
Guidelines for bi- or multilateral arrangements
on the recognition of:
Tests results – Pattern approvals – Verifications

Conseils pour les arrangements bi- ou multilatéraux de reconnaissance des :
Résultats d'essais - Approbations de modèles - Vérifications



Contents

<i>Foreword</i>	3
Introduction	4
1 Principles, classification	5
2 Technical aspects.....	6
3 General and administrative aspects.....	7
4 References.....	7

Foreword

The International Organization of Legal Metrology (OIML) is a worldwide, intergovernmental organization whose primary aim is to harmonize the regulations and metrological controls applied by the national metrological services, or related organizations, of its Member States.

The two main categories of OIML publications are:

- **International Recommendations (OIML R)**, which are model regulations that establish the metrological characteristics required of certain measuring instruments and which specify methods and equipment for checking their conformity; the OIML Member States shall implement these Recommendations to the greatest possible extent;
- **International Documents (OIML D)**, which are informative in nature and intended to improve the work of the metrological services.

OIML Draft Recommendations and Documents are developed by technical committees or subcommittees which are formed by the Member States. Certain international and regional institutions also participate on a consultation basis.

Cooperative agreements are established between OIML and certain institutions, such as ISO and IEC, with the objective of avoiding contradictory requirements; consequently, manufacturers and users of measuring instruments, test laboratories, etc. may apply simultaneously OIML publications and those of other institutions.

International Recommendations and International Documents are published in French (F) and English (E) and are subject to periodic revision.

This publication – reference OIML D 13, edition 1986 (E) – which is under the responsibility of TC 3/SC 1 *Pattern approval and verification*, was approved by the International Committee of Legal Metrology in 1986.

OIML publications may be obtained from the Organization's headquarters:

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INTRODUCTION

The setting up of an OIML certification system is not envisaged explicitly in the Convention establishing the International Organisation of Legal Metrology. Nevertheless, since the middle of the nineteen-seventies, Member States have been aware of the general interest in a system by means of which tests and decisions on pattern approval and verification, performed by an OIML Member State in conformity with the technical specifications of OIML International Recommendations, would be recognized by other Member States.

An ad hoc group, set up for this purpose by the International Committee of Legal Metrology, has for several years endeavoured to establish the characteristics and terms of operation of such a system.

At the beginning of the 1980's, the Conference and the International Committee of Legal Metrology realized that because of economic and political circumstances which are beyond their control, the immediate creation of an OIML certification system cannot be envisaged.

Consequently, the Committee charged the Reporting Secretariat SP 2Sr 4 under the responsibility of BIML, to propose punctual actions intended to facilitate at a later date the creation of an OIML certification system, whatever its form may be.

One of these actions is the harmonization of the technical and procedural contents of bi- or multilateral arrangements on the recognition of test results, of pattern approvals and of verifications. In fact, during recent years, several States have established arrangements of mutual recognition of metrological controls, either bilateral or multilateral, especially on a regional basis, and at the present time this state of affairs is developing rapidly.

Depending on whether the technical and procedural contents of such arrangements are harmonized or not, at least in their general outlines, these arrangements may either represent a decisive step forward, or become an unsurmountable obstacle in the creation of an OIML certification system.

These Guidelines, edited in the form of an International Document, have no compulsory character. It is presumed however, that the OIML Member States in particular, but also all the other States of the world in general, will understand that it is in their interest to follow the Guidelines whenever they participate in the creation of bi- or multilateral arrangements.

The BIML

GUIDELINES
for BI- or MULTILATERAL ARRANGEMENTS
on the RECOGNITION of:
TEST RESULTS - PATTERN APPROVALS -
VERIFICATIONS

This International Document is intended to serve as a guide for States wishing to prepare, on a bi- or multilateral basis, arrangements on the recognition of test results, of pattern approvals, and/or of verifications of measuring instruments (in brief : arrangements).

1. Principles, classification

1.1. Participation

From the aspect of participation, an arrangement may be :

- bilateral, or
- multilateral.

By the adherence of new parties a bilateral arrangement may become multilateral, with the agreement of the original parties.

1.2. Reciprocity

From the aspect of reciprocity, a bilateral arrangement may be :

- mutual, or
- unilateral.

In the case of multilateral arrangements reciprocity is practically indispensable.

1.3. Level of an arrangement

An arrangement may be concluded at several levels, in particular :

- the level of the governments, or
- the level of the national metrology services.

1.4. Coverage of an arrangement and degree of obligation

1.4.1. An arrangement may include the recognition of :

- test results, and/or
- decisions on pattern approvals, and/or
- decisions on verifications

relating to :

- a single pattern of measuring instrument,
- a category of measuring instruments (in general those intended to measure one quantity),
- all the measuring instruments subject to legal control.

Note : « Test results » means a set of data (especially numerical values) obtained when a measuring instrument or a pattern of instrument is subjected to a series of metrological and/or technical tests, of which the list, aim, methods and means of realization, etc., were fixed in advance.

« Decision on pattern approval » means a decision declaring that, after testing, the evaluated pattern was recognized as complying with all the requirements for pattern approval.

« Decision on verification » means a decision declaring that, after testing, the examined instrument was recognized as complying with all the requirements for verification.

1.4.2. With respect to the degree of obligation accepted by the parties, an arrangement may have the following character :

1.4.2.1. obligation of the recognition of test results : the results of the tests made by one of the parties are recognized by the other parties as the basis of their own decisions on pattern approvals or verifications,

1.4.2.2. obligation of the recognition of pattern approvals and/or of verifications: the decisions on pattern approvals and/or verifications of one of the parties are recognized by the other parties.

2. Technical aspects

2.1. Arrangements should be based, as far as possible, on OIML International Recommendations if these exist in an appropriate form or if they can be elaborated within reasonable time.

2.2. International Recommendations on which the arrangements are based should, if necessary, be completed to facilitate the operation of these arrangements.

The complementary requirements should concern, in particular, the following points :

- exact definition of metrological and technical specifications,
- definition of reproducible test methods,
- definition of necessary test equipment,
- harmonized presentation of test results,
- possibility of adaptation to technological progress.

2.3. Where an International Recommendation complying with the requirements enumerated in point 2.2 is not yet available, the arrangements may be based temporarily on suitably defined national or international prescriptions.

In such a case it is advisable to contact the BIML to examine the feasibility and opportunity of starting the elaboration of corresponding OIML International Recommendations.

2.4. Where two or more groups of States have established or intend to establish two or more arrangements for the same type of measuring instrument but with different participation, technical and procedural differences between these arrangements should be avoided or reduced to a minimum.

2.5. The BIML should make every effort to harmonize the technical and procedural contents of arrangements mentioned in point 2.4 and to facilitate the compatibility of the arrangements set up for the same type of measuring instrument.

2.6. Prior to the conclusion of an arrangement, the level of technical and metrological competence of different laboratories should be established by means of suitable methods, e.g. by bi- and multilateral intercomparisons, by the evaluation of the traceability of measuring instruments used for the tests, etc. International Recommendations and Documents on measurement standards and hierarchy schemes and other publications of similar kind developed by OIML should be taken into consideration.

3. General and administrative aspects

- 3.1. The arrangements must be realized within the laws of the contracting States, in accordance with agreed rules and procedures.
- 3.2. One of the aims of the arrangements is to improve international trade and to facilitate transfer of technology. These arrangements should rule out any discriminatory measures in metrological control.
- 3.3. In drawing up the arrangements, any existing or planned more general agreement on the recognition or equivalence of product certification or relevant exchange of information must be taken into consideration to ensure that there is no possible conflict.
- 3.4. Bi- or multilateral arrangements on the recognition of test results, of pattern approvals and/or of verifications define the conditions under which the parties will operate and include, in general, the following clauses :
 - signatory parties to the arrangement,
 - background or introduction,
 - scope of the arrangement (nomenclature of measuring instruments subject to the arrangement),
 - definitions,
 - questions of jurisdiction,
 - questions of responsibility,
 - reserves concerning implementation of the arrangement,
 - resolution of disputes,
 - administrative procedures,
 - verification procedures,
 - recognized approval and verification marks,
 - duration of the arrangement, method of termination,
 - amendment or revision of the arrangement,
 - effective date.

4. References

- ECE/STAND/17/Rev.2. Recommendations on standardization policies - Part F: Creation and promotion of international certification arrangements - United Nations, Economic Commission for Europe, Geneva 1984.
- ECE/STAND/R.51 Certification. Report on the study of selected international and regional certification arrangements - United Nations, Economic Commission for Europe, Geneva 1984.
- ISO GUIDE 2 - 1983. General terms and their definitions concerning standardization, certification and testing laboratory accreditation.
- ISO GUIDE 7 - 1982. Requirements for standards suitable for product certification.
- ISO/IEC GUIDE 25 - 1982. General requirements for the technical competence of testing laboratories.
- ISO/IEC 42-1984. Guidelines for a step-by-step approach to an international certification system.
- ILAC. Laboratory accreditation - principles and practice. Collected reports 1979-1983. Published by ISO, 1985.
- ILAC. Agreements between accreditation systems and other agreements on mutual recognition of test reports. Report 1984. Published by ISO, 1985.