

UKAS and The Noise Emission Directive

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1. INTRODUCTION

At the request of the various UK regulatory authorities, such as DTI, DETR and HSE, UKAS provides assessment services to assist those authorities who are required to make appointments of conformity assessment bodies (CABs) under the requirements of the regulations which implement EC directives or other measures. The provision of these services is in line with the requirements of the DTI/UKAS Memorandum of Understanding.

UKAS assistance on the appointment of CABs is provided in two forms

- a) A specific (and ongoing) assessment process of a CAB is undertaken against requirements for appointment developed by the regulator. Following a successful initial assessment a recommendation for appointment is made by UKAS and, following appointment by the regulator, a surveillance and reassessment process is implemented.
- b) The regulator may choose to make an appointment without further reference to UKAS on the basis of a UKAS (or other) accreditation.

This lecture deals with the Type a) appointment process, as applied, to the directive 'The Noise Emission in the Environment by Equipment for use Outdoors Directive 2000/14/EC. The essence of the process is that UKAS assesses against specified requirements or guidelines and makes a recommendation for appointment. The responsible government department always retains the responsibility for making the formal appointment.

2. BASIS FOR ASSESSMENT

The regulators, with the assistance of UKAS, develop guidelines or equivalent documents for the assessment of the potential appointed bodies. These guidelines provide the detail underpinning the minimum criteria for appointment given in the regulations or directives and relate the conformity assessment activity to the relevant EN45000 series standards, to the essential health and safety requirements and to product standards where they exist. Whilst the guidelines make it clear that accreditation is not mandatory they use the EN 45000 series standards as the basis for assessment.

UKAS is required to assess against the requirements of the guidelines and to provide a view on the status of applicants against the requirements of the guidelines and then to make a recommendation to the competent authority on the applicant's overall competence in respect of the specified conformity assessment duties and proposed technical scope of work.

3. ACCREDITATION AND REGULATORY APPOINTMENTS

UKAS complies with EU policy and the policy of the relevant UK competent authority in undertaking assessment work in support of directives and other UK regulatory appointments. In assessing for regulatory appointments UKAS does not insist on accreditation, does not add requirements to those of the guidelines but nonetheless uses the criteria in the relevant EN45000 series standard as far as practicable.

In many cases the requirements of the legislation make the provision of services by a formally appointed body the only legal route by which conformity assessment services can be provided within the UK or the EU. In such cases UKAS does not offer an overlapping voluntary accreditation for the activities described in the regulations. Accreditation can of course continue to be granted in the usual way against relevant product or laboratory standards or QA Scopes that fall both within and outside the regulations.

The lecture will describe in more detail some of the processes in making recommendations to the DTI under the Directive.