



AEC-1, Issue 4

## PROGRAM DOCUMENT REQUIREMENTS

AEC documents are governed by the ASNT Certification Management Council (CMC).

Approved: May 10, 2019

CMC Chair	
ASNT Certification Group	



The American Society for Nondestructive Testing, Inc.

	<b>TITLE:</b>	<b>Number: AEC-1</b>
	<b>PROGRAM DOCUMENT REQUIREMENTS</b>	<b>Revision: Issue 4</b>
		<b>Date: 5/10/2019</b>

**1.0 PURPOSE**

The purpose of this procedure is to provide guidance to Authorized Examination Centers (AEC's) who are administering American Society for Nondestructive Testing (ASNT) NDT qualification examinations. All documents within the AEC Program are governed by the Certification Management Council (CMC).

**2.0 SCOPE**

This document establishes the minimum requirements to qualify as an Authorized Examination Center (AEC).

**3.0 REFERENCES**

- 3.1 AEC-2 AEC Practical Examination Requirements
- 3.2 AEC-2.1 Practical Examination Equipment Requirements
- 3.3 AEC-2.2 Practical Examination Samples
- 3.4 AEC-3 AEC Computer Based Testing Requirements
- 3.5 AEC-4 AEC Assessment Requirements
- 3.6 AEC-5 AEC Quality Management System (QMS) requirements.
- 3.7 AEC-6 AEC Requirements for administering practical examinations by AEC personnel at remote sites.
- 3.8 ISO 9001 Quality Management Systems - Requirements
- 3.9 ISO 17025 General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories
- 3.10 CMC 15.3.1.7 Appeals, Complaints and Dispute Policy
- 3.11 A2-1 ASNT Independent Contract Auditor Requirements
- 3.12 A4-1 ASNT On-site Audit Procedure
- 3.13 A5-1 ASNT Nonconformance Procedure

**4.0 DEFINITIONS**

- 4.1 Assessor: An individual appointed by the CMC who is qualified to conduct NDT assessments, reassessments, and/or quality audits in accordance with ASNT requirements.
- 4.2 Authorized Examination Center: A site with appropriate facilities and personnel that is authorized by the CMC to administer ASNT NDT qualification examinations.
- 4.3 Coordinator: Point of contact between ASNT and the AEC and to schedule examinations between the AEC and the examination candidate
- 4.4 Examination Coordinator: An individual appointed by the examination center and approved by ASNT who is the primary contact between the examinee, the AEC, and ASNT Technical Services.
- 4.5 Examinee: An individual whose application to sit for an examination has been approved by ASNT.
- 4.6 Certified Test Administrator: AEC staff trained by the Computer Based Testing (CBT) Provider to administer ASNT NDT CBT examinations only.
- 4.7 Examiner: Authorized by ASNT to conduct and supervise practical examinations. The Examiner shall hold an ASNT Level III in the method for the examination they are proctoring.

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**5.0 RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 5.1 The Certification Management Council (CMC) is responsible for:
  - 5.1.1 Establishing and maintaining requirements for certification of applicants, equipment requirements, examination materials, quality requirements, and other technical issues for AECs.
  - 5.1.2 Approving technical requirements for assessors to conduct AEC audits.
  - 5.1.3 Approving audit checklists.
  - 5.1.4 Approving training modules for the assessors and applicable AEC personnel.
  - 5.1.5 Development and approval of the examination grading criteria.
  - 5.1.6 Periodically assessing ASNT International Service Center (ISC) Certification Department's compliance to this procedure.
- 5.2 ASNT ISC Certification Department is responsible for:
  - 5.2.1 Developing audit checklists and training modules.
  - 5.2.2 Approving assessors.
  - 5.2.3 Approving AEC's in accordance with CMC approved documents.
  - 5.2.4 Scheduling of audits with an approved assessor.
  - 5.2.5 Performing ongoing surveillance activities of AEC's.
  - 5.2.6 Reviewing the audit documentation completed by the assessor and closing out outstanding items directly with the AEC.
  - 5.2.7 Maintaining records pertaining to AEC's.
  - 5.2.8 Publishing the names of approved AECs on the ASNT website.
  - 5.2.9 Periodically reporting to the CMC on the status of AEC's.
- 5.3 The Authorized Examination Center is responsible for:
  - 5.3.1 Compliance to this procedure and any other contractual requirements.
  - 5.3.2 Administering the applicable examinations using approved Certified Test Administrators and Examiners.
  - 5.3.3 Securely returning (as applicable) examination materials via traceable carrier to ASNT.
  - 5.3.4 Maintain the quality of the examination test samples in accordance with CMC examination sample maintenance procedures AEC-2.1.
  - 5.3.5 Signing an ASNT Confidentiality, Compliance and Conflict of Interest agreement form for all AEC personnel involved with the administration of ASNT examinations. Shall comply with all ASNT requirements, will maintain the confidentiality of all examination-related materials and will abide by the Conflict of Interest requirements.
  - 5.3.6 Notifying ASNT ISC of any issues that impact the AEC approval process. For example personnel, procedural or equipment changes, non-functional equipment, etc.

**6.0 AEC QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (QMS)**

- 6.1 AECs that administer ASNT NDT practical examinations are required to have a QMS in place, such as ISO 9001, ISO17025 and recognized by the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) or the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC).
  - 6.1.1 Other QMS approvals may be allowed, however must be agreed upon by the CMC AEC Committee and ASNT ISC.
  - 6.1.2 If an AEC does not possess a recognized QMS, then ASNT shall perform a QMS Audit in accordance with CMC procedure AEC-5.

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6.1.2.1 The audit will be performed at the same time as the AEC audit, however depending on the approval frequency, they may be performed at different times.

6.1.3 AEC approval is contingent on maintaining a valid recognized QMS (unless the QMS is approved directly by ASNT ISC).

6.1.4 The AEC shall supply the ASNT ISC Certification Group with a copy of the latest QMS certificate (unless the QMS is approved directly by ASNT ISC).

6.1.5 Any changes to the AEC's QMS shall require notification to ASNT ISC.

6.2 The AEC shall develop their own documented procedures that address the requirements specified in this procedure and other associated documents. Simply referring to an ASNT CMC procedure is not acceptable.

## 7.0 AEC PERSONNEL

All AECs are required to have the following personnel available to facilitate the administration and ensure the security of ASNT NDT qualification examinations:

7.1 The AEC shall appoint a coordinator to act as a point of contact between ASNT and the AEC and to schedule examinations between the AEC and the examination candidate.

7.2 If an AEC is administering Computer Based Testing on behalf of ASNT, the AEC shall appoint a Certified Test Administrator, in accordance with the requirements of the CBT provider and appendix A.

7.3 The AEC shall employ an Examiner who is an ASNT NDT Level III or ACCP Level III certificate holder to conduct practical examinations and be responsible for the security of examinations and examination test samples.

7.3.1 In the event that there are multiple Examiners, the AEC shall designate one of those individuals as the Lead Examiner, responsible for the overall program.

## 8.0 AEC EXAMINATION ADMINISTRATION

8.1 AEC's offering Computer Based Testing (CBT) for the written examinations shall meet the requirements of AEC-3.

Note: AEC's are not automatically given authorization to offer CBT as part of the AEC approval process. The determination for an AEC to administer CBT will be based on business agreements, needs, location, etc., through ASNT ISC.

8.2 For practical examinations the AEC shall provide quiet examination rooms supplied with all necessary services (heat, power, lighting, etc.); and shall provide adequate space for the stated number of examinees at any examination sitting.

8.3 The AEC shall maintain secure, lockable storage facilities for all examination materials including examination test samples. These shall be located in an area where candidates and unauthorized employees will not have unsupervised access and shall be locked at all times.

8.4 All examination test samples are the property of ASNT and shall not be used for any purpose other than ASNT examinations.

8.4.1 The AEC shall maintain an inventory of ASNT examination test samples by serial number and description.

8.4.2 The secure storage shall be in a suitable environment to avoid degradation of ASNT examination test samples. Maintenance of the samples shall be performed per AEC-2.2.

8.4.3 ASNT examination test samples shall be in secure storage when not immediately used for examinations.

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**9.0 EXAMINATION TEST EQUIPMENT**

- 9.1 The AEC shall have all necessary materials and test equipment for the administration of ASNT practical examinations in accordance with AEC-2.1. The AEC shall maintain a list of available equipment and notify ASNT within 30 days if any change in equipment holdings is planned.
- 9.2 The AEC shall utilize technology to allow ASNT ISC to witness examinations through a video monitoring system. The monitoring system shall have capability to record the examination and retain for a period of not less than six (6) weeks. During this time, ASNT may request copies to be sent to ISC as part of the oversight process. For more details refer to AEC-2 and AEC-3 for administration of practical examinations and CBT examination.

**10.0 INCIDENT REPORTING**

- 10.1 The AEC shall have a program in place to address any incidents as a result of issues relating to the ASNT program examinations not performed to the program requirements or when there is a customer complaint.

For example, if it was necessary to extend the time of the examination, due to computer or equipment problems, then the AEC shall identify this in the incident report log indicating what action was taken and what steps are being taken to prevent the situation from occurring again.

**11.0 APPLICATION PROCESS**

- 11.1 As part of the application process, the AEC shall complete a self-audit, using the applicable ASNT checklist(s). The AEC shall incorporate this audit into the company internal audit program to record any nonconformance or opportunity for improvement measures, to comply with the AEC requirements.
  - 11.1.1 When completing the checklist, the AEC shall also record on the checklist the objective evidence that was used to determine compliance to the requirements.
  - 11.1.2 Any internal nonconformance shall have a corrective action plan in place as part of the submittal documentation to ASNT ISC.
  - 11.1.3 All information pertaining to this self-audit shall be included in the package of information.
- 11.2 The application pack shall comprise of a completed application form, applicable checklists, procedures, etc. and supplied to ASNT ISC, prior to any audit taking place. This includes the applicable checklists and procedures.
- 11.3 All documentation and correspondence shall be provided in English. If English is not the language used within the AEC, then the applicable documentation shall be translated accordingly into English.

**12.0 ON SITE AUDIT**

- 12.1 Audit protocols shall meet the general ASNT ISC requirements for conducting audits in accordance with procedures AEC-4 and A4-1.
- 12.2 During the audit the assessor will verify that any items recorded during the self-audit as non-conforming have been addressed in the AEC's QMS. A nonconformance shall be issued, if action was not taken.

Note: This nonconformance is that the QMS did not address this item. The non-conformance specific to the issue at hand that prompted the non-conformance shall be recorded through a separate non-conformance.

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**13.0 ASNT AEC ASSESSOR**

- 13.1 The assessor conducting the audits shall either be an ASNT ISC Certification Group staff member (approved by the AEC Committee group) or an assessor approved by the ASNT ISC Certification Group.
- 13.2 Assessors are approved in accordance with ASNT ISC Procedure A2-1.
- 13.3 The CMC AEC Committee shall determine if in addition to meeting the requirements of ASNT ISC Procedure A2-1, there are additional requirements necessary to perform an AEC audit. For example, assessor credentials or development of a training program. Any such information shall be defined in a separate procedure.
- 13.4 If the AEC is concerned of a conflict of interest, then ASNT ISC will make every effort to address the situation to determine if there is a conflict and take the appropriate action. If the AEC is still not satisfied with the decision of the ISC, then the AEC may appeal the decision directly with the CMC Committee Group in accordance with CMC 15.3.1.7.

**14.0 CLOSURE OF ALL FINDINGS**

- 14.1 For approval of an AEC all non-conformances and any other outstanding items for example payment of the audit, shall be closed out within a timely manner. For further information relating to addressing nonconformance and response timeframes, refer to procedures A5-1.
- 14.2 In the event that ASNT ISC does not believe technically that the AEC should be approved, then ASNT ISC shall convene a meeting with the AEC Committee for concurrence.
  - 14.2.1 If the AEC is found not to be in a condition for approval, then ASNT ISC shall notify the AEC accordingly.
- 14.3 If the AEC is not satisfied with the decision the AEC may appeal the decision with the AEC Committee. The appeal shall be documented and sent to the applicable ASNT ISC staff member involved in the audit. The appeal shall include the following:
  - 14.3.1 A letter requesting the appeal with an explanation regarding why the AEC Committee should overturn the decision.
  - 14.3.2 Provide objective evidence to substantiate the content of the letter.

**15.0 ISSUANCE OF CERTIFICATE**

- 15.1 ASNT ISC shall issue a certificate of approval to the AEC. The certificate shall contain the following information:
  - 15.1.1 Name of the AEC.
  - 15.1.2 Address of the facility (including any other sites that were part of the AEC audit process).
  - 15.1.3 Test Methods & Techniques.
  - 15.1.4 Any limitations, e.g. Industry Sector Specific.
  - 15.1.5 ASNT AEC Logo.
  - 15.1.6 List of examinations capable of being administered by the AEC.
  - 15.1.7 Approval date and expiration.
- 15.2 Upon certification of the AEC, the information of the company, location, Lead Examiner, test method, techniques and limitations shall be identified on the ASNT AEC website.



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**16.0 AEC APPROVAL FREQUENCY**

- 16.1 AEC approval is valid from the month of the initial approval for a period not exceeding five years. Expiration will occur at the end of the corresponding month.
- 16.2 For re-approval the AEC shall apply six (6) months prior to the expiration month/year for an audit to be completed not more than ninety (90) days prior to the expiration. This gives the AEC, assessor and ASNT ISC Staff sufficient time to close out the audit prior to expiration.
  - 16.2.1 No allowances for approval extensions are granted, unless the ASNT logistics (such as assessor availability) are such that the audit was conducted, preventing any outstanding items to be closed prior to the expiration. Any extensions shall only be granted prior to the expiration month/year.
  - 16.2.2 Re-approvals will begin the day after the previous approval expiration month, for another period of five years.

**17.0 ASNT ISC SURVEILLANCE ACTIVITIES**

- 17.1 At the end of each year, the AEC shall perform an internal audit using the ASNT AEC checklist and submit to ASNT ISC. This shall include if any non-conformances were issued, corrective actions taken.
  - 17.1.1 The audit shall include a cover letter from the AEC to report on any issues.
  - 17.1.2 This shall be submitted to the ISC no later than the end of Jan 31 of the following year.
- 17.2 ASNT ISC will periodically access the AEC monitoring system to conduct surveillance activities.
  - 17.2.1 The AEC shall be notified within seven (7) days of the review. This shall be in the form of a report. If a response is required by the AEC, then the AEC has fourteen (14) calendar days to provide a response.
- 17.3 Any changes that affect the AEC process such as personnel, procedures, equipment, etc., shall be communicated immediately to ASNT ISC to determine if any action is necessary.

**18.0 SUSPENSION OF APPROVALS**

- 18.1 If at any time, the AEC is not able to meet the requirements, timeframes for supplying information, customer complaints, then the AEC may (depending on the circumstances) have their approvals suspended.
  - 18.1.1 Any recommendations for suspension of approvals shall be made with the concurrence of the AEC committee Chair or Vice-Chair.
  - 18.1.2 Notification of suspensions will be identified on the ASNT AEC Website.
- 18.2 Re-instatement of approvals will be granted upon satisfactory closure of the circumstances that resulted in the suspension.
- 18.3 Suspensions exist for a maximum of ninety (90) days to allow the AEC the opportunity to remedy the situation. On day ninety one (91), the AEC approval will be withdrawn.

**19.0 APPEALS**

- 19.1 The AEC has the right to appeal any decisions. Appeals shall be in accordance with CMC 15.3.1.7.
- 19.2 The AEC is not permitted to give ASNT examinations during the appeals process.

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**20.0 TRANSITION REQUIREMENTS**

20.1 For AEC's approved to AEC-1, Issue 3, ASNT ISC shall require full compliance with the requirements of this program document, within six months of this program document being issued. After the six months, ASNT ISC will determine what action to take as it relates to the AEC approval.

**21.0 DOCUMENT CHANGE HISTORY**

<b>Revision</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary of Changes</b>
4	5/10/2019	Complete Re-write