II for certification or product approvals.

MRA), four FCBs are recognised by OFCA to certify equipment for use in Hong Kong .

Accreditation of Certification Bodies

4. In order to be accredited by CA as LCBs, they are required to obtain external accreditation to ISO/IEC Guide 65² in order to ensure their competence in their certification work. Hong Kong Accreditation Service (HKAS) is the accreditation body in Hong Kong to grant ISO/IEC Guide 65 accreditation to LCBs through its Hong Kong Certification Body Accreditation Scheme. As for FCBs recognised by OFCA, they should be accredited to ISO/IEC Guide 65 by an accreditation body which has entered into mutual recognition arrangement with HKAS.

5. On 15 September 2012, the standard ISO/IEC 17065³ was published to supersede ISO/IEC Guide 65. Following the publication, the International Accreditation Forum (IAF)⁴ passed a resolution to implement a three-year transitional arrangement for certification bodies to be accredited to ISO/IEC 17065. As a result of the resolution, all accreditations to ISO/IEC Guide 65 will become invalid after 14 September 2015.

6. In Hong Kong, HKAS has adopted the transitional arrangement promulgated by IAF and accepts applications for accreditation to ISO/IEC 17065. In this connection, LCBs and FCBs should obtain accreditation to ISO/IEC 17065 before their current ISO/IEC Guide 65 accreditations expire or become invalid. OFCA has notified all the CBs on such arrangement. In addition, OFCA has also updated the relevant Information Notes related to telecommunications equipment certification as posted on OFCA website.

Attention Sought

7. Members are invited to note the content of this information paper.

² “ISO/IEC Guide 65 : General requirements for bodies operating product certification systems” published by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) in 1996

³ “ISO/IEC 17065 : Conformity assessment – Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services” published by the ISO in September 2012

⁴ The IAF is a global association of Accreditation Bodies and Certification Bodies. Its primary function is to operate a program for accreditation bodies dealing with conformity assessment, in order to ensure that certification of products, processes or services in one region or country should be accepted in other regions or countries.

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