

**EFSAC Position Paper**  
**“One Stop Testing and Certification”**

**13<sup>th</sup> September 2011**

**1. Scope**

The purpose of this document is to provide basic information to stakeholders in the field of fire protection and security protection of the existing requirements for testing and certification of the industrial products and services concerned.

The document gives also an overview of the requirements that have to be fulfilled by law.

**2. Introduction**

When a product is to be introduced into the European market, it is often required by law, purchasers, end users, insurance companies etc. that some characteristics of the product are approved by a third party. In practice this means testing and certification of the product, at least in accordance with the product standard.

When the word law is used in this document, it could be an expression of directives from the European Commission or the result of national or regional laws.

**3. Standardization**

CEN defines a standard as a document established by consensus and approved by a recognized body that provides, for common and repeated use, rules, guidelines or characteristics for activities or their results, aimed at the achievement of the optimum degree of order in a given context.

The standardization is the process in which agreements between interested parties are made and established in a standard.

Any standard is a collective work. Standards are created by bringing together the experience and expertise of all interested parties as the producers, sellers, buyers, users and regulators of a particular material, product, process or service. A distinction is usually made between descriptive and performance standards. They are designed for voluntary use and do not impose any regulations. However, laws and regulations may refer to certain standards and make compliance with them compulsory: it may be the case in the field of fire protection. Voluntary standards come in force when someone requires those to be fulfilled.

Harmonized standards are European standards produced by CEN, CENELEC or ETSI under a mandate given by the European Commission. In general these standards support the essential requirements

of a New Approach Directive, such the EMC directive or the Construction Products Directive (CPD), which will has become the Construction Products Regulation. The purpose of the CPR is to replace all national standards and conformity systems which can constitute technical barriers for the free trade of all construction products within the European Union by harmonising national laws with respect to the essential requirements applicable to these products in terms of health and safety.

A de facto standard is a standard that has achieved a commonly accepted position, by tradition, enforcement or market dominance. It has not necessarily received formal approval by way of a standardization process and may not be an official standard document.

The norms issued by standardization bodies as CEN may be seen as official standards, particularly because their standardization process includes a public enquiry

The reference documents as those endorsed by EFSAC may be considered as standards as far as EFSAC or the bodies issuing the documents are seen as representative bodies.

The EFSAC endorsed documents complete these norms or concern topics not covered by them.

#### **4. Certification**

Certification is a conformity assessment activity. The other conformity assessment activities are: testing, surveillance, inspection, auditing, registration, and accreditation.

The certification is the process through which an organization grants recognition to an individual organization, process, service or product that meets certain established criteria, in accordance with established requirements or standards.

Certification is generally voluntary but may be mandatory by law, notably for health and safety reasons. CE marking - as a declaration of conformity - is the result of a certain system of attestation of conformity corresponding to a specific mandatory certification for products complying with the essential requirements defined in harmonized standards or the EOTA route (European Organisation for Technical Assessment).

Accreditation is the formal recognition of the competence of a body to conduct a specific activity such as testing or certification.

EN 45011 is the recognised European Standard for Product certification (Industrial product or Service). The three main principles of EN 45011 are: independence, third party checks on standards and normative documentation against which standards can be measured. The corresponding international standard is ISO 17065.

## 5. EFSAC position about standardization and certification

- Require one stop testing across Europe
- Require one stop certification across Europe
- Independent of industry control notably for the MARK ownership
- Industry participation as stakeholder
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Party for testing (test houses) and certification (approval decision) and control (periodic surveillance of products especially manufactured components)
- Based on published and accepted standards<sup>1</sup> specific to each product category
- Testing based on harmonised test procedures
- Ongoing product surveillance based on harmonised audit procedures
- The market is free to decide between pre-existing voluntary marks of quality and a European Mark Scheme
- The European Mark Scheme must have robust control (approval and surveillance) within defined product categories
- Certification Bodies must be subject to control (approval and surveillance) within defined products categories

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<sup>1</sup> In most cases this will be the CEN or CENELEC existing standard. In some cases ALL stakeholders may agree to elect an alternative existing standard (where for example existing standards do not fully cover the scope of the products function)