



American Association for Laboratory Accreditation

R308 – SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS: TELECOMMUNICATION CERTIFICATION BODY ACCREDITATION PROGRAM

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In December 1998, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) adopted new rules to streamline its equipment authorization requirements by allowing Telecommunications Certification Bodies (TCBs) to certify equipment under Parts 2 and 68 of the Commission's Rules. The requirements for TCBs were specified in the Commission's Report and Order (R&O) in GEN Docket 98-68 (FCC 98-338), adopted on December 17, 1998. Under the Report and Order, TCBs are required to be accredited by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), or by a NIST recognized accreditor. A2LA is recognized by NIST as an accreditor of telecommunications certification bodies (TCBs) for FCC requirements.

TCBs are to be accredited in accordance with *ISO/IEC Guide 65:1996 - General Requirements for Bodies Operating Product Certification Systems*, and any program specific requirements for the specific certification scheme as required by relevant regulatory bodies or A2LA. Currently, A2LA is recognized to accredit TCBs to the following scopes:

- Federal Communication Commission's TCB program as described in its Report & Order 98-338 (GEN Docket 98-68) and Public Notice DA 99 1640;
- Industry Canada's (IC) certification body program described in its documents: CB-01, CB-02 and CB-03;
- Info-communications Development Authority (IDA) of Singapore: Scheme for recognizing Foreign Testing Laboratories and Certification Bodies for Conformity Assessment of Telecommunications Equipment, IDA MRA REC SCHEME;
- Office of the Telecommunications Authority (OFTA) Hong Kong: Criteria and Requirements Applicable to Foreign Testing Laboratories and Certification Bodies Seeking Recognition by OFTA as Conformity Assessment Bodies;
- Japan (MIC) Business Telecommunications Act and Radio Law.

Telecommunication Certification Body (TCB) specific additional general requirements for Accreditation are as follows:

PART A INTRODUCTION

FCC Report and Order FCC-98-338 preclude manufacturers from being an accredited Telecommunications Certification Body (TCB).

The following certification schemes that are currently considered for TCB accreditation are: (Reference A2LA [*G106 - Guidance on Scopes of Accreditation for Telecommunication Certification Bodies \(TCBs\)*](#) from the A2LA website.)

1. United States of America – Telecommunications Certification Bodies (TCB) in the USA as designated by the United States (US) Federal Communications Commission (FCC) for: (a) Unlicensed Radio Frequency Devices; (b) Licensed Radio Frequency Devices; and (c) Telephone Terminal Equipment.



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2. *Canada* – Industry Canada (IC): All Radio Standards Specifications (RSS) in Category I Equipment Standards List; All Broadcasting Equipment Technical Standards (BETS) in Category I Equipment Standards List.

3. *Singapore* – Info-communications Development Authority (IDA): Technical Specifications for Line Terminal Equipment and Radio Communication Equipment.

4. *Hong Kong* – The Office of the Telecommunications Authority (OFTA): radio equipment; marine radio equipment and fixed network equipment.

4. *Japan* – The Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communication (MIC): telephone terminal equipment and radio equipment.

PART B

CONDITIONS FOR ACCREDITATION

In order to attain and maintain accreditation, TCBs must comply with A2LA [R102 - Conditions for Accreditation](#) published by A2LA.

PART C

A2LA ACCREDITATION PROCESS

I. Application

All applicants must agree to the Conditions for Accreditation (see Part B of this document), pay the appropriate fees, and provide detailed supporting information as outlined in A2LA *F309 – Application for Accreditation: ISO/IEC Guide 65 Product Certification Bodies*.

In accordance with the FCC document [TCB Program Roles and Responsibilities](#), the TCB must also be accredited to *ISO/IEC 17025:2005, General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories*.

The scope of accreditation is normally identified in terms of scopes of equipment as identified in FCC Public Notice DA 99-1640, in Industry Canada CB-02, in IDA Singapore Scheme for Recognizing Foreign Testing Laboratories and Certification Bodies for Conformity Assessment of Telecommunications Equipment, in OFTA Criteria and Requirements Applicable to Foreign Testing Laboratories and Certification Bodies Seeking Recognition (OFTA MRA 002) as Conformity Assessment Bodies and Annex III of the US-Japan MRA. Reference A2LA [G106 - Guidance on Scopes of Accreditation for Telecommunication Certification Bodies \(TCBs\)](#) from the A2LA website.



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II. Assessment Process

Refer to A2LA [R307- General Requirements: Accreditation of ISO/IEC Guide 65 Product Certification Bodies.](#)

III. Deficiencies

Refer to A2LA [R307- General Requirements: Accreditation of ISO/IEC Guide 65 Product Certification Bodies.](#)

IV. Annual Review

TCBs will be required to undergo a surveillance assessment on each of the odd years between renewal assessments. Depending on the outcome of the previous year's full assessment and the number and nature of FCC audit issues, the surveillance assessment may be a remote assessment in lieu of an on-site assessment after the 1st renewal assessment has occurred.

PART D Specific Program Requirements

Specific program requirements for each of the economy's certification schemes included on the A2LA Scope of Recognition can be found in the following documents and websites:

1. United States of America - FCC

Federal Communications Commission (FCC) requirements for designation and requirements as a Telecommunications Certification Body (TCB) are in Public Notice DA 99-1640, [47CFR2.960](#) and [47CFR68.160](#), "Designation of Telecommunications Certification Bodies (TCB's)", [47CFR2.962](#) and [47CFR68.162](#) "Requirements for Telecommunications Certification Bodies". TCBs will be assessed for compliance to these requirements as required by the FCC.

During the on-site assessment of the TCBs the assessor must evaluate the competency of each employee that performs the certification functions of evaluation (Technical reviewers) and decision on certification on-site at least every two years in accordance with the section 14. of FCC document, [TCB Program Roles and Responsibilities.](#)

TCBs shall retain all documentation associated with the approval of a product subject to certification by the FCC for a minimum of 5 years.



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In addition to all other relevant requirements, the TCB will also be evaluated against A2LA *C310 - Telecommunications Certification Body (TCB) Evaluation Checklist* and verify that the technical operation (testing laboratory) is accredited to ISO/IEC 17025 by A2LA or an acceptable MRA partner.

An overview of the FCC's TCB program can be found at:

<http://transition.fcc.gov/oet/ea/mra/implementation.html#sec4>

2. Canada - IC

TCBs shall retain all documentation associated with the approval of a product subject to certification by the IC for a minimum of 10 years.

In addition to all other relevant requirements, the TCB will also be evaluated against the criteria in IC [CB-02 Appendix A Cross Reference Checklist](#) and verify that the technical operation (testing laboratory) is accredited to ISO/IEC 17025 by A2LA or an acceptable MRA partner.

The website for Industry Canada can be found at:

<http://strategis.ic.gc.ca/epic/site/smt-gst.nsf/en/home>

Industry Canada's APEC MRA site can be found at:

<http://strategis.ic.gc.ca/epic/site/mra-arm.nsf/en/nj00018e.html>

Industry Canada's Requirement Documents, CB-01, CB-02 and CB-03 can be found at:

http://strategis.ic.gc.ca/epic/site/smt-gst.nsf/en/h_sf06138e.html

Industry Canada's Category-1 Equipment List can be found at:

<http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/smt-gst.nsf/eng/sf09888.html>

Once A2LA accredited, the list of documentation required to be submitted to NIST for U.S. CAB nomination in accordance with the Industry Canada requirements can be found at

<http://gsi.nist.gov/global/index.cfm/L1-4/L2-16/L3-90/A-185>

3. Singapore - IDA

TCBs shall retain all documentation associated with the approval of a product subject to certification by the IDA for a minimum of 5 years.

In addition to all other relevant requirements, the TCB will also be evaluated against the criteria in the IDA Annex 3 Checklist of [Scheme for Recognising Foreign Testing Laboratories and Certification Bodies for Conformity Assessment of Telecommunication Equipment](#) and verify that the technical operation (testing laboratory) is accredited to ISO/IEC 17025 by A2LA, an acceptable MRA partner or has been evaluated by the certification body to be competent in accordance with ISO/IEC 17025.



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The website for IDA Singapore is
<http://www.ida.gov.sg/home/index.aspx>

IDA Singapore’s APEC MRA site is
<http://www.ida.gov.sg/Policies%20and%20Regulation/20060602142302.aspx>

IDA Singapore’s Requirements document - Scheme for Recognizing Foreign CBs can be found at
<http://www.ida.gov.sg/Policies%20and%20Regulation/20060609145118.aspx>

IDA Singapore’s actual specifications can be found at
<http://www.ida.gov.sg/Policies%20and%20Regulation/20060419202223.aspx>

Once A2LA accredited, the list of documentation required to be submitted to NIST for U.S. CAB nomination in accordance with the IDA Singapore requirements can be found at
http://ts.nist.gov/Standards/Global/phase-ii_list_singapore.cfm

4. Hong Kong – OFTA

TCBs shall retain all documentation associated with the approval of a product subject to certification by the OFTA for a minimum of 5 years. In addition to all other relevant requirements, the TCB will also be evaluated against criteria in the OFTA [Checklist for Technical Competence Assessment of Foreign Certification Bodies](#) and verify that the technical operations (testing laboratory) is accredited to ISO/IEC 17025 by A2LA or an accreditation body which is a signatory to the APLAC MRA.

OFTA Criteria and Requirements Documents for FCBs:
http://www.ofta.gov.hk/en/tec/apectel_mra/procedures_3.pdf

OFTA Procedures for Recognition of FCBs:
http://www.ofta.gov.hk/en/tec/apectel_mra/procedures_2.pdf

OFTA Telecommunications Equipment Standards:
http://www.ofta.gov.hk/en/tec/apectel_mra/annex1.pdf

5. Japan – MIC

In addition to all other relevant requirements, the TCB will also be evaluated against criteria in:

	Terminal Equipment	Radio Equipment
Applicable Laws	- Telecommunications Business Law (Law No. 86, 1984) and amendments	- Radio Law(Law No. 131, 1950) and amendments



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	Terminal Equipment	Radio Equipment
Ordinances Regarding Technical Regulations	- Ordinance concerning Terminal Facilities etc. (Ordinance of the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications No.31,1985) and amendments	- Ordinance Regulating Radio Equipment (Radio Regulatory Commission Regulations No.18, 1950) and amendments.
Ordinances Regarding Conformity Assessment Procedures	- Ordinance concerning Technical Conditions Compliance Approval etc. for Terminal Equipment (Ordinance of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications No.15, 2004) and amendments	Ordinance concerning Technical Regulations Conformity Certification etc. of Specified Radio Equipment (Ordinance of the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications No.37, 1981) and amendments

The TCB shall translate the technical requirements from Japanese to English language. The TCB shall have a procedure for periodically reviewing all applicable MIC requirements for continuing suitability relevant to their certification activities.

TCBs shall retain all documentation associated with the approval of a product subject to certification by the MIC for a minimum of 10 years.

The TCB must have a testing laboratory that is accredited to ISO/IEC 17025 by A2LA or an accreditation body listed by NIST, as identified at: <http://ts.nist.gov/Standards/Conformity/mra/NIST-Recognition-of-Accreditation-Bodies.cfm>.

The testing laboratory must be accredited to perform testing to all equipment classes under each desired scope. The laboratory may either be accredited to the actual test methods notified by MIC Japan or a method that is equal to or surpasses these methods. If the laboratory is not using the test methods notified by MIC, the laboratory shall have procedures for determining equivalency of other test methods to those separately notified by MIC and shall maintain records of equivalency determination.

The CAB shall have the necessary technical competency to perform the certification and testing for the relevant characteristics specified in the applicable laws, regulations and notices issued by Japan for the scope of recognition being sought.

For the Radio Law, the personnel conducting the certification activities shall meet one of the following conditions:

(a) The person shall have a certificate issued by a government agency which certifies that said person holds a qualification equivalent to either of the qualifications listed below, and shall have



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at a minimum five years of experience, including the testing, tuning, and maintenance of radio equipment.

(b) The person shall have graduated from a school which is equivalent to a US university or college, having completed the subjects related to radio communications, and shall have at a minimum three years of experience, including the testing, tuning, and maintenance of radio equipment.

(c) The person shall have graduated from a school which is equivalent to a US junior college or technical college, having completed the subjects related to radio communications, and shall have at a minimum five years of experience, including servicing, testing, tuning, and maintenance of radio equipment.

For the Telecommunication Law, the personnel conducting the certification activities shall meet one of the following conditions:

(a) The person shall have graduated from a school which is equivalent to a US university or college, with a degree in electrical engineering or telecommunications engineering, and shall have at a minimum, one year of experience in technical standards conformity approval or certification of type, or test, adjustment or maintenance of terminal equipment

(b) The person shall have graduated from a school which is equivalent to a US junior college or technical college, with a degree in electrical engineering or telecommunications engineering, and shall have at a minimum, three years of experience in technical standards conformity approval or certification of type, or test, adjustment or maintenance of terminal equipment.

The CAB shall demonstrate that its technical personnel have initial and on-going training regarding MIC administrative and technical requirements.

The CAB shall have written procedures to describe the process followed to certify equipment under the applicable laws of Japan. The procedures shall be in English.

The CAB shall have the necessary test equipment (calibrated in accordance with A2LA's Traceability Policy) to perform testing for the relevant characteristics specified in the applicable laws, regulations and notices issued by Japan for the scope of recognition being sought. Test equipment used to support certification activities (including data accepted from another testing laboratory) shall be calibrated annually in accordance with the Radio (Article 24-2) and Telecommunication Business (Article 87) Laws.

The CAB shall have written procedures to describe the process followed when accepting data from another testing laboratory. The procedures shall meet the applicable requirements of the Laws of Japan for the designation being sought. The procedures shall be in English.



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APPENDIX A - Document Revision History

Date	Description
09/18/07	Original Issue of this document.
10/02/08	Revised document to include Hong Kong OFTA requirements
09/02/2010	Added Japan MIC Requirements
11/05/2010	Revised IC web site links to include revised CB-02
05/06/2011	Added education requirement for Japan Telecommunication Law
09/13/2011	Updated links for FCC documents due to change in website.
1/4/2012	REC-CB was removed because it was superseded by CB-01. CB-02 hyperlink also updated.

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