 <b>GHANA STANDARDS AUTHORITY</b>	<b>GHANA STANDARDS AUTHORITY PRODUCT CERTIFICATION SCHEME</b>	<b>PRODUCT CERTIFICATION GUIDELINES</b>
<b>DOC: GSA-PCM-GL7.4-02</b>	<b>ISSUE: 2.3</b>	<b>17 NOVEMBER 2022</b>

## **GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS OF PRODUCT CERTIFICATION**

### **1. PURPOSE**

To provide guidelines for the prospective applicant of Product Certification and inform on what the applicant needs to know before filing the application for certification.

### **2. SCOPE**

This covers general information that an application of Product Certification license would need.

### **3. DEFINITION**

3.1 Applicant- An Organization which applies for a license under the GSA Product Certification Scheme.

3.2 Application -The request for grant of license under the Ghana Standards Authority Act, 2022 (Act 1078) and Certification Rules.

### **4. RESPONSIBILITIES**

Head, Product Certification - is responsible for publication, printing and making available such general information to prospective applicant and general public.

### **5. GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS**

**5.1.** Ghana Standards Authority Act, 2022 (Act 1078) and Ghana Standards (Certification Marks) Rules 1970

The Ghana Product Certification Scheme is governed by the Ghana Standards Authority Act, 2022 (Act 1078) and Ghana Standards (Certification Marks) Rules 1970 which gives GSA powers to grant licenses to producers to use the Standard Mark on their product which conforms to the requirements of the corresponding Ghana Standard. The Act also provides for penalties for violation of the Act.

#### **5.2 Application**

To get product certification, the manufacturer applies in on the prescribed form (can be downloaded from the GSA website [www.gsa.gov.gh](http://www.gsa.gov.gh) or is obtainable from the Product Certification Secretariat) and pays the approved fee. The applicant ensures that the application is accompanied by proof of adequate manufacturing facility, testing facilities and qualified testing personnel. Every application is registered and applicant is informed. The applicant is also requested to indicate a convenient date for the preliminary and/or factory inspection.

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## 5.3 Evaluation

5.3.1 License to use the Standard Mark on a product is accorded only after GSA PCM has ensured the capability of the manufacturer to manufacture the product continuously in accordance with the relevant Ghana Standard. This is ensured through factory evaluation to ascertain the capability of the manufacturer to produce goods according to the relevant Ghana Standard especially with respect to raw materials, process of manufacture, manufacturing capability and quality control facilities including testing equipment and supervisory staff.

Samples are tested in the factory, where feasible, in order to bring out any deficiencies in test equipment /testing procedures and testing personnel as well as for spot establishment of quality of product. Simultaneously, samples are also drawn for testing in the independent laboratories for assessing conformity to the relevant standard.

### 5.3.1 Remote Factory Inspection/ Audit

Under difficult conditions, to be determined by the Head, Product Certification, GSA-PCM may choose to conduct inspection/audit remotely. Conditions under which remote inspections/audits may be chosen include the following:

- a. Travel to client/specific location is not reasonable (i.e. for safety constraints, pandemic, travel restrictions, instability, etc.).
- b. The number of sites to be assessed is difficult for the CB to completely fulfill factory evaluation within its timeframe.
- c. Client or Auditee has systematic implementation of its management system where records, data, etc. can be reviewed at any site, despite where the work is being performed.
- d. The inspection/audit or assessment is for a minor extension to scope.
- e. Client or auditee has a proven track record of conformance at the location of the remote assessment.
- f. The risk level of the assessment is of low concern to the CB.
- g. An activity or activities planned for the on-site inspection/audit could not be completed and extending the on-site inspection/audit is not the best resolution.
- h. The situation requires the inspection/audit team to come back for a follow-up, but another visit is not easily achievable within a short time frame.
- i. CB has an assessor (or team of assessors) already familiar with the client's management system and its practices and have visited the client/auditee's organization before.

Details of the remote inspection/audit including the technology to be used for teleconferencing (Microsoft teams, zoom etc), transfer of documents (email etc), inspection team, plan and dates shall be discussed and communicated to the applicant/client.

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## 5.4 Grant of license

5.4.1 The manufacturer is required to agree to operate a well-defined Scheme of Testing and Inspection (STI) as approved by GSA PCM from time to time, which inter alia prescribes the specific tests and the frequency for conducting them. In order to meet the expenditure incurred by GSA in operating the license, the manufacturer also has to agree to pay a marking fee fixed by GSA for the product. License is granted only after the manufacturer agrees to these conditions and if the factory inspection and test reports are satisfactory and he /she signs certification agreement.

### 5.4.2 Pre-requisites for grant of license

The basic requisites for the grant of license to use the Standard Mark to a manufacturer are:

- The availability of manufacturing and processing equipment,
- A test laboratory equipped to check quality characteristics of the product strictly in accordance with the test procedure detailed in the specification and should be manned by competent and qualified personnel
- The conformance of the product and raw material to quality characteristics as given in the relevant Ghana Standard.
- The applicant confirming acceptance to follow the scheme of testing and inspection (STI) and to pay the marking fee.
- Documentation authenticating the premises of manufacture such as Certificates/ documentary evidence from Registrar-General's department indicating ownership of the premises by the applicant firm

5.4.3 It shall be ensured that the licenses are granted within a maximum period of sixty working days from the date of recording of the application.

5.4.4 The requisites detailed above are satisfied before a license is granted to the party. Any deviation from prerequisites requires prior sanction of Competent Authority who may, based on the merit of the case, permit relaxation in the in-house testing facilities.

## 5.5 Surveillance after the grant of license

5.5.1 After the grant of license, PCM carries out surprise periodic surveillance visits through technical auditors. During these surveillance visits technical auditors check that the manufacturer is following the prescribed STI and all relevant requirements. Sample(s) are also tested in the factory to ascertain whether the product conforms to the requirements of the

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relevant Ghana laboratories recognized by GSA to ensure that the products are in conformity with the relevant Ghana Standard.

5.5.2 In addition, samples are also drawn from open market for testing in recognized laboratories. It is ensured that the goods bearing Standard Mark conform to the relevant Ghana Standard, when manufactured and tested on continuous basis according to the relevant Scheme of Testing and Inspection

## **5.6 Operation of license**

5.6.1 License is considered for renewal when the renewal application is received before the date of expiry, performance is satisfactory and all money due are cleared.

5.6.2 License not considered for renewal when the application is not received in time, received but performance is unsatisfactory and there exist no or little possibility of effecting an improvement

5.6.3 The license is cancelled when nonconformity of serious nature observed during inspection or independent testing. Any contravention of the licensing provisions or the STI considered serious in nature non settlement of complaints, not allowing technical auditor access during working hours for the purposes of inspection, using the Mark for types /varieties not included in the scope of the licence etc.

## **5.7 The scheme of testing and inspection (STI)**

5.7.1 The STI document is a tool for in-process control in production for a given article /process. In order to ensure consistency in the evaluation of product conformity to specification, the licensee has to follow an agreed Scheme of Testing and Inspection (STI) while exercising self marking rights and maintain records of the test results.

5.7.2 When an applicant applying for Certification license is required to accept and implement after grant of license.

## **5.8 Certification marking fees**

5.8.1 The Certification marking fee is levied to meet administrative and surveillance expenses incurred by GSA PCM for rendering the necessary services in relation to certification of product.

5.8.2 With a view to encourage certification activities in the small-scale sector, and to reduce the burden on account of low volumes of production a lump sum concession is given to small scale industries. The applicant is required to give his acceptance of marking fees prior to the grant of license.

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## 5.9. Obligation of licensees

- a) Nominate responsible person(s) to deal with all matters concerning GSA PCM Certification to keep informed the firm's top Management and coordinate with GSA PCM inspection.
- b) Pay minimum marking fee in advance. If it is not received in time, your license may be allowed to expire.
- c) Supply one copy each of the up-to-date Bhutan Standard(s) and the Scheme of Testing and Inspection attached to the license to all concerned specially to the personnel of Quality Control Department.
- d) Inform GSA immediately if there are any changes in the name of the organization, status, factory premises, management, process, design and brand names.
- e) Apply for renewal (along with the license and fees) one month in advance of the expiry date of the validity period of your license.
- f) Comply with all instructions of GSA immediately, especially when a license is under suspension or is cancelled /deferred/expired.
- g) Get prior approval from GSA of the design, proportions and manner of applying the Standard Mark.
- h) Apply Standard mark only on those varieties and batches/lots of production which conform to the relevant Bhutan Standard and for which firm holds a valid license.
- i) Maintain records of inspection and testing indicated in the Scheme of Testing and Inspection (STI) attached to license.
- j) Extend all possible co-operation to the GSA Technical Auditor coming for checking production line and records, testing in the factory premises and drawl of samples for independent testing.
- k) Dispatch the sample(s) expeditiously to the Laboratory as instructed by the GSA Technical Auditor with advice to the concerned Office of GSA PCS.


Note – See Certification agreement for details

## 5.10 Privileges of licensees

The privileges enjoyed by GSA PCM licensees include:

Original License which can be demonstrated by licensees to any one concerned,

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Use certification mark in advertisements, brochures, compliments and for other promotional purposes.