



A SUMMARY OF THE REVIEW PROCESS FOR AN ICC EVALUATION SERVICE (ICC-ES) REPORT

Introduction

At ICC-ES, each application for an evaluation report gets individual attention, and this makes it difficult to summarize the ICC-ES review process. In general, however, it may be said that the review process begins when you file an application, the appropriate fees, and—if you are reasonably sure of what is needed—data in support of the application. If data is not supplied initially, ICC-ES will contact you and discuss the type of data that is needed to indicate compliance with the relevant code or with ICC-ES evaluation guidelines and/or acceptance criteria. Depending on the type of recognition that you desire, the necessary supporting data may include quality documentation for the products or materials to be covered in the evaluation report; detailed technical information on the product/material; test reports from accredited laboratories; and any other data thought necessary, to show compliance with the code or other governing documents, by the ICC-ES technical staff. As information is exchanged about the application and supporting data, ICC-ES will also tell you about any forms that must be submitted to complete the application file.

Evaluation

Applications are assigned a number (if they are initial applications and don't already have a report number), and are referred to a member of the ICC-ES technical staff at one of the three ICC-ES regional offices (Chicago, Birmingham, or Los Angeles). Once supporting data is received, it will usually take at least sixty days for the staff member to perform an initial review and report the results to you. For most applications, results are conveyed in a letter, which may be accompanied by the draft of an evaluation report. To smooth the evaluation process, the assigned staff member will serve throughout as the single point of contact between ICC-ES and you.

The evaluation process may be summarized as follows for ICC-ES evaluation reports and for legacy reports (legacy reports are evaluation reports that were originally issued by one of the legacy evaluation services: the National Evaluation Service, ICBO Evaluation Service, SBCCI Public Service Testing and Evaluation Services, and BOCAI Evaluation Services):

The Process for an ICC-ES Evaluation Report (NOTE: A Similar Process Would Apply When a Legacy Report Is Converted to an ICC-ES Report)

The ICC-ES staff member will review your data to see if it indicates compliance with the code or with existing ICC-ES acceptance criteria. If there is the need, for your product, to develop a new criteria, specifying the data that must be submitted and the conditions

under which ICC-ES will approve the product, then the assigned staff member will work with you to draft the document. Once drafted, the criteria will be put before the ICC-ES Evaluation Committee, which must approve all acceptance criteria.

ICC-ES acceptance criteria are usually approved only after they have been considered during public hearings of the Evaluation Committee, which take place three times a year. (Some criteria are subject to an alternate approval process that does not involve public hearings. The assigned ICC-ES technical staff member will let you know if an alternate process may be used to develop an acceptance criteria for your product.) The committee may approve a new criteria on first consideration; but it is also possible the committee will need two or more hearings, with input from various interested parties, before it can finally approve the criteria related to your product. At that point you should submit the data specified in the criteria to the ICC-ES staff member who has been working with you.

Comments from the staff member, raising questions about the data or any other issues, will be conveyed to you in letters until all issues have been resolved. During the review process, for your comment, the staff member may also send you drafts of the proposed evaluation report. Once most questions have been answered and the report is close to being issued, there will be a qualifying inspection of your manufacturing facilities. Successful completion of this inspection, and final agreement between you and ICC-ES staff on the contents of the report, will clear the way for the report's final publication and posting to the ICC-ES web site.

Depending on the type of product covered by your report, it is possible you will have to engage the services of an inspection agency, accredited by the International Accreditation Service, Inc., to perform regular inspections of your production facility. If this should be the case, ICC-ES, before issuing the evaluation report, will confirm the existence of a suitable agreement between your company and the accredited agency. (When an inspection agency is involved, the on-site inspection discussed earlier may be carried out by the agency rather than an ICC-ES representative.)

New ICC-ES evaluation reports are initially issued for a one-year period. Thereafter, your evaluation report will be subject to re-examination at one- or two-year intervals, depending on your preference.

The Process for Legacy Reports

The review process for legacy reports is relatively simple, since legacy reports can only be re-examined, without substantive changes. (Any substantive change, such as a change in the product, the addition of a product, or a change in the manufacturing facility, would require that the legacy report be converted to a new ICC-ES report.)

For re-examination, legacy reports originally issued by the National Evaluation Service (NES) or SBCCI Public Service Testing and Evaluation Services, Inc. (SBCCI PST & ESI), are normally reviewed by a technical staff member from the ICC-ES Birmingham Regional Office. On the other hand, legacy reports originally issued by BOCAI Evaluation Services (BOCAI ES) are normally reviewed by a staff member from ICC-ES's Chicago Regional Office, and reports originally issued by ICBO Evaluation Service (ICBO ES) are normally reviewed at the Los Angeles Regional Office.

ICC-ES has special rules to cover instances where a product is the subject of more than one legacy report, issued by more than one of the legacy evaluation services (NES, SBCCI PST & ESI, BOCAI ES, and ICBO ES). If you happen to hold such overlapping legacy reports, you are encouraged to carefully review Section 3.2 of the ICC-ES Rules of Procedure for Legacy Reports.

Where there is no overlap in a legacy report, an ICC-ES staff member from the appropriate regional office will review your application for re-examination, along with any changes (of a nonsubstantive nature) that you are requesting to the report. The staff member will work with you, through written correspondence, to resolve issues that arise during the ICC-ES review, and will prepare a draft of the re-examined report for your own review. If the re-examination process is not completed before the expiration date of the legacy report, then you will have to pay monthly fees (see the ICC-ES fee schedule) to maintain the validity of your legacy report until it can be reissued.

Like ICC-ES reports, legacy reports may be reissued for a one-year or a two-year period, depending on the preference of the applicant. The ICC-ES fee schedule presents the differing fees for one-year and two-year reports.

The Process for Interim Revisions and Re-examinations out of Schedule

If you want to revise an existing report before its re-examination date, you would apply either for an "interim revision" or a "re-examination out of schedule." Interim revisions may be made to both ICC-ES evaluation reports and legacy reports, but the revisions must be minor in nature, requiring no more than eight hours of ICC-ES technical staff time. In the case of ICC-ES evaluation reports, interim revisions may include minor technical changes; while only editorial changes are allowed, at any time, in the case of legacy reports. Once an interim revision is approved, the report will be reissued with a revision date, but the required date for re-examination will remain the same.

If, before its re-examination date, you want to make really significant revisions to a report, requiring more than eight hours of work by the ICC-ES technical staff, then you would apply for a re-examination out of schedule. (By definition, such significant changes would apply only to ICC-ES evaluation reports, not legacy reports.) A report that is successfully re-examined out of schedule will be reissued for a one- or two-year period, depending on your preference.

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