

Potential Adoption of Products with Certificates of Conformity in Contracts of Architectural Services Department (ArchSD)

What is Product Certification?

Product Certification ensures a high level of quality assurance through upstream monitoring. The product is controlled at source in a manufacturing plant starting from initial prototype testing, technical inspection of the manufacturing process, auditing of the quality system, approval of the product and subsequent surveillance audit testing of products sampled from the factory and/or market, etc. In order to enhance the credibility of the product certification, manufacturers of the product very often have to seek third party certification body to perform the independent certification audit. This third party product certification scheme is featured with a certification mark.

[Extracted from the paper on “Product Certification of Heat Soaked Tempered Glass” by Ir CK Cheung of HKAS in 2006]

Examples of Product Certification for Construction Materials

Product Conformity Certification Schemes (PCCS) for some construction materials have been developed in Hong Kong. The “Quality Scheme for Production and Supply for Concrete” (QSPSC) is the first scheme developed in the early 1990’s. After more than 20 years of implementation, the value of the scheme in enhancing the quality of ready mix concrete is well recognized. It has been stipulated in the General Specification for Building since the 2007 Edition that structural concrete shall come from a supplier registered under QSPSC for ArchSD contracts.

An overseas example is the requirement for timber from a responsibly managed source certified by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), or other similar certifying / licensing authority, which has also been stipulated in the General Specification. The underlying principle for this overseas certification system is the same: upstream quality assurance.

Other product conformity certification schemes developed in Hong Kong as shown in **Table 1** have also been launched in recent years. Schemes for some other building materials are being developed.

Operation of Product Conformity Certification Schemes (PCCS)

The supplier/manufacturer is required to operate a quality system in compliance with ISO 9001 and the regulations of a particular Scheme. Upon receipt of an application, the **accredited Certification Body** will assess the quality and technical documentations, and conduct on-site assessment of the quality system management office and manufacturing plant of the applicant. After successful certification to confirm that a product of a given supplier satisfies the requirements of a specified certification scheme, surveillance assessment and recertification assessment will be carried out by the accredited certification body according to the regulations of the Scheme.

Advantages of Product Certification

Product Certification provides the following advantages:

- It is an independent assurance that the product is manufactured under an effective system of testing, supervision and control
- Purchasers of the products may not be required to carry out further tests, as the products are already certified to be in compliance with the standards
- Certified products provide the user with an assurance for safety and reliability
- Certified products enjoy the benefits of protection against competition from substandard products and misrepresentation
- The product certification mark enhances the reputation of manufacturer and thus extends its marketing capability
- Improved efficiency in production and reduced wastage and rejects.

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Adoption of Products with Certificates of Conformity in ArchSD Contracts

Adoption of products with Certificates of Conformity in ArchSD contracts is being actively considered. PCCS that enhance public safety and health may be given priorities. The requirements for certification under the PCCS-TA for “Tile Adhesives” and the PCCS-RM for “Repair Mortars” had been applied as pilot use in some ArchSD tenders since 2013 and 2015 respectively. PCCS for Cement Products, Passive Fire Protection Products, Aluminium Window and Frictional Hinges, Heat-soaked Tempered Glass, Ceramic Tiles, Mesh Reinforcement, Drainage uPVC Pipe and Fittings, and Close-coupled Water Closet Suites are potential products for future consideration where applicable. The ultimate objective is assurance of public safety and health through adopting PCCS.

Enquiry

For general enquiries on Product Conformity Certification Schemes (PCCS) for construction materials and products in Hong Kong, you may contact Hong Kong Council for Testing and Certification (HKCTC). Contact information can be viewed at the following website of the Product Certification for Construction Materials under HKCTC:

https://www.hkctc.gov.hk/en/tcsector/ba/construction_product_cert.html

For general enquiries on adoption of construction materials listed under Product Conformity Certification Schemes (PCCS) in ArchSD contracts, please contact our Technical Secretary/2, on telephone number: 2286 3490 or by e-mail: ts2@archsd.gov.hk

Other information on Product Certification is available in the following websites:

(a) The Hong Kong Certification Body Accreditation Scheme (HKCAS) - Index of Accredited Services:

https://www.itc.gov.hk/en/quality/hkas/doc/common/accrorg/cb_svc_en.pdf

(b) Hong Kong Accreditation Service – Mutual Recognition Arrangements (MRA) / Multilateral Recognition Arrangements (MLA):

<https://www.itc.gov.hk/en/quality/hkas/agreement.htm>

(c) Hong Kong Housing Authority - Construction Product Certification:

<https://www.housingauthority.gov.hk/en/business-partnerships/resources/construction-product-certification/index.html>

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(Last updated August 2019)

Table 1 – Examples of Local Product Certification Schemes for Construction Materials

Quality Scheme (QS)/ Product Conformity Certification Scheme (PCCS)	Scheme Owner	Copy of Scheme is available from* :
Quality Scheme for the Production and Supply of Concrete (QSPSC™)	Hong Kong Quality Assurance Agency (HKQAA)	Can be purchased online at HKQAA website : http://www.hkqaa.org/en_pub_standards.php?catid=1
PCCS for Cement Products (PCCS-CP)	Hong Kong Concrete Institute (HKCI)	Can be purchased / downloaded from HKCI : The Secretariat Hong Kong Concrete Institute P.O. Box 79077, Mongkok Post Office, Mongkok, Kowloon Tel: (852) 2789 2389 Fax: (852) 2789 2390 Website : http://www.hongkongci.org/publication/
PCCS for Tile Adhesives (PCCS-TA)		
PCCS for Repair Mortar (PCCS-RM)		
PCCS for Ceramic Tiles (PCCS-CT)		
PCCS for Mesh Reinforcements (PCCS-MR)		
PCCS for Aggregates for Concrete (PCCS-AC)		
Quality Scheme for Standard Sands (QS/SS)	Castco Certification Services Ltd (CCSL)	Can be purchased from CCSL : Tel : (852) 2597 8333 Fax : (852) 2597 8399 Website: http://www.castco.com.hk/services/cert_product.aspx
PCCS for Mechanical Couplers (PCCS-MC)		
Quality Scheme for Replacement Sands (QS/RS)		
PCCS for Passive Fire Protection Products (PCCS-PFPP)	Hong Kong Institute of Steel Construction (HKISC)	Can be purchased/ downloaded from HKISC : Website : http://www.hkisc.org/index.html
PCCS for Aluminum Window (PCCS-AW)		
PCCS for Frictional Hinges for Aluminum Window (PCCS-FH)		
PCCS for Heat-soaked Tempered Glass (PCCS-TG)		
PCCS for uPVC Pipe and Fittings for Foul Water Drainage above Ground (PCCS-UP)	Hong Kong Institution of Plumbing and Drainage Ltd (HKIPD)	Can be purchased from HKIPD : Email address : hkipdl@gmail.com Tel: (852) 5110 8379 Fax: (852) 3585 3800 Website: http://www.hkipd.com.hk/index.php
PCCS for Close-coupled Water Closet Suites (PCCS-WC)		
PCCS for Paint Products (PCCS-PP)	Hong Kong Association for Testing, Inspection and Certification Ltd. (HKATICL)	Can be purchased from HKATICL : Email address : info@hktic.org Tel: (852) 3116 1376 Fax: (852) 3116 1371 Website: http://www.hktic.org/template?series=3&article=274