VINÇOTTE nv
Jan Olieslagerslaan 35 ▪ 1800 Vilvoorde ▪ België
tel: +32 2 674 57 11 ▪ brussels@vincotte.be

GENERAL REGULATIONS

EN 1090-1 Factory Production Control

Certification of management systems used by manufacturers for the CE marking of metal components

Registered office: Jan Olieslagerslaan 35 ▪ 1800 Vilvoorde ▪ Belgium
VAT BE 0462.513.222 ▪ RPM/RPR Brussels
BNP Paribas Fortis: BE24 2100 4113 6338 ▪ BIC: GEBABEBB

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1 Introduction

This General Regulations defines the rules applicable for the assessment, certification and registration of Factory Production Control (FPC) management systems 2+ according to the Construction Products Regulation 305/2011 applied by organisations responsible for CE marking according to EN 1090-1.They also apply when the assessment of the management system is done in combination with the specific assessment requested by some Directives for which Vinçotte nv (Vsa) has been notified or with national normative documents.

Vinçotte sa/nv (VINCOTTE) acts as a body accredited by Belac and notified by the Belgian FPS-Ministry of Economic Affairs (Notified Body - NoBo).In that capacity, VINCOTTE is authorised to assess and certify management systems EN 1090-1 FPC 2+.

2 Reference standards

The certification process applied is based upon a demonstrated compliance with the requirements of the latest version of the following normative international documents :

a) Bouwproductenverordening 305/2011
b) EN 1090-1: Execution of steel structures and aluminium structures
   - Part 1: Requirements for conformity assessment of structural components
c) EN 1090-2: Execution of steel structures and aluminium structures
   - Part 2: Technical requirements for steel structures
d) EN 1090-3: Execution of steel structures and aluminium structures
   - Part 3: Technical requirements for aluminium structures

3 Definitions and acronyms

The following general definitions and acronyms apply throughout the whole of this document :

- **Vsa** : Vinçotte nv
- **Applicant** : Organization seeking the certification and registration of its FPC 2+ management system by Vinçotte nv (Vsa).
- **NoBo** : A body notified by the notified authority that is independent of the organizations or construction products it assesses. For this application VINÇOTTE has been notified by the Federal Public Service Economy, SMEs, Self-Employed and Energy to the European Commission for the FPC 2+ certification scheme.
- **Organization** : Organization involved in production that applies for or has obtained certification according to the FPC 2+ certification system
- **Assessor** : Person qualified by VINÇOTTE to audit the organization..
- **FPC** : Factory Production Control
- **RWC** : responsible welding coordinator.

4 General rules

The current General Regulations are the only ones applied by Vsa for certification and registration of management systems complying with the standards and normative documents listed in § 2.

Any Organization seeking certification and registration of its management system by Vsa and any certificate holder must abide by the General Regulations in force at the time the certification contract is concluded.

When the General Regulations are revised, the Organizations concerned may choose either to adopt the revised version or the one already applicable to them. This option remains open for a maximum of one year after the publication date or until the next continuous surveillance, whichever comes first.

An exception to this is when a change in the accreditation rules or in the reference standards or documents makes it necessary to amend the General Regulations. In this case, only the new version is applied.

The requirements of the current General Regulations supersede the corresponding requirements of the Vsa Standard Terms and Conditions of Supply of Services.

The specific conditions defined in the certification contracts may neither alter nor modify the requirements of the current General Regulations.

5 Certificate characteristics

5.1 Scope

The Vsa management system certificate attests that the management system implemented by a Certified Organization, complies with the requirements of the referenced standard EN 1090-1.

5.2 Period of validity

The certificate is valid as long as all predefined requirements are met. The date on which the decision to grant the certificate is taken by the Certification Committee of VINÇOTTE, or after thorough examination and evaluation another date on the advice of the Technical Manager, is deemed to be the starting date.

At the end of each foreseen period (see §5.3) or each period ended by system modifications requiring a new certificate (see §5.3), an application for supervision or new certification must be submitted to VINÇOTTE. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in suspension or withdrawal of the certificate.

5.3 Conditions of validity

The validity of an Vsa certificate is maintained provided that the Certified Organization concerned continuously complies with the following requirements :

a) The certified management system is continuously maintained (e.g. Vinçotte's assessor must be able to assess the continuous practical implementation of the documented quality system during continuous surveillance audits or additional surveillance audits).

b) A controlled and updated copy of the management manual and/or documented procedures for the management system is maintained at the Organization's site, for review by Vsa. The manual will be made available to Vsa upon request.

c) Any significant modification to the management system is communicated to Vsa within one week after they have come into force.

Examples of these modifications are, but not limited to :

- Changes in the Organization's name or address, including the certified workshop(s)
- Change of the execution class (EXC) mentioned in the certificate
- Change of activities or outsourcing, if applicable
- Significant changes within the organization, processes
- Change of the method of declaration of performance according to Annex ZA.3.x of EN 1090-1
- Addition or deletion of activities described in EN 1090-2 (steel) and/or EN 1090-3 (aluminium)
- Modification of the type of components or kits manufactured
- Changes of application of the components or kits
- Stop or cessation of existing activities

- New or significantly changed organizational structure
- Significant increase or decrease in the number of employees
- Changes in the listed welding processes
- Changes in the listed base materials and welding consumables
- Changes in the listed product or construction standards and directives
- Appointment of a new Responsible Welding Coordinator
- Bankruptcy
- See also § 9.1
- …

d) Any complaint raised by a third party about the CE marking and performance of products covered by the certified management system, must be recorded, managed and presented to Vsa's (lead)assessor at the beginning of each audit or upon request by the assessor.

e) The continuous monitoring of certified companies shall be carried out according to the following schedule. The frequency may be higher due to circumstances.
EXC1 and EXC2 : 1, 2, 3, 3, ... years
EXC3 and EXC4 : 1, 1, 2, 3, ... years

f) Vsa is authorized to carry out any unscheduled audit at any time and without notice.

g) All financial obligations with regard to Vsa are satisfied.

6 Responsibilities, tasks and authorities of the 2 parties : NoBo and Certificate holder

The responsibilities of the parties involved in the CE marking of metallic components as meant in the Construction Products Regulation CPR 305/2011, built according to the system 2+, are particularly stated in Annex V of the CPR and further stated in EN 1090-1 and the corresponding standards EN 1090-2 and/or EN 1090-3.

In particular, Annex V of the Construction Products Regulation provides the required information in § 1.3:

CPR 305/2011 Annex V

§ 1.3. System 2+

Declaration of the performance of the essential characteristics of the construction product by the manufacturer on the basis of the following items

a) the manufacturer shall carry out the following:

(i) the determination of the product-type on the basis of type testing (including sampling), type calculation, tabulated values or descriptive documentation of the product;

(ii) factory production control

(iii) testing of samples taken at the factory according to the prescribed test plan;

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(b) the notified production control certification body shall issue the certificate of conformity of factory production control on the basis of

(i) initial inspection of the manufacturing plant and of factory production control

(ii) continuous surveillance, assessment and evaluation of factory production control.

During initial inspection and continuous surveillance the Notified Body (NoBo) is responsible for the examination of the subjects listed in EN 1090-1 Annex B. In particular table B.1 and B.2.

Vsa is reminded by "position paper NB-CPR/13/568" of the group of notified bodies to ensure proper customer complaint management by the certified organization. That is to say, the organization is obliged to set up a functional customer complaint management system and to record and deal with all complaints, whether justified or not. The organization is thereby also obliged to grant Vsa access to all that information at any time.

Pursuant to the requirements set out in EN 1090-1 Annex B.4.3, the certified organization is obliged, in periods where the interval between inspections is 2 or 3 years, to forward "annually" (anniversary of the certificate) a written declaration to the NoBo stating that no modifications with regard to the criteria referred to in B.4.1 of the same Annex B have been introduced to the FPC system.

If before the anniversary date of the certificate there are changes concerning the criteria of B.4.1, the NoBo must be informed of this immediately. The NoBo will then investigate the changes and organize the necessary steps to ensure the certificate is maintained.

When the organization engages the services of an external responsible welding coordinator (RWC), he is obliged to meet the following requirements:

- keep an on-site logbook which shall be completed by the RWC whenever he/she assumes FPC responsibilities, powers and duties,

- keep this logbook available to the FPC assessor(s) at all times.

7 Application for Certification

Any Organization interested in the certification of its FPC 2+ management system may apply to Vsa.

As soon as the Organization’s intention is known, Vsa will supply the Organization with a Preliminary or Informative Questionnaire. The interested Organization(s) should complete the questionnaire and return it to Vsa together with appropriate documentation which provides a clear description of the Organization’s organizational structure and the activit(y)(ies), product(s) or service(s) to be covered by the management system to be certified.

Vsa may also send one of its employees to the interested Organization to collect the necessary data, to get a precise idea about the management system and to offer Vsa’s services in detail.

As soon as the necessary information has been collected and reviewed, the Applicant and Vsa agree the certification conditions, which are finalized in a quotation.

At the Applicant’s request, the certification process may include a pre-audit of the management system that is to be certified.

Ordering proceeds with filling in and signing of the applicable declaration form by the Applicant which may, if so indicated by the Applicant, serve as order form. These forms are part of the Vsa quotation. The relevant declaration form must be returned to Vsa, if necessary attached to a standard order. The provisions of the purchase order must conform to the requirements of the Vsa order forms, the current General Regulations and the requirements of the Certification Scheme.

8 Certification Process

8.1 Registration

Vsa acknowledges all orders received.

Before the beginning of the documentation review, Vsa communicates to the Applicant the names of the assessors who will conduct the certification services. The Applicant will be informed beforehand if there is any change to the assigned assessors.

The Applicant may refuse the participation of an assessor, providing such refusal is made in writing to the assessor's Hierarchical Responsible (including justification) or the Lead assessor and not less than two weeks before the beginning of the certification process. If the Applicant is unable to accept any of the assessors proposed by Vsa, the certification order is considered to be void. Vsa will inform the Applicant of this decision in writing.

Requirement of assessor impartiality: an assessor may not be assigned to and participate in the certification process if he/she has provided consulting or internal audit services to the Organization concerned within the last 2 years.

8.2 Preparation of the audit and review of the documentation (stage 1)

The management system should be implemented for at least 3 months so that significant evidence will be available. The purpose of the preparation stage is to obtain the optimal preparation of the certification audit.

According to the contract (depending on the reference standard, the size of the Organization, the scope of the audit, and the status of "initial certification" or "continuous surveillance"), this preparation mostly takes the form of a preliminary visit on site, or will be executed at a distance using phone calls, faxes or e-mail. It includes, as a general rule :

- acquaintance with the Organization and its activities ;
- the review of the system documentation (the assessors examine the manual and/or documented procedures to assess their compliance with the requirements of the legislative reference document, accordingly the Applicant provides these documents to Vsa) ;
- checking the level of preparedness for the certification audit in the light of the internal audits and management review reports ;
- the establishment of an audit program and all necessary arrangements.
- If applicable, possible and suitable, the RWC's Professional Interview is conducted, in order to determine her/his suitability in function of the set requirements per execution class (EXC). This interview can possibly be started or continued during Phase 2. In the opinion of the lead assessor, this interview can only be conducted to a limited extent if the RWC, in function of the requirements per EXC, holds an I/EWE, I/EWT, I/EWS or EN 1090 RWC-basic certificate. In this case, not so much the technical knowledge, but the competence and authority in relation to the products in the workplace will be assessed. The assessor will then also ask the VLC during the interview for evidence of work previously carried out by him.

In principle, the Lead assessor takes care of the preparation, but he may delegate this task to an assessor of the audit team.

The Lead assessor will communicate possible findings regarding non-conformities and needs for clarification to the Applicant. The Applicant is expected to take necessary actions and to submit to the auditor any modifications to the documentation that may resolve all non-conformities. As far as possible, all non-conformities are addressed and closed before the start of phase 2. The implementation of corrections and possible corrective actions can also be assessed during phase 2.

The certification audit (stage 2) will be scheduled after completion of the preparation visit or documentation examination (stage 1), on a date (normally 3 to 4 weeks later) allowing the Applicant to make any improvements that may be necessary.

8.3 Certification audit (stage 2)

During the certification audit, the appointed assessors verify that the management system described in the manual and in the supporting documented procedures is implemented effectively and in compliance with the requirements of the reference normative document. For this purpose, all documented procedures not yet reviewed are examined, the personnel involved in the management system are interviewed and the relevant management reports are thoroughly analyzed. In this phase, all levels of responsibility are involved and the audit is conducted on the Applicant's premises and other premises (e.g. subcontractors) if these areas are relevant to the agreed scope of the audit.

During the audit, the interview of the RWC will be completed if not already completed during Stage 1.

In the event that a non-conformance or an indication of non-conformance regarding a requirement of the applicable part of EN 1090 is found, the assessor will immediately inform the Applicant. The assessor further investigates the finding and decides whether it is a non-conformity or not. If it is a non-conformity, the assessor will (later) draw up a notice of non-conformity with a demand for correction and possibly corrective action. The applicant shall reply to these requests for correction and possibly corrective action by giving his position and action plan and by proposing a date for implementation for each accepted request for correction and possibly corrective action. The applicant must return these replies to Vsa, ... as soon as possible by a specifically agreed date.

For the duration of the audit, an office with sufficient seating and desks will be allocated to the audit team for their private meetings.

The audit process starts with an introduction meeting involving the Applicant's management and the assessors. During the meeting, the participants introduce themselves and the details of the audit program are defined.

The audit ends with a closing meeting with the Applicant's management and the assessors. During the closing meeting, the assessors will present their conclusions and issue any possible request(s) for correction or corrective action.

Note: For EXC1 Vsa can decide to carry out stage 1 and 2 simultaneously.

8.4 Request for Correction or Corrective Action

The deviations and observations that were identified during the initial or a surveillance audit will be recorded in reports. They represent a non-compliance with the requirements of the standard.

Major nonconformities (or severe shortcomings or serious defects) mean that there is no process link, or that a system fails completely.

Minor nonconformities (or slight deficiencies or small deviations) mean that a requirement of the standard or a provision in the applicable documents or remark in the procedures or work instructions of the organization is not met, but on the basis of objective evidence the conformity of the product is not in doubt. Several small deviations – usually against a common requirement of the system or standard – may be considered as a major nonconformity.

- A **non-exhaustive** list of major nonconformities can be found below :

  - introduction of unapproved changes to the system ;
  - incorrect definition or application of the used part of EN 1090 ;
  - use of base material or welding processes and others, outside the application domain stated on the certificate or mentioned in the audit report(s) ;
  - use of other than in the scope mentioned welding processes, base and filler materials and/or misclassification of these processes or materials ;

- incorrect use of qualified welders or the use of unqualified welders ;
- no availability of a properly qualified responsible welding coordinator ;
- no or incomplete control over outsourced activities (when applicable) ;
- failure to comply with prior requested correction measures or not solving non-conformities ;
- non authorized use of the certificate as provided in Vsa's General Terms and Conditions and this document ;
- not maintaining the documented system up to date (manual and procedures) when the implemented system evolves ;
- when the system of implementing the necessary corrections in order to maintain the requirements of the corresponding standards proofs to be inadequate or inefficient ;
- insufficient planning of the quality management system considering the objectives to be reached: insufficient, unsuitable or non-existent management plan or lack of resources to realize the established objectives (missing capability) ;
- lack of an essential QMS component: no evidence of documentation or of implementation of a criterion (or of a significant part thereof) of the reference standard ;
- when only a part of a system component is missing and when the missing part has a critical influence on the global operation of the system or on the delivered product, and this to such an extent that the negative consequences of this failure are established in the past period.
- evident / deliberate non-conformance with statutory or regulatory requirements ;
- breach of a statutory or regulatory requirement which can call into question consumer safety (or the general interest) ;
- when a nonconformance is such that the balance of the system and its global working is harmed ;
- accumulation of minor non-conformities which leads to a lack of confidence in the system's efficiency ;
- too long a period for the resolution of the correction or corrective action requests established by the auditors, in such that the Organization's capability to handle them may be in doubt.
- No annual reporting by the certified organisation to the NoBo regarding the status of the system and the VLC, starting from year 2 after certification

- A **non-exhaustive** list of minor nonconformities can be found below :

  - incomplete documentation of an applicable criterion of the reference standard, on the condition that the missing documentation is not essential for the operation ;
  - incomplete implementation of an applicable criterion of the reference standard, on the condition that the missing implementation is not essential for the operation ;
  - lack of evidence demonstrating the conformity with a criterion of the reference standard, if this does not harm confidence in the implementation of an essential element of the system.

The reports on deviations shall be delivered on site or sent to the applicant/certified organization in the days following the assessment. Upon receipt, the applicant/certified organization shall provide, as soon as possible or before the specifically agreed date, the answers to the questions for corrections and possible corrective actions with the planned action plan.

Both the minor and the major nonconformities must be resolved - and their implementation verified on site if necessary - before the final assessment report is completed. For an initial assessment this means that the final certification process only starts when "all" nonconformities have been dealt with, approved and the implementation of the corrections and possibly corrective measures has been verified.

If implementation of corrective measures takes longer than 6 weeks for serious shortcomings or 3 months for minor ones, Vsa may decide to suspend the assessment. In that case Vsa informs the

applicant/certified organization that the assessor team will return after the corrections and any corrective measures have been taken and implemented.

If implementation of a correction or measure takes longer than 6 months, the assessment is deemed invalid and a completely new certification or follow-up cycle must be completed. Deviations from this rule can only be granted by the Technical Manager on the basis of a well-founded dossier.

The shortcomings found during the subsequent continuous surveillance are subject to the same measures, with the difference that the certification is not interrupted as long as the implementation does not take longer than 3 months.

8.5 Audit report

During and following the audit, a (or several) confidential report(s) is (are) prepared by the assessor(s).

These reports include a brief description of the Applicant, the description of the products or services covered by the related management system and the Requests for Correction or Corrective Action with all of the nonconformities found.The report(s) also contains the Applicant's responses to the Requests for Correction or Corrective Action.

Based on the certification file and the audit report(s), the Lead auditor will draw up his recommendation.

The reports, with the decision and advice of the lead assessor, together with the complete file are assessed by an independent person. The independent assessor draws up a certification advice.

8.6 Certification

The complete certification file (including the audit reports, together with the recommendation of the Lead Auditor) are then reviewed by a recognized independent person. This independent reviewer will formulate his advice towards granting or otherwise of the certificate to the Certification Committee.

The concerned assessor(s) is (are) heard when necessary. In each case, the Certification Committee will decide either to grant a certificate stating the conditions, or to refuse the certification stating the reason(s).

The granting or maintaining of a certificate is refused when the Certification Committee judges that the management system implemented substantially derogates from the requirements of the reference normative document. This judgment is based upon the following factors :

- Evidence of critical / major non-conformities.
- Accumulation of minor non-conformities giving rise to a lack of confidence in the operability of the management system.
- Attitude of the Applicant towards the resolution of Corrective Action Requests.

In the event of an initial inspection, all deviations must be resolved with the approval of VINÇOTTE before the certificate is issued.

The validity of the certificate is unlimited as long as the requirements set are met. The date on which the decision to award the certificate is taken by the Certification Committee is deemed to be the effective date. The conditions laid down in §5.2 offer a deviation for the implementation of the previous rule.

Normally, after 9 years, a completely new certification cycle is started with, depending on the circumstances, a continuation or an adjustment of the current follow-up cycle.

8.7 Certification registration

When a certificate is granted, a unique registration number is assigned to it. This number is printed on the certificate. The certificate itself is comprised out of 2 parts, a general part (main certificate) and an annex (welding certificate) stating the scope of work more in detail.

The first part (main certificate) normally states:

- the reference normative document(s) ;
- the certified Organization's name and address(es) ;
- the scope of the certification (activities, products or services covered) ;
- the reference of the latest audit report ;
- the date of first and current issue

The second part (welding certificate) normally states:

- reference to used product standards
- the implemented welding process(es) ;
- the base material (sub)group(s) used ;
- the name of the responsible welding coordinator (RWC) ;
- the reference of the latest audit report ;
- the date of first and current issue

VINÇOTTE is entitled to publish certificates, references thereto or summaries thereof in any media form.

8.8 Certification surveillance

Supervision of certified organisations is carried out on a scheduled basis to check that they continue to work in accordance with the FPC 2+ certification scheme. The frequency may be higher due to circumstances (e.g. complexity, many different products, changes in the company, ...).

The **surveillance audits** include :

- the review of the Conditions of Validity (see §5.3);
- the review of complaints received since the last review ;
- dealing with the Requests for Correction or Corrective Action Requests issued during the previous audit(s) ;
- the review of internal audits and their scheduling ;
- the review of parts of the management system * ;
- the review of the use of the certificate ;
- the drawing up of DoPs and the affixing of the CE marking ;
- the mandatory notifications to the Notified Body (see the requirements in §5.3 and §8.4 of these General Regulations).

* As a general rule, all elements of the reference normative document will be reassessed during the validity period of the certificate.

Additional audits may be taken in a number of cases such as :

- a (some) major modification(s) of the certified management system ;
- major or minor nonconformities found during the scheduled surveillance audits ;
- change of responsible welding coordinator
- a complaint raised by a third party.

These additional audits involve reviews of the documentation at Vsa's offices or audits at the Certified Organization's premises or at the site that so requires.

A report is written for all audits. These reports are sent to the Certified Organization within one month after the receipt of acceptable measures in response to any requests for correction(s) or corrective action(s).

The reports, together with the recommendations of the assessors, are presented to the Certification Committee during its next meeting. The Certification Committee decides whether to maintain, modify, suspend or withdraw the corresponding certificate or to impose additional conditions.

9 Specific cases

In addition to the standard certification program described above, special cases can also be accommodated. The most common examples are detailed below.

9.1 Changes to the certification

A Certified Organization may request that modified activities be covered by its current certificate. This request may involve new products, services, activities or locations or another reference standard.

In such a case, a specific program is developed and an additional audit is planned, taking account of the nature of the request. In general, the program is limited to the Certified Organization's new activities.

In cases where the modification is granted, either the initial certificate is adapted to the new situation or it is withdrawn and replaced by a new certificate with new conditions, or an additional certificate is established. The certification surveillance program is modified accordingly.

The applicant shall apply for an adjustment of his certification timely when major system changes occur in order not to have an interruption of the validity of his certification.

The adjustment process is similar to the original certification.

However:

- the program takes into account the previous knowledge of the management system that must be re-assessed;

- the General Regulations in force on the date of the renewal proposal shall apply.

Continuous assessment shall be performed preferably before, but no later than 3 months after the introduction of the changes to the management system. After that date, no temporary certificate is issued, but VINÇOTTE may confirm by letter that the adaptation process is under way, provided the new contract has been signed and the assessment dates agreed.

9.2 Combined certification

The possibility of combining certificates with one of the EN ISO 3834 series should be examined on a case by case basis.

9.3 Transfer of certificates

On the request of a Certified Organization that wishes to transfer a certificate issued by another certification body to Vsa, Vsa can, on some conditions (e.g. the original certification body must also be ISO 17065 accredited, all audit reports available, certificate status valid, …), issue a certificate based on previous audit results and take over the certification programs. This will always be decided on a case by case basis.

The original certificate and all the current certification cycle audit reports are examined and assessed, including the status of outstanding nonconformities, as well as complaints and actions taken.

The results of this Transfer Review and a supplementary transfer audit are submitted to the Certification Committee, which issues (or not) a certificate, with whether or not continuance of the usual cycle of continuous monitoring.

The Certification Committee decides about possible complementary actions (preliminary audit, etc.) and defines the new surveillance program (or confirms the original one).

10 Use and misuse of the certificate and the NoBo logo

The FPC 2+ certified organization is entitled to use the certificate in all cases in which it finds it useful, within its validity.

The FPC 2+ certified organization is entitled to use the certificate at home and abroad, provided that they themselves are the users.

In the event of transfer to third parties and other misuse the certificate will be withdrawn by Vsa.

Vsa also reserves all rights to take appropriate legal measures against the certified organization in that regard.

The certified organization is entitled to use the FPC 2+ logo in the way that is considered most appropriate only for those activities that fall within the scope of the certification. In any case, publicity using the logo shall give a true and accurate picture of the organization's competence for the activities covered by the certification.

The certified organization has the duty to indicate the Vsa registration number 0026 as notified body (NoBo) on the applicable declarations of performance (DoP) and applicable CE marks in accordance with the rules set out in EN 1090-1.

Upon termination of certification, for whatever reason (suspension, withdrawal by VINÇOTTE, cessation of activities, etc.) the certified organization takes the necessary actions to cease all use of the logo forthwith and to destroy the stock of materials bearing the logo.

The logo to be used is transmitted by VINÇOTTE. Any derogation requires a written request to be addressed to the Certification Committee.

11 Certificate renunciation, suspension and withdrawal

11.1 Renunciation

The manufacturer can renounce the certification in writing to Vsa for any reason and at any time. As a consequence of renunciation, the manufacturer must :

- give back the certificate to Vsa ;
- refrain from using any copy of the certificate ;
- remove from all documentation and printed material any reference to the certification.

Renunciation of the certification is acknowledged in writing to the manufacturer by Vsa.

11.2 Suspension

Suspension of certification is decided by the Certification Committee of Vsa as a result of (some examples)

- deviations of the management system with regard to the Construction Products Regulation 305/2011, the qualifying standards of the EN 1090 series or other legislation that do not have sufficient grounds for withdrawal, but which have not been resolved by agreed dates

- improper use of the certificate;

- serious deviations from the requirements;

- unannounced changes that have already been implemented in the organization and have not yet been evaluated by Vsa

- repetitive refusal of proposed dates for ongoing supervision.

Suspension of certification is notified in writing by Vsa to the certified organization together with a statement of the underlying reasons and conditions for reinstatement.

The maximum period for suspension of a certificate is 3 months. This period starts either immediately after the findings as described above or on the agreed date for resolving deviations without respecting this date.

Vsa will notify the competent Belgian authorities (FOD Economie) of the suspension of the certificate. The suspension is only lifted after Vsa has ascertained that the matter has been put back in order in accordance with the requirements. Lifting of the suspension is notified to the organization by Vsa in writing.

In the event of suspension of the certificate, the certificate holder is obliged not to continue his relevant FPC production during the period of suspension.

11.3 Withdrawal

Withdrawal of certification is decided by Vsa, as a consequence of :

- non-respecting the Conditions of Validity (see §5.3).
- important deviations from compliance with requirements ;
- misuse of the certificate ;
- modifications to the manufacturer's organisation not acceptable to Vsa ;
- refusal to allow surveillance audits or checks ;
- cessation of the certified activity ;
- production of metal components to be CE marked shall continue during the suspension period.
- Not resolving deviations during the period of suspension

The withdrawal of certification is notified in writing to the manufacturer by Vsa, together with the supporting reasons.

As a consequence of withdrawal, the manufacturer must :

- give back the certificate to Vsa ;
- refrain from using any copy of the certificate ;
- remove from all documentation and printed material any reference to the withdrawn certification.

Vsa will remove the company from the list of certified organizations.

If the manufacturer decides to seek certification again, a new application must be submitted.

11.4 Notification obligation

The certification holder must immediately inform his current and potential customers of negative results such as suspension and withdrawal and take all associated measures for the protection of his current and potential

customers. However, even if he returns the certificate to Vsa on his own initiative, he is required to inform his actual and potential clients accordingly and to take the appropriate measures.

Vsa will furthermore notify the Belgian accreditation body BELAC, the FPS Economy and the local authority of the decision. Insofar as possible all other notified bodies (NoBos) of the Construction Products Regulation (CPR) will also be notified thereof by Vsa.

12 Appeals and complaints

Any party concerned that wants to object to a decision made by the Certification Committee has the right to appeal, or when they feel that they have been unfairly treated during the audit may file a complaint. To be considered, all objections – including justifications – must be sent to the Vsa Manager by registered mail.

To resolve a complaint, Vsa will operate its proper internal procedures thereto.

To resolve an appeal, a meeting of the Appeals Committee is called. The Certification Committee's decision continues to apply during the appeal procedure.

The members of the Appeals Committee will be communicated to the appellant. The appellant has the right to contest members of the committee by registered letter – including justifications – within 8 days of being notified of the Appeals Committee members.

A meeting of the Appeals committee is called within two weeks after the final agreed upon constitution of the Committee members. During the meeting, both the appellant and the Certification Committee will be entitled to be heard in confidence. The Appeals Committee may also hear any other individual(s) who may be relevant to the appeal. Each interviewee is given one week's notice of the time and place of the Appeals Committee meeting.

The Appeals Committee shall release its decision on the appeal within two weeks after the meeting.

The decision of the majority of the Appeal Committee, as declared by its Chairman, will be final.

The appealed decision will stand for the duration of the appeal procedure.

13 Confidentiality

All information about the applicants and the Certified Organizations and the certification files are held confidential.

Vsa commits itself not to disclose any private information about the applicant or Certified Organizations nor any information collected during the audits, except for the data directly related to the status of the certification (all the data mentioned on the certificate).

However, Vsa may disclose parts or all of the certification files to the accreditation bodies, he FPS Economy and the local authority, if requested upon.

Where appropriate, the Organizations accept the presence of representatives of the accreditation bodies, or auditors undergoing training.

14 Certification fees

The certification fees fixed by Vsa are defined in lump sums and a set of daily and hourly rates.

The sums notably cover:

- the audit preparation and documentation review
- the certification audit and report
- the certification, registration and publication

- the certification surveillance program

The continuous monitoring certification program is subject to the prices in force at the time.

The amounts are determined on the basis of the chosen standard(s) from the EN 1090 series, whereby the assessment times depend on, inter alia, the size of the organization, its complexity, etc. Any existing certification or previous examination of the management system by Vsa can also be taken into account.

A fixed amount is determined per certificate for certification and registration.

All amounts are invoiced after execution of the relevant certification phase (generally after dispatch of the report).

Additional assessment services for which Vsa cannot be held responsible, such as re-examination of documentation, re-execution of the assessment or part thereof, additional services, will be invoiced in accordance with the applicable daily & hourly rates.

The determined certification fee is valid from the certification date until the next continuous surveillance and as long as no adjustments have to be made to the file.

Necessary adjustments lead to new fees.

15 Reference standards changes

In the event of amendments to the regulations of the FPC 2+ certification system for companies in accordance with EN 1090 or documents referred to therein, Vsa shall inform the certified organization thereof timely. Depending on the extent of the change(s), Vsa will indicate to the certified organization a period of time by which they must have implemented the change(s). After the date on which the changes have been implemented at the certified organization, Vsa will reassess the certification system in accordance with the amended regulations.

16 Loss of accreditation

Vsa is under supervision of one or more institutions for the purpose of implementing the current certification scheme and takes all necessary measures to keep the accreditations and authorizations obtained. If Vsa should lose an accreditation, notification and/or authorization in whole or in part, all relevant contractual undertakings with the applicants will be immediately cancelled and.

17 Applicable law & disputes

The current general regulations are governed by Belgian law. Subsequent to an attempt to reach an amicable settlement, any dispute about the validity, interpretation and implementation of the regulation shall be judged by the Brussels first court of instance.