

TECHNICAL INFORMATION SHEET

THIRD PARTY CERTIFICATION: SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

Minimum criteria for Certification and Technical Services
based on **British and European Normative test standards
outside of EN 13501 classification series**

VERSION 2



INTRODUCTION

The objective of third party certification schemes is to provide confidence to interested parties that the product can provide the required performance stated by the manufacturer. Third party product certification schemes also allow suppliers to demonstrate to the market that their product has been attested to fulfil specified requirements.

For a third party certification scheme to provide the highest level of assurance, they must include conformity assessment activities that allow the performance of the product to be independently determined, audited and maintained on an ongoing basis. Schemes operating at the highest level, such as those provided by Warringtonfire Testing and Certification Limited (WTCL), are defined as Type 5 certification schemes according to ISO 17067.

This technical information sheet explains the minimum criteria for supporting evidence, used within the voluntary third party certification schemes operated by WTCL (Certifire and Q-Mark), trading as Warringtonfire Certification or BM TRADA, when considering the performance of construction products if they were to be tested to a relevant British or European Normative test standard (outside of classification to the EN 13501 series).

Detail on how the supporting evidence is used for the purpose of certification is given in the relevant BM TRADA scheme technical document or Warringtonfire Certification technical schedule.

The following items are considered as supporting evidence for the purpose of certification and the minimum criteria for each is explained in this document.

- **Sampling**
- **Initial Type Testing (ITT)**
- **Technical Evaluations and Field of Applications (FoA)**

SAMPLING

Sampling acts as a means of providing added assurance that the product being constructed for testing relates to the product that will be placed on the market.

Sampling allows traceability of the test sample, including components, raw materials and purchase orders, back to the facility where it was fabricated, and it also gives information on specific aspects of construction that would only be visible during the manufacturing process.

The process of sampling for testing differs depending on the type of product being sampled. It varies if the product is:

- Being taken 'off the shelf' (i.e. a representative market sample)
- Constructed specifically for generating initial test evidence (i.e. prototype)
- Not 'off the shelf' (i.e. non-series or made to order)

In all cases, the objective of sampling is the same – to make sure the product being tested relates to that being offered (or due to be offered) for sale and to record information on the production processes and materials used, prior to testing, that may otherwise be hard or impossible to determine once the product is made. This information can be referred to later in the certification cycle to confirm that products are representative of those originally tested.

The sampling requirements for WTCL schemes are detailed below:

- All sampling and sampling reports shall follow the principles of Group of Notified Bodies (GNB) document NB-CPR 15/639r3 (see note 2) and any relevant scheme rules/checklists and must be in English.
- As sampling is a key conformity assessment activity under the responsibility of the Certification Body, it is normally undertaken by the body that is providing the certification. Therefore, the sampling for both Certifire and Q-Mark schemes would be undertaken by WTCL. WTCL may accept sampling for ITT conducted by others (e.g. an approved or notified certification body), subject to documented approval. Please note: For audit testing, sampling shall be conducted by WTCL.
- For each product on the certified company's existing scope of certification, we require at least one piece of supporting evidence that has been sampled for each performance characteristic being considered for certification. On renewal of certification, additional sampled evidence may need to be generated meeting the requirements outlined herein.

Note 1: The Group of Notified Bodies is a co-ordinated group of bodies that provide testing and certification of construction products under the Construction Products Regulation in the E.U. NB-CPR 15/639r3 is an approved position paper on sampling requirements for Notified Certification Bodies issued by the Advisory Group of the GNB-CPR.

INITIAL TYPE TESTING (ITT)

ITT is a critical aspect of establishing a product's performance to the relevant test standard and must meet specific requirements to be considered for the purpose of certification by WTCL, based on impartiality, performance and relevance.

The requirements for ITT are given below:

- ITT is required for each Product Type to be incorporated into the scheme, and each performance characteristic that is to be certified.
- The laboratory conducting the test must be United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS) accredited or accredited by an Accreditation Body that is a signatory of ILAC (International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation) to ISO 17025 for the appropriate test standard, which must have been included in their schedule at the time of the test.
- The test laboratory must have Notified Body/Approved Body status and/or be a member of the European Group of Organisations for Fire Testing, Inspection and Certification (EGOLF). This is to demonstrate test lab independence and impartiality.
- The test laboratory must follow all appropriate EGOLF agreements and position papers for testing to the EN suite of test standards. It is preferential, but not essential, that EGOLF recommendations are followed as 'best practice'. The test lab does not have to be a member of EGOLF to achieve this requirement.
- The test laboratory must follow all appropriate Fire Test Study Group (FTSG) resolutions for fire and smoke testing, as applicable. The test lab does not have to be a member of FTSG to achieve this requirement.
- The test itself must be covered by the accreditation scope of the laboratory. This will usually be indicated by the Accreditation Body logo (e.g. UKAS logo) being printed on the report.
- ITT must be in the English language. ITT not in English must be translated using a legally notarised technical translation service or be reissued in English by the laboratory who originally issued the documents.

If a test laboratory does not meet all the above criteria, the laboratory cannot be used to generate evidence for the purpose of third party certification schemes operated by WTCL, unless it is witnessed according to Warringtonfire's witness testing procedure.

Manufacturers should engage with Warringtonfire as early as possible, if they intend to use a laboratory that does not meet the above criteria for the purpose of generating ITT for use within a scheme operated by WTCL. This provides an opportunity for Warringtonfire to explain the witnessing procedure and helps prevent evidence being generated that does not meet WTCL scheme requirements, avoiding unnecessary delays and cost.

WTCL reserves the right not to accept test evidence that meets all the above criteria for another reason not specified in these rules – for example, if there is doubt over the veracity of the results, or the independence or credibility of the laboratory.

TECHNICAL EVALUATIONS & FIELD OF APPLICATIONS

Technical Evaluations and Field of Applications are assessments of product performance, written by individuals with the necessary competence that provide an extension to scope of the tested design, based on suitable and sufficient test evidence for the application proposed.

Assessments written by Warringtonfire follow several routes for substantiating the scope of designs, which are, in so far as possible, based on prescribed rules and application of expert judgment. For example:

- Published rules in test standards e.g. Direct Application (DIAP) rules in EN test standards
- Published rules in extended application (EXAP) standards
- Industry guidance (e.g. ASFP coloured books, PFPF publications, EGOLF papers, FTSG resolutions, BSI codes of practice)
- Published rules within certification technical schedules e.g. Certifire

Note 2: For ease of reading, the terms Technical Evaluations and Field of Applications will collectively be referred to as ‘assessments’ throughout this sheet, unless otherwise specified.

The requirements for assessments that are used within the certification schemes operated by WTCL are given below:

- All test evidence on which the permissible extent of assessment scope is based, irrespective of age, will require a declaration from the sponsor that “no alteration of components or construction has been made to the product” since that test evidence was created.
- WTCL policy is to follow Annex D of the PFPF Guide to undertaking technical assessments of fire performance of construction products based on fire test evidence (2021) for all evidence reviews, where that evidence is used to formulate a scope of application (e.g. assessments).
- At least one piece of evidence must have met the intended performance to be certified. The evidence must be directly relevant to the product being certified (i.e. not supporting evidence).
- The assessment must be based on suitable and sufficient test evidence. A key principle is that it should be possible for the user of the assessment to identify how an assessed judgement has been made, where it hasn’t been directly tested. The assessed design should be linked to test evidence that clearly relates to the assessed design (i.e. suitable), and the evidence should provide confidence that the design is likely to provide the required performance if it were to be tested to the relevant standard (i.e. sufficient).
- Historic evidence (i.e. evidence generated to an earlier version of the standard than that stated in the scheme document) may be considered. It is WTCL’s policy to follow the applicable GNB guidance, NB-CPR/19/792r5 or NB-CPR/SHo2/SGo6-18/001r1, as applicable.
- Test evidence on which the permissible extent of assessed scope is based must be in the English language. Evidence not in English must be translated using a legally notarised technical translation service or be reissued in English by the laboratory who originally issued the documents. This also applies to any assessments prepared by other laboratories that are to be reviewed for the purpose of certification under WTCL.

- We require written permission for each use of, and reference to, test evidence on which the permissible extent of assessment scope is based, where the test evidence has not been sponsored by the customer that has contracted the work with us.
- Assessments must not solely be based on assessment information.
- Assessments shall only be issued when all test evidence referred to in the document has been issued in its final form, inclusive of signatures as appropriate.
- Assessments are reviewed every 5 years. Since they are based on published rules and guidance, and applied expert judgment – which evolves over time as different products, processes and designs are directly tested – the conclusion and expressed scope of an assessment may change, even if the evidence on which the assessment is based has not.
- Test evidence that contradicts the scope of the assessment must be submitted to the assessing body (e.g. Warringtonfire) for the assessment to be reviewed and to enable any necessary action to be taken e.g. withdrawal. This includes test evidence generated at laboratories operated by Warringtonfire or by any other test laboratory, whether for the purpose of ITT or as part of ongoing audit testing under a third party certification scheme.



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VERSION	AMENDMENTS	DATE
V2	Clarification on sampling requirements when using other certification bodies and for existing scopes of certification	05_11_2025

Note: The last revised version of this document supersedes all previous versions/revisions.

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