



**AERC 301**

**Independent Inspection Agency Program Requirements**

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## 1. Scope

The AERC 301 *Independent Inspection Agency Program Requirements* establish the minimum requirements regarding AERC acceptance of *Independent Inspection Agencies* as qualified to provide inspection services to *Program Participants*. It includes additional requirements that applicants are subject to, including responsibilities of the agency, agency suspension and reinstatement, and maintaining compliance with all applicable provisions of the program documents.

## 2. Definitions

All terms referenced in this document are defined in *AERC 400 Certification Policies and Procedures, Appendix A*.

## 3. Responsibilities of an Accepted Independent Inspection Agency

- a. Conduct all *Inspections* in adherence to the processes and procedures delineated in the agency operations manual and AERC inspection checklists.
- b. Report required information, in accordance with the *Program Requirements*, standards, and/or protocol documents as to format and precision.
- c. Submit inspection reports to the *Administrator* in a timely manner.
- d. Comply with all provisions of its ISO 17020 accreditation, which is foundational to its acceptance under the *Program Requirements*.
- e. Comply with all provisions of the quality assurance requirements mandated in *AERC 400 Certification Policies and Procedures*.
- f. Comply with the recordkeeping requirements as documented in the *Program Requirements*, ISO 17020 and ISO 17065.
- g. Comply with all the requirements as agreed to in the *Authorization Agreement* and in the *Program Requirements*.

## 4. Application

- a. *Entities* seeking acceptance as an *Accepted Independent Inspection Agency* shall present their qualifications for consideration in the form of an application using the latest program form specified by the *Administrator*.
- b. *Applicants* must demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the *Administrator*, in accordance with *Program Requirements*, that they have the personnel, equipment, processes, and competence to perform inspection services for any/all of the protocols as listed in *Appendix A*.
- c. *Applicants* may claim credit toward acceptance by holding a currently issued acceptance/accreditation from any organization listed in *Appendix B*, scoped to the specific protocols listed in *Appendix A*.
- d. The application will be assessed on the basis of the application materials, and any other process deemed necessary and prudent in the judgement of the *Administrator* to evaluate the claims of qualification and competence.

## 5. General Requirements

- a. All accepted *Independent Inspection Agencies* shall perform their services under the terms and conditions of the *Authorization Agreements* governing their participation.
- b. All *Accepted Independent Inspection Agencies* applicants shall commit to and meet the requirements of ISO 17065 regarding independence, transparency, and the avoidance of conflicts.
- c. All *Accepted Independent Inspection Agencies* shall honor and protect against any breach of the confidentiality provisions of ISO 17065.

## 6. Qualifications

- a. Foundational to any application for acceptance is the current holding of a properly scoped acceptance/accreditation to ISO/IEC 17020 by any of the bodies listed in *Appendix B*, or deemed equivalent by the *Administrator*. Existing acceptances may obviate the need to document the base eligibility requirements. However, final acceptance decisions are contingent on a successful onsite evaluation by the *Administrator* to determine full conformance with the *Program Requirements* establishing qualification.
- b. All applicants must demonstrate competence in their understanding and practice of all inspection services performed in accordance with all *Program Requirements*. Alternative methods of meeting this requirement can include exercises at the discretion of, and designed by, the *Administrator* to provide additional support and evidence in establishing qualifications for acceptance in the absence of recorded experience.

## 7. On-Site Inspection Processes

- a. An initial, onsite *Inspection* may be required, or in lieu thereof, another process designed to establish competence and resources necessary for acceptance under the *Program Requirements* as an *Accepted Independent Inspection Agency*. Alternatives could include, for example, a representative of the *Administrator* accompanying an inspector from the *Applicant* on an inspection of similar scope with an *Applicant's* existing client.
- b. Pre-Inspection - The *Administrator* is to contact the *Applicant* in advance of scheduling the initial qualification review to discuss the process and specific areas of relevance:
  - i. Arrange a date and time to conduct the review.
  - ii. Provide the name of the *Inspector* who will make the assessment.
  - iii. Identify any specific protocol(s) to be addressed or products that may require some specified process that may require observation.
  - iv. Provide a checklist of relevant and required information so that the *Applicant* can be prepared on the day of the inspection.
  - v. Identify specific records and documentation to be reviewed in the course of evaluating the application.

- vi. Explain the process by which technical evaluation of the *Applicant's* ability to meet the *AERC 301* program requirements will occur and outline the breadth of documentation and or inspection that the applicant may be required to supply.
- c. Day of Review
  - i. Upon arrival, the *Inspector* will provide the *Applicant* with an overview of the following:
    - (1) *AERC 301 Independent Inspection Agency Program Requirements*.
    - (2) Objectives of the review process.
    - (3) The services *Applicant* has applied to render and are subject to review.
    - (4) The agenda for the day.

At the conclusion of the review, the *Inspector* will brief the *Applicant* on their initial impressions and provide some indication of when to expect a determination. The *Inspector* will also communicate in list form any known outstanding items that will be required to complete the assessment process.
- d. Post-Review
  - i. Within 30 days of the conclusion of the onsite review, or within 30 days following receipt of any documentation requested at the conclusion of the onsite inspection, one of the following will occur:
    - (1) A request will be issued for provision, clarification, or correction of documents relevant to the inspection/evaluation process with a deadline to submit them.
    - (2) Issuance of a notice that the application has been processed and acceptance has been granted.
    - (3) Issuance of a written notice denying the application specifying all the reasons on which the denial is based and explaining all rights of *Appeal* and the process for pursuing an appeal.

## **8. Inspection and Operations Manual**

- a. Minimum Requirements
  - i. *Independent Inspection Agencies* applying for *Acceptance* must have defined and documented processes to conduct inspection services that are required for the scope of protocols established in the program requirements. The specific documents designed to guide the conduct of inspections specific to the needs of the *AERC* shall be defined in forms/documents/checklists designed by the *AERC*.
  - ii. Inspection and Equipment Operations Manual

The Inspection and Equipment Operations Manual must include the following:

    - (1) Instructions for conducting the *Inspections* and a current copy of the relevant protocols.
    - (2) Checklists and report forms adequate to establish sufficient oversight of *Inspection* and sampling services.

- (3) A cross reference indicating which portion of the manual relates to which section of the inspection protocol.
- (4) Logs covering all measuring devices employed by the organization and the results of required inspections and calibrations.

## **9. Acceptance Decisions**

- a. Final decisions as to the acceptance of *Independent Inspection Agencies* are the exclusive prerogative of the *Administrator* under authority granted by the *AERC Board of Directors*, subject to appeal.

## **10. Term of Acceptance**

- a. All *Independent Inspection Agency* authorization agreements shall bear a term of four years from the date of issuance, subject to annual renewal and continued compliance with *Program Requirements*.

## **11. Suspension and Revocation of Acceptance**

- a. Acceptances are subject to suspension and/or revocation for any action deemed by the *Administrator* to be a violation of the *AERC Program Requirements*, including the following:
  - i. Failure to conduct *Inspections* in accordance with the *Program Participant's* accepted operations manual(s).
  - ii. Failure to implement corrective actions as required by any notice of non-conformance in association with any conformity assessment process.
  - iii. Failure to pay all fees required for program participation.
  - iv. The filing of an application for bankruptcy under any chapter of Federal law by the participant.
  - v. Failure to submit to or cooperate with the *Administrator* in performing *Inspections*.
  - vi. Failure to submit to *Inspections* on a schedule determined by the *Administrator*.
  - vii. Any action that is determined by the *Administrator* to pose a threat to the credibility or good name of the *AERC*, the *AERC* product certification program, or its status as a certification body.
  - viii. Any violation of the *Authorization Agreement*, determined by the *Administrator* to be an intentional act by the *Program Participant*, its principals, employees, or agents, that violates the use of the marks and other representations of the *AERC* in the act of labeling or certification, either written or oral.
- b. All actions in regard to suspension or revocation of acceptance under the *Program Requirements* are subject to appeal per the provisions established in *AERC 400 Policies and Procedures*.

## **12. Reinstatement after Suspension.**

- a. An accepted agency whose authority has been suspended for a violation of *AERC Program Requirements* may apply for re-instatement of its authority, subject to the procedures established by *Program Requirements* and the payment of all fees specified by the *Administrator* incurred as a result of the suspension.

## Appendix A - List of Applicable Standards

Item #	Standard or Protocol
1	AERC 1-2017 - Procedures for Determining Energy Performance Properties of Fenestration Attachments
2	AERC 1.1-2017 - Procedures for Determining the Optical and Thermal Properties of Window Attachment Materials
3	AERC 1.2-2017 - Physical Test Methods for Measuring Energy Performance Properties of Fenestration Attachments
4	AERC 2-2017 - Procedures for Determining Annual Energy Performance Ratings of Fenestration Attachments in Residential Homes
5	THERM 7 / WINDOW 7 AERC Simulation Manual
6	ASTM C 1199-14 - Standard Test Method for Measuring the Steady-State Thermal Transmittance of Fenestration Systems Using Hot Box Methods
7	ASTM E 283-04(2012) - Standard Test Method for Determining Rate of Air Leakage Through Exterior Windows, Curtain Walls, and Doors Under Specified Pressure Differences Across the Specimen
8	ASTM E1175-87(2015), Standard Test Method for Determining Solar or Photopic Reflectance, Transmittance, and Absorptance of Materials Using a Large Diameter Integrating Sphere
9	IEEE/ASTM SI 10-2010, American National Standard for Metric Practice
10	NFRC 101-2014, Procedure for Determining Thermophysical Properties of Materials for Use in NFRC-Approved Software
11	NFRC 201-2014, Procedure for Interim Standard Test Method for Measuring the Solar Heat Gain Coefficient of Fenestration Systems Using Calorimetry Hot Box Method



## Appendix B – List of Accepted Accreditation Entities

<b>Accreditation Agency</b>	<b>Address</b>
A2LA – American Association for Laboratory Acceptance	5202 Presidents Ct Suite 220, Frederick, MD 21703
ANAB – ANSI-ASQ National Accreditation Board	600 N. Plankinton Ave., Suite 300 Milwaukee, WI 53203
ANSI – America National Standards Institute	1899 L Street, NW, 11th Floor Washington, DC 20036
IAS – International Acceptance Service	3060 Saturn Street, Suite 100 Brea, CA 92821-1732 U.S.A.
LAB – Laboratory Acceptance Bureau	11617 Coldwater Rd. Ste 101, Fort Wayne, IN 46845
NFRC – National Fenestration Rating Council	6305 Ivy Lane, Suite 140 Greenbelt, MD 20770