

IEC SYSTEM OF CONFORMITY ASSESSMENT SCHEMES FOR ELECTROTECHNICAL EQUIPMENT AND COMPONENTS (IECEE)

Subject:

Resuming on-site assessments as the primary method of IECEE Peer Assessments.

Background:

With the end date for IECEE-CMC/2199B/AC approaching on December 31, 2022, the IECEE will be resuming on-site assessments as the primary method of Peer Assessment utilizing our existing operational documents. Assessments that have already been scheduled as remote with confirmed dates and an associated peer assessment team confirmed will remain unchanged.

Despite this return to on site assessments, we also recognize the ongoing pandemic and associated challenges with operating an on-site peer assessment system. In the event on-site assessments cannot be operationalized due to local conditions, the organization to be assessed shall provide the Lead Assessor with justification, along with supporting evidence of why an assessment cannot be performed in person. The Lead Assessor will review the justifications on a case-by-case basis to determine if flexibility can be allowed for qualified cases following the guidelines of IECEE-CMC/2199B/AC. The IECEE Secretariat shall be contacted by the Lead Assessor in cases that are uncertain or questioned.

Assessors assigned to assessments are also expected to carry out assessments on-site. In the event the assessor cannot perform the assessment on-site due to local conditions, the assessor shall provide the Lead Assessor with justification of why they cannot perform the assessment in person. The Lead Assessor will review the justifications on a case-by-case basis to determine if flexibility can be allowed for qualified cases following the guidelines of IECEE-CMC/2199B/AC.

The return to on-site assessments is effective for any assessment scheduled to take place after January 1, 2023. Members are reminded that on-site assessments shall be planned as local conditions allow, by coordinating with your Lead Assessor.

Action:

IECEE Members and assessors to note the return to on-site assessments and annexed guidance documents of IECEE-CMC/2199B/AC for conducting remote assessments as an exception to on-site assessments.

Annex 1 – Guidance for Remote IECEE Assessments During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Annex 2 – Guidance for the handling of CTFs (Customer's Testing Facilities) Stage 1-3 during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Annex 3 – Additional Guidance for Remote Assessments

Annex 1 Guidance for Remote IECEE Assessments During the COVID-19 Pandemic

General Principles

This guideline describes permissible **temporary** deviations from the existing IECEE assessments procedures for NCBs, CBTLs, SPTLs and Stage 4 CTFs, due to the global COVID-19 pandemic. Except as specifically modified in this deviation guideline, all relevant IECEE assessment requirements continue to apply in full. The document submission timeline from OD-2007 remains unchanged for all types of assessments.

IECEE assessments of NCBs, CBTLs, SPTLs and Stage 4 CTFs are permitted to be performed remotely until December 31, 2022, as specified in this guidance and summarized in the tables below.

NCB Assessments		
Type of Assessment	Remote assessment?	
	Yes	No
Cybersecurity – all assessment types	X	
Initial Assessment (IAR)		X
Extension of Scope (EAR)	X	
Re-Assessment (RAR)	X	
Follow-up Assessment (FAR) ¹		X
Re-Location Assessment (RLAR) ²	N/A	N/A

Notes:

1. The IECEE Secretariat deals with Follow-up Assessments on a case-by-case basis.
2. The re-location of the NCB requires only an administrative assessment.

CBTL/SPTL, Stage 4 CTF Assessments			
Type of Assessment	Comments/Conditions	Remote assessment ?	
		Yes	No
Cybersecurity – all assessment types	Not applicable to Stage 4 CTFs	X	
Initial Assessment (IAR)	Only possible if NCB is already operating in the IECEE as I/R NCB. Lab assessment report from NCB required. <i>The first on-site re-assessment has to be conducted in the same way as an Initial Assessment.</i>	X	
Extension of Scope (EAR)	OD-2021, Part 2 checklist/declaration required for scope extensions in both accepted and new categories	X	
Re-Assessment (RAR)	Already implemented	X	
Relocation Assessment (RLAR)	Lab assessment report from NCB required	X	
QMS Assessment (RAR)	Not applicable to Stage 4 CTFs	X	
Follow-up Assessment (FAR) ¹			X

Notes:

1. The IECEE Secretariat deals with Follow-up Assessments on a case-by-case basis.

General Guidance

The use of appropriate teleconferencing and document sharing platform (e.g. Skype, Teams, Zoom, etc.) must be agreed upon in advance of the assessment.

Where the use of Live Stream Video (LSV) is required for remote witnessing of tests, the technology used for this purpose must be acceptable to the Assessment Team in terms of its audio/video capability and its mobility.

The participation of an NCB Representative in a Remote assessment is required. However, depending on the time zones, it may be limited to participation in the Opening and Closing Meetings, and availability on request as agreed with the Assessment Team and the assessed organization.

Where an onsite assessment is possible, e.g. the assessment team can travel, the organization to be assessed has no visitation restrictions, and all parties agree to an onsite assessment, the normal onsite assessment procedures will apply. In case there is no consensus on this between the assessment team and assessed organization, the Secretariat will arbitrate.

The NCB/CBTL must assume full responsibility for the risks related to the transmission of Live Stream Video data and electronic documents.

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PART A: Organization of the Assessment – Assessment Plan

1. Assessment Planning

- 1.1 Due to the fact that for many of the currently scheduled re-assessments the members of the Assessment Team and the assessed organization may be in different time zones, a practical plan for a remote assessment must be developed early in the planning phase.
- 1.2 Specifically, where the time difference is greater than 3 hours, there should be an agreement to split the normal assessment time into a number of segments appropriate for the available time windows.
- 1.3 Separate remote assessment sessions may be arranged by individual members of the Assessment Team with the staff of the assessed organization - within the framework of the overall assessment plan and with overall coordination by the Lead Assessor.
- 1.4 The total time of the assessment should be estimated in half-day increments taking into account all anticipated additional preparation work as compared to a regular onsite assessment, such as LSV demonstrations, pre-assessment document and report review, etc. The collective IECEE experience with remote assessments confirms that additional preparation time is required. The cost estimate using approved IECEE daily rates should be based on 8 hour days. The total assessment time will generally depend on a number of factors such as assessment type, number of facilities assessed during the same round of assessments, scope of assessment for each facility, potential language issues, etc. Therefore, IECEE Assessment Teams can estimate and charge additional fees in accordance with this guideline, after discussing it with the organization to be assessed.

The following table could be used for as a starting point for estimating the additional assessment time for each facility, before considering other factors.

Assessment Type	Scope	Additional Charges per Facility (days)
NCB – Re-assessment or Scope Extension		0.5 - 1
CBTL – Re-assessment or Scope Extension	Large	1 - 2
	Small	0.5 - 1
CBTL – Relocation or QMS Assessment		0.5 – 1
CBTL – Initial assessment under existing I/R NCB		1 - 2

Where assessment documentation is not provided in advance as requested, the assessment team may request re-scheduling of the assessment or request additional assessment time, and charge additional fees over and above the original cost estimate.

PART B – Remote Assessment of NCB (Re-assessment and Scope Extension)

1 Preparation for Remote Assessment of NCB

1.1 All required application documentation is submitted by the assessed NCB **six weeks in advance of the assessment**, in accordance with the relevant section of OD-2007.

Note: Item 1.2 does not apply to Scope Extension Assessment

1.2 Additionally, and at the same time (six weeks in advance of the assessment), the NCB provides the following documentation, in English:

- a) A document describing the NCB's current Quality Management documentation structure,
- b) A list of Quality Management System documents relevant to CB Scheme operations, including completed form OD-2007 F1 (prev. OD-2016), Check List for NCBs.
 - i. For remote re-assessments, the statement that there are no changes in quality system is not allowed, and the completed checklist is required.
 - ii. The list should highlight new and/or changed QMS documentation.
- c) A list of changes to key management and certification personnel since the last IECEE assessment,
- d) A list of internal assessors used to conduct NCB audits of CBTLs and CTFs (to allow selection of staff for review of training and potential interview).

1.3 NCB confirms that the Assessment Team will have online access to management system documentation, or provides the requested documents by email or FTP server, such as Dropbox, etc. (the issue of documentation language must be addressed here).

1.4 NCB confirms that a person fluent in English will be available to assist each member of the Assessment Team in their interactions with the NCB staff.

1.5 For Re-assessments the Assessment Team decides on the assessment scope (a selection of product categories and standards) and informs the NCB.

1.6 NCB provides the number of completed projects (last 3 years) for each standard in the scope of the assessment (Annexes 1A or 1B in OD-2004) – in advance of the assessment.

1.7 NCB provides a list of certification projects completed over the last 3 years for each standard in the scope of the assessment. The list must include for each project at least the project number, standard used, and the type of product.

- Where the number of projects is very large, the NCB may choose to limit the list to 20 projects per standard - representative of the products tested to that standard over the last 3 years.

1.8 Assessment Team selects for review an appropriate number of projects for the overall assessment scope. For re-assessment, a minimum of 1 project per standard should be selected.

- a) These projects (CBTC and CBTR) are provided to the Assessment Team by email in advance of the assessment **and** the related certification files are made available for an online review during the assessment.
- b) Where the requested CBTCs/CBTRs are not provided for review in advance, additional remote sessions may be required for online report review.



2. Remote assessment

- 2.1 All interactive parts of the assessment may be conducted by Zoom, Teams, Skype or any other online meeting platform that will allow both screen-sharing and audio/video interactions with the staff of the NCB.
- 2.2 The assessment will consist of:
 - a) Opening meeting
 - b) Review of documentation – either online or as provided by email in advance
 - c) Interactive assessment activities – each assessor opens a separate remote interface with the interviewed NCB staff.
 - d) Closing meeting.

3. Completion of Assessment Report

- 3.1 Regular process and timing are followed.
- 3.2 The assessment report shall include the following statement on the title page:
 “This assessment was conducted remotely and was subject to the limitations of a remote assessment. The facts, judgments and conclusions documented in the report are based on remote observations of the assessment team.”

4. NCR Resolution

Regular process and timing are followed.

Part C – Remote assessment of CBTL, SPTL or Stage 4 CTF

(The term “CBTL” used below applies also to SPTLs and Stage 4 CTFs)

C1 – General Guidance

1. Preparation for Assessment

- 1.1 All required application documentation is submitted by the NCB of the assessed CBTL **six weeks in advance of the assessment**, in accordance with the relevant section of OD-2007. *Note: Item 1.2 does not apply to Scope Extension nor Relocation Assessment).*
- 1.2 Additionally, and at the same time (6 weeks in advance of the assessment), the NCB/CBTL provides the following documentation, in English:
 - a) A document describing the CBTL’s current quality management documentation structure
 - b) A list of Quality Management System documents relevant to CB Scheme operations, including completed form OD-2007 F2b (prev. OD-2017), Check List for CBTLs.
 - i. For remote re-assessments, the option of stating that there are no changes in quality system is not allowed, and the completed checklist is required.
 - ii. The list should highlight new and/or changed QMS documentation.
 - c) A list of changes to key management, testing and engineering personnel since the last IECEE re-assessment,
 - d) A list of internal assessors used to conduct audits of CTFs (to allow selection of staff for review of training and for a potential interview).
- 1.3 CBTL confirms that the Assessment Team will have online access to management system documentation, or provides the requested documents by email or FTP server, such as Dropbox, etc. (The issue of documentation language must be addressed here).

1.4 CBTL confirms that a person fluent in English will be available to assist each member of the Assessment Team in their interactions with the CBTL staff.

Note: Items 1.5 – 1.12 do not apply to QMS Assessments.

1.5 CBTL provides evidence that it possesses adequate LSV and audio capability to permit remote witnessing of tests by the Assessment Team, and provides the technical details.

1.6 Assessment Teams reviews the provided LSV/audio documentation, arranges for a brief online demonstration of this capability and accepts it (prior to the assessment).

Note: Items 1.7 – 1.12 do not apply to Relocation Assessments.

1.7 For Re-assessments, the Assessment Team decides on the scope of assessment (a selection of product categories and standards) and advises the organization to be assessed.

1.8 CBTL provides the number of completed projects (last 3 years) for each standard in the scope of the assessment (i.e. in form of completed Annex 1A, 1B or 1C in OD-2005-2) – in advance of the assessment.

1.9 CBTL provides the actual list of projects completed over the last 3 years for each standard in the scope of the assessment. The list must include for each project at least the project number, standard used, and the type of product.

a) Where the number of projects is very large, the CBTL may choose to limit the list to 20 projects per standard - representative of the products tested to that standard over the last 3 years.

1.10 Assessment Team selects for review an appropriate number of projects for the overall assessment scope. For re-assessment, a minimum of 1 project per standard should be selected.

a) These projects (CBTRs only) are provided to the Assessment Team by email in advance of the assessment **and** the related files are made available for an online review during the assessment.

b) Where the CBTRs are not provided for review in advance, additional remote sessions may be required for online report review. This may extend the total assessment time and result in additional assessment charges.

1.11 At least one week before the assessment the Assessment Team prepares a List of Tests to be Witnessed during the remote assessment, and provides the list to the CBTL.

1.12 CBTL prepares to demonstrate the requested tests by LSV.

2. Remote Assessment

2.1 All one-on-one or group discussions of the assessment may be conducted by Zoom, Teams, Skype or any other online meeting platform that will allow both screen-sharing and audio/video interactions with the staff of the CBTL.

2.2 The assessment will consist of:

a) Opening meeting

b) Review of documentation – either online or as provided by email in advance

c) Interactive assessment activities – questions, interviews, witnessing of tests (by LSV), etc.

ii. each assessor opens a separate remote interface with CBTL/SPTL staff to be interviewed,

iii. LSV witnessing of tests must allow sufficient visual detail and time for questions about the test equipment used and the test procedure.

d) Closing meeting.

3. Completion of Assessment Report

- 3.1 Regular process and timing are to be followed.
- 3.2 The assessment report shall include the following statement on the title page:
“This assessment was conducted remotely and was subject to the limitations of a remote assessment. The facts, judgments and conclusions documented in the report are based on remote observations of the assessment team.”

4. NCR Resolution

Regular process and timing are followed.

C2 – Re-assessments

The preparation and the assessment process should follow the **General Guidance** in Section C1 above.

C3 - Scope Extension Assessments

A decision to carry out a remote Scope Extension Assessment that includes addition of a new category (except CYBR) can only be made after reviewing the completed OD-2021, Part 2 application and declaration form signed by the NCB and provided to the Secretariat (even though this form was originally intended for administrative scope extensions only).

The preparation and the assessment process should follow the applicable parts of the **General Guidance** in Section C1.

C4 – Relocation Assessments

A decision to carry out a remote Relocation Assessment of a CBTL can only be made after reviewing an assessment report from an onsite or remote assessment of the CBTL carried out by the responsible NCB within the last 6 months.

The preparation and the assessment process should follow the applicable parts of the **General Guidance** in Section C1.

C5 –QMS Assessment

The preparation and the assessment process should follow the applicable parts of the **General Guidance** in Section C1 above.

C6 –Initial Assessment of new CBTL under existing I/R NCB

Preconditions:

- A decision to carry out a remote Initial Assessment of a CBTL can only be made after:
 - Reviewing the NCB’s assessment report from an onsite or remote assessment of the CBTL, carried out within the last 6 months.
 - NCR’s from NCB’s assessment (if applicable) are closed.

- CBTL needs to have an accreditation based on ISO/IEC 17025:2017 (Temporary Measure).
- CBTL should have a scope not excessive in size.

The Secretariat will check that all documentation has been provided, the content of which will be reviewed by the appointed assessment team.

Other cases and specific circumstances need the individual decision by the Secretariat.

Additional Requirements

- If a remote initial assessment is finalized with positive result, interim acceptance will be granted by the Secretariat, until an actual on-site assessment has been successfully completed.
- The first on-site assessment has to be conducted in the same way as an Initial Assessment and needs to cover the entire scope of the laboratory, the findings of the remote assessment, etc.
- Re-assessments are scheduled as per regular re-assessment cycle.
- The time-line for the re-assessment cycle starts at the date of the remote assessment.
- In exceptional circumstances and based on the outcome of the remote assessment, the Lead Assessor may recommend an onsite follow-up assessment.

The preparation and the assessment process should follow the applicable parts of the **General Guidance** in Section C1 above.

Annex 2

Guidance

for the handling of

CTF (Customer's Testing Facilities) Stages 1 to 3 during the COVID-19 Pandemic

1. General Principles

This guideline describes a permissible temporary deviation from the existing IECEE procedures for **Remote Re-Validation and Assessments** of CTFs due to the global COVID-19 pandemic.

The validity period of this temporary remote assessment deviation procedure is given on page 1 of this guidance document.

When applying the deviations listed below, it is important to keep in mind that a CB Test Certificate issued by the NCB obtained by utilization of a CTF has the same status as one obtained from a CBTL (ref. OD-2048, cl. 4.2.i)

2. Initial CTF Assessments

Initial Assessment for ...	OD-2048 ref.	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3
New CTF	cl. 3.1 and 4.2.j)	No	Yes	see Cond. 2)
Additional CTF location	cl. 4.1.3	No	Yes	see Cond. 2)
Progression Stage 1 --> 2	cl. 11.2	//	see Cond. 1)	//
Progression Stage 2 --> 3	cl. 11.3	//	//	see Cond. 2)
Transfer to another NCB	cl. 4.2.j)	Yes	Yes	Yes

// = N/A (Not applicable)

For any of above permissible remote assessments, an on-site assessment needs to be conducted as soon as possible once travel is allowed, preferably by the same assessment team that conducted the remote assessment.

- Cond. 1):
- a. Only for the same tests as in current CTF Stage 1 scope.
 - b. The test equipment used during previous CTF Stage 1 projects were the CTF's test equipment (not the CBTL test equipment)

- Cond. 2):
- a. Only for the same tests as in current CTF Stage 2 scope, and
 - b. Successful completion of 5 complete test programs at CTF Stage 2, and (Any missing tests are demonstrated by remote assessment)
 - c. Successful completion of 2 PTP programs (CTL or others) while at CTF Stage 2, and
 - d. Successfully maintained CTF Stage 2 status for a minimum of two years, prior to a recommendation of being remotely assessed for progression to CTF Stage 3.
 - e. OD-2048 rules for progression to CTF Stage 3 remain applicable.
 - f. The previous progression to CTF Stage 2 was not by remote assessment.

3. CTF Assessment types other than "Initial"

Other Assessment Types	OD-2048 ref.	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3
Annual Assessment	cl. 3.1.b) and 10.2	//	//	Yes
Re-validation	cl. 3.2. and 10.1	Yes	Yes	//
Re-Assessment	cl. 3.1.e)	Yes	Yes	Yes
Re-Location	10.3	No	Yes	Yes
Scope Extension	10.3	No	Yes	Yes
Follow-up Assessment	cl. 3.1.c)	see Cond. 3)	see Cond. 3)	see Cond. 3)

// = N/A (Not applicable)

Cond. 3): The NCB deals with Follow-up Assessments on a case-by-case basis. The decision must be documented by the NCB.

Where there is "No" indicated in the two tables above, Assessments must be performed on-site, and therefore may need to be postponed until an on-site assessment is possible.

The use of appropriate teleconferencing and document sharing platforms (e.g. Skype, Teams, Zoom, etc.) must be agreed upon in advance of the assessment.

For CTF Stages 2 and 3, where the use of LSV (Live Stream Video) is considered to be an alternative to on-site witnessing, the technology used for this purpose must be acceptable to the Assessment Team in terms of its audio/video capability and its mobility (refer to Annex C of OD-2048).

Where an on-site Assessment is possible, the normal assessment procedures will apply.



PART A: Stage specific Guidance

CTF Stage 1:

The main concept of this CTF Stage is the physical presence of CBTL staff or LTR in the CTF, whereby full testing is carried out by CBTL staff or an LTR. LSV can only be utilized from CTF Stage 2 onwards. Hence, if CBTL staff or an LTR cannot travel to the CTF, then there is also no testing possible. Once travel to a CTF Stage 1 becomes possible again, the assessment can be performed at the same time.

Nevertheless, a remote assessment acc. to PART B below could be conducted in case desired by any of the involved parties.

The "Valid" status on the IECEE Website shall be maintained at least by remote re-validation. Otherwise, the CTF must be removed from the IECEE Website no later than the three month grace period as required by OD-2048, clause 10.1. After this time, the CTF is no longer eligible for a re-validation and must be subject to an initial assessment to regain status as a CTF Stage 1.

CTF Stage 2:

The main concept of this CTF Stage is the physical presence of CBTL/NCB staff or LTR in the CTF, whereby 100 per cent of the tests carried out by the CTF staff are witnessed by the CBTL/NCB qualified staff or a qualified LTR.

However, LSV can be utilized for the remote witnessing of testing projects even if the CTF Stage 2 was not previously assessed for LSV by the CBTL/NCB or LTR. Once travel to a CTF Stage 2 becomes possible again, the assessment can be performed at the same time and has to cover the LSV issues.

Refer to PART B below.

The "Valid" status on the IECEE Website shall be maintained at least by remote re-validation.

If re-validation is not possible, the CTF Stage must be either reduced to a lower stage, or the CTF removed from the IECEE Website, no later than the three month grace period as required by OD-2048, clause 10.1. After this time, the CTF is no longer eligible as CTF Stage 2 and must be reduced to a lower stage or subjected to an initial assessment to regain status as a CTF Stage 2.

CTF Stage 3:

Refer to PART B below.

The "Valid" status on the IECEE Website shall be maintained at least by remote annual assessment.

Otherwise, the CTF Stage must be either reduced to a lower stage, or the CTF removed from the IECEE Website, no later than the three month grace period as required by OD-2048, clause 10.2. After this time, the CTF is no longer eligible as CTF Stage 3 and must be reduced to a lower stage or subjected to an initial assessment to regain status as a CTF Stage 3.

Part B: Remote assessments

Separate remote assessment sessions may be arranged to individual members of the Assessment Team and staff of the assessed organization.

1. Preparation for Assessment

- 1.1 All required documentation shall be submitted by the assessed CTF in advance of the assessment, in accordance with OD-2048, clause 10.
- 1.2 Additionally, the CTF shall provide a list of changes to key management, testing and engineering personnel and staff in charge of calibration activities since the last assessment,
- 1.3 CTF prepares to provide the Assessment Team with online access to management system documentation, or to provide requested documents by email.
- 1.4 For CTF Stages 2 and 3, the CTF provides evidence that it possesses the full LSV and audio capability to permit remote witnessing of tests by the Assessment Team, and provides the technical details.
- 1.5 Assessment Teams reviews the provided LSV/audio documentation, arranges for a brief online demonstration of this capability and accepts it (prior to the assessment).
- 1.6 Assessment Team decides on the scope of assessment (a selection of standards and clauses) and advises the CTF.
- 1.7 CTF provides the number of completed projects (last 12 months) for each standard selected for the assessment (i.e. in form of completed Annex 1A in OD-2048-F2/F3) in advance of the assessment.
- 1.8 For CTF Stage 3, the Assessment Team selects for review a total of 3 projects for the overall assessment scope. These projects must be provided to the Assessment Team either by email in advance of the assessment, or must be made available for an online review during the assessment.
- 1.9 For CTF Stages 2 and 3, the Assessment Team prepares a List of Tests to be Witnessed during the remote assessment, and provides the list to the CTF at least one week before the assessment. The CTF prepares to demonstrate the requested tests by LSV.

2. Conduct of the Remote assessment

- 2.1 All one-on-one or group discussions of the assessment may be conducted by Zoom, Teams, Skype or any other online meeting platform that will allow both screen-sharing and audio/video interactions with the staff of the CTF.
- 2.2 The assessment will consist of:
 - a) Opening meeting
 - b) Review of documentation – either online or as provided by email in advance
 - c) Interactive assessment activities – questions, interviews, witnessing of tests (by LSV), etc.
 - d) Closing meeting.
- 2.3 Remote discussions with individual staff – each assessor to open a separate remote interface with CTF staff to be interviewed.



2.4 For CTF Stages 2 and 3, LSV witnessing of tests must allow sufficient visual detail and time for questions about the test equipment used and the test procedure.

3. Completion of Assessment Report

Regular process and timing are to be followed.

Annex 3

Additional Guidance for Remote Assessments

Initial Pre-Assessment Actions

- Follow the process and the timing given in Annex 1 above.
- Provide a detailed description of the documentation required for the assessment and follow-up with the NCB/CBTL/SPTL with sense of urgency
 - Convey a clear message to all parties (Technical Assessors and the organization to be assessed) that timely responses are critical during the preparation phase, and can influence the ultimate assessment time and cost.
 - It is crucial that key documents (QMS procedures, certificates, reports) are directly accessible to the assessment team before the assessment – rather than being shown to the assessment team online during the assessment.
 - Reviewing at least some of the provided documentation in advance can make up for the time limitation during the assessment, and will allow the assessors to prepare specific questions.
 - Where translation of some documents will be required, suitable provisions must be made for presenting them during the remote assessment and having a good interpreter available for the assessment team.
- Agree on the “assessment platform” to be used. Not all organizations accept Zoom, due to some security concerns in the past. A number of recently performed remote assessments successfully utilized Microsoft Teams.
 - Rarely used local communication tools with limited functionality should not be accepted as an assessment platform.
- Rather than sending a large number of documents by email, NCB/CBTL/SPTL can provide links to an internal or external site (e.g. internal SharePoint, or some cloud service such as DropBox) where these documents are placed.
 - Unrestricted access to this site must be provided and verified by the Assessment team, since it will be used at all times of day and night.
- Online pre-meetings (as many as necessary) between the assessment team and the NCB/CBTL should be held to:
 - Clarify documentation requirements
 - Verify the agreed on communication platforms
 - Check adequacy and stability of the WiFi connections and ability to communicate at all ends, in all areas where the assessment will be conducted, including the “virtual lab tour”.
 - Verify adequacy of the LSV and Audio capability at the CBTL/SPTL through actual online demonstrations for all areas where testing will be witnessed, not less than 2-3 weeks before the assessment. That will still allow time to address any identified issues.
- The LSV capability must include the following:
 - The TA should be able to give “live directions” to the person behind the camera
 - The camera should be properly mounted to allow both stability and mobility where needed. Use of a tripod is recommended.

- Ensure that the camera works in shielded areas where there may be no cellular or WiFi signal.
- Camera must have the ability to focus and to provide sharp close up views where needed. Assessors must be able to inspect the setup, see and read calibration labels, readings on measuring instruments and raw data sheets.

Assessment Plan (should include)

Note: Use all relevant parts of the IECEE Assessment Plan Template (OD-2006-F2)

- Detailed description of the assessment activities and their (expected) timing for the full duration of the assessment, taking into account the time differences and other assessment logistics, such as:
 - Need to have separate online meetings for each assessor and the people he/she will interact with
 - Scheduled consultations between assessment team members,
 - Breaks, e.g. lunch
 - It needs to be clear who will send the online meeting invitations
 - Clear indication of which sessions on the agenda are online and which are offline (e.g. document check)
- Where the online assessment window is reduced due to time differences, the number of assessment days should be adjusted accordingly to allow for the completion of all required assessment activities.
- Consider different starting times for assessors in different time zones.
- Consider opening and closing meetings on a different day than a day of the assessment.
- Tasks for technical assessors must be very clear and the main contact persons must be named
- The list of tests to be witnessed should be provided as part of the Assessment Plan

Final Preparation for the Assessment

- It is very important to review in advance the assessment documentation provided by the NCB/CBTL/SPTL, as well as the additional documents provided by the Secretariat, such as the Particular Points to be Checked, the previous Assessment Reports, and the IFM report on PTP participation.
- Review at least the top level QMS documents and as many as possible of the previously issued CBTCs and/or CBTRs provided by the organization. This will allow you to prepare specific questions for the assessment.
- The Lead Assessor should ensure that all individual communications channels are established and meeting invitations are sent, including any planned separate meetings between the assessment team members.
- The assessment team members should also agree on the methods to call for unscheduled consultation meeting.
- Request the NCB/CBTL/SPTL to reduce background noise during the assessment days.
- The Assessment Team members conducting the remote assessment from home must ensure the stability of their own WiFi networks and environment (e.g. background noise, etc.) before the assessment.



The Assessment

- Where the assessment team members start the assessment at different time, e.g. if the time difference among the team members exceeds 3 hours, the Opening Meeting may be conducted a day before (or Friday of the week before) the start of the assessment activities.
- The Opening Meeting should emphasize the remote aspects of the assessment and the need to have rapid continuous access to the assessed organization's staff and documentation.
- The time needed for the Opening Meeting should be optimized so that it does not impact the time required for the assessment.
- The main challenge for the Lead Assessor is to decide where to focus the limited time during the online portion of the assessment. That is why is important to have a prepared checklist and specific questions from the documentation review.
- Frequent sharing of assessment observations, at least on a daily basis, is recommended.
- It is important to summarize the assessment findings, NCRs and recommendations at the Closing Meeting. The assessment report can be prepared subsequently and emailed to the assessed organization for signatures shortly after the assessment.
- Electronic signatures in a Word document are the preferred signing method unless the need for signatures is waived.
- When sending a Word version of the Assessment Report to the assessed organization for signatures, the Assessment Team is responsible for verifying all of the information in the report.