

THE PARALLELISM BETWEEN CERTIFICATION AND TECHNICAL ASSESSMENT OF CONSTRUCTION PRODUCTS

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Rezumat. *Lucrarea își propune să arate diferența dintre certificarea și agrementarea tehnică a produselor pentru construcții, pentru a veni în ajutorul agenților economici și factorilor implicați în fabricarea, furnizarea și utilizarea de produse pentru construcții, realizate în țară, sau procurate din import.*

Abstract. *The paper aims to show the difference between certification and technical assessment of construction products, to help economic agents and factors involved in the manufacture, supply and use of construction products, made in Romania or imported.*

Keywords: construction product, certification, technical assessment

1. Introduction

There is a confusion on the construction market and also in public acquisitions about the certification or assessment of a construction product. That is why it is important to know when the certification of the product or the technical assessment is needed.

Certification of construction products can be done in two ways:

- in an accredited system - represents the assessment and certification of conformity by an impartial certification body (accredited and notified – a notified body), in accordance with a harmonised European standard.
- in a voluntary system - represents the assessment and certification of conformity by an impartial certification body, in accordance with a national standard, national norm or non-harmonised European standard.

Technical assessment is the ability to use in construction the built-in products or processes applied in construction, which by their novelty or by the conditions of use, are not included in the technically regulated field. Technical assessment is considered as national technical assessment.

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2. Technical Assessment

The technical assessment in constructions is a component of the quality system in constructions and represents the favorable technical evaluation, concretized in a written document, on the aptitude for use in accordance with the fundamental requirements applicable to the constructions provided in art. 5 paragraph (1) of Law no. 10/1995 regarding the quality in constructions, republished, of some construction products, which are not the object of a technical specification [1], [4].

The body that elaborates the technical assessments in constructions is a specialized body, based in Romania, authorized to carry out activities for the elaboration of technical assessments in constructions by the state authority competent in the field of construction products, Ministry of Development, Public Works and Administration, through the Standing Committee on Construction, hereinafter referred to as the CTPC which functions as an entity without legal personality, in accordance with the provisions of art. 17 of the Government Decision no. 668/2017 on establishing the conditions for the marketing of construction products [3].

The CTPC ensures the development of the activity regarding the technical assessment in constructions, through specialized technical commissions for the evaluation of the technical assessments in constructions, the extension or modification of the technical assessments in constructions and the extension of the technical assessments for the valid technical assessments.

The necessary conditions for carrying out the technical assessment activities that must be provided to the bodies elaborating technical assessments in constructions and to the specialized groups, mainly, are the following:

- examination and evaluation of production spaces in terms of endowment, knowledge of manufacturing processes, as well as ensuring the maintenance of quality and consistency of relevant characteristics of the construction product in the manufacturing process;
- performing verifications and tests only in laboratories accredited by a national accreditation body, within the meaning and according to the provisions of Regulation (EC) no. 765/2008 or in laboratories authorized by the State Inspectorate for Constructions - ISC; laboratories must be accredited / authorized for the tests or trials provided for in the technical assessment in question;
- monitoring the behavior of the construction product during the entire validity period of the technical assessment.

After obtaining the Technical Assessment and the Technical Approval, the manufacturer or his authorized representative shall issue a declaration of conformity with the related technical assessment.

3. Product Certification

3.1. Voluntary certification

Voluntary certification applies in accordance with the Non-Harmonised Technical Specifications.

Non-harmonised technical specifications include:

- international standards and standardization documents
- non-harmonised European standards and standardization documents adopted by the Romanian Standardization Association at national level
- the original Romanian standards.

The certificate of conformity issued is a document certifying the construction product compliance with a non-harmonised technical specification and is drawn up by a construction product conformity assessment body by classifying the product in certification schemes, in accordance with SR EN ISO / CEI 17067 : 2014

Product-specific tests are important, according to the non-harmonised technical specification (standard or normative) and can be performed in laboratories accredited by a national accreditation body or in laboratories authorized by the State Inspectorate for Constructions - ISC to determine its essential characteristics.

The manufacturer is audited with inspection of the manufacturing plant and factory production control.

The files completed by the audit teams are subject to evaluation by the Certification Committee, internal to each Certification Body and following the decision to grant certification, Certificates of Conformity may be issued.

After obtaining the Certificate of Conformity, the manufacturer issues the declaration of conformity, and by drawing up the declaration of conformity, the manufacturer assumes responsibility for the compliance of the construction product with the declared performance.

After obtaining the Certificate of Conformity, the supervision is carried out annually, by evaluation in the production unit.

3.2. Accredited and notified certification

The accredited and notified certification shall be applied in accordance with the Harmonised Technical Specifications by a Notified Body – a body involved in the assessment and verification of constancy of performance, according to Regulation (EU) no. 305/2011 – laying down harmonised conditions for the marketing of the construction products.

The evaluation and verification of the constancy of the performance of construction products represents a procedural system through which the performance of a product is evaluated and the constancy of the performance of the product is verified according to a harmonised technical specification.

The body for the assessment and verification of the performance of construction products is a product certification body, a factory production control certification body or a testing laboratory notified in accordance with Regulation (EU) no. Regulation (EC) No 305/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 March 2011 laying down harmonised conditions for the marketing of construction products and repealing Council Directive 89/106 / EEC, as subsequently amended and supplemented, assessing the performance of the construction product and verifies the constancy of its performance according to a harmonised technical specification [5]. In Romania, the accreditation of CABs is performed by the Romanian Accreditation Body – RENAR, as unique national accreditation body [6], [7].

The authority for notifying to the European Commission the bodies for evaluating and verifying the constancy of the performance of construction products and the European technical assessment bodies is the Ministry of Development, Public Works and Administration, according to the provisions of art. 2 of the Government Decision no. 1236/2012 on establishing the institutional framework and some measures for the application of the provisions of Regulation (EU) no. Regulation (EC) No 305/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 March 2011 laying down harmonised conditions for the marketing of construction products and repealing Council Directive 89/106 / EEC, as subsequently amended and supplemented.

The harmonised technical specifications include the harmonised European standards, as well as the European evaluation documents and are published every year in the Official Gazette of Romania in the form of a Ministerial Order.

Harmonised standards define the methods and criteria for assessing the performance of construction products in terms of their essential characteristics.

The harmonised standard shall include the technical details necessary for the implementation of the system of assessment and verification of constancy of performance (such as: system 1+, system 1 or system 2+).

Prior to the start of the certification process itself, it is important to perform the initial type tests as follows:

- for system 2+ in laboratories accredited by a national accreditation body or in laboratories authorized by the State Construction Inspectorate - ISC (initial type tests are the responsibility of the manufacturer)

- for system 1 only in laboratories accredited by an accreditation body (initial type tests or calculations are the responsibility of the Certification Body).

In the case of both systems, audits are carried out at the manufacturer, by assessment with initial factory inspection and factory production control.

The files completed by the audit teams are subject to evaluation by the Certification Committee, internal to each Certification Body and following the decision to grant certification, Certificates of Conformity for factory production control / Certificates of constancy of product performance can be issued.

After obtaining the Certificate of Conformity for Factory Production Control / Certificate of Constancy of Product Performance, the manufacturer issues the Declaration of Performance before placing the product on the market (Fig. 1).

The declaration of performance shall express the performance of construction products in terms of their essential characteristics in accordance with the relevant harmonised technical specifications.

After obtaining the Certificate of Conformity for Factory Production Control / Certificate of Constancy of Product Performance, supervision, evaluation, continuous examination and factory production control are performed annually.

4. Conclusions

Construction products shall be marketed accompanied by a declaration of conformity or a declaration of performance drawn up by the manufacturer as follows:

- 1) the declaration of conformity based on the technical assessment elaborated, for the products that are not the object of a technical specification;
 - 2) the declaration of conformity based on an unpublished technical specification, for which a Certificate of Conformity has been issued. The CE marking does not apply.
 - 3) the declaration of performance on the basis of a harmonised European standard, for which a Certificate of Conformity for Factory Production Control or a Certificate of Constancy of Product Performance has been issued, depending on the system of assessment and verification of constancy of construction product performance provided. For products for which the manufacturer has drawn up a declaration of performance on the basis of a harmonised technical specification, the CE marking shall be affixed.
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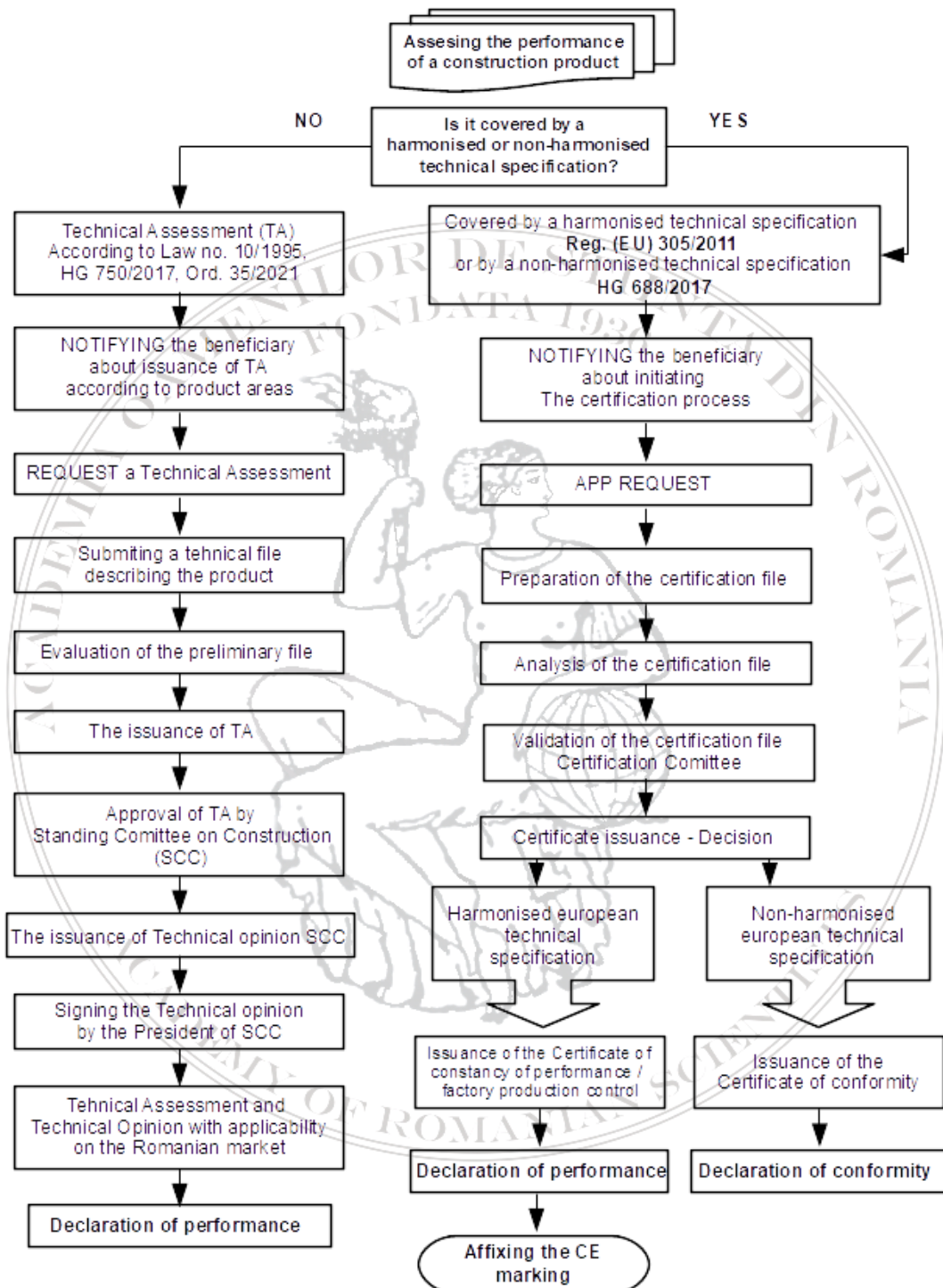


Fig. 1. Parallelism between certification and technical assessment

The non-observance by the manufacturer of the declared performance / performances for a product, confirmed by tests in accredited / notified / authorized laboratories, under the conditions imposed by the product / test standards, constitutes a contravention.

Close collaboration between producers and notified / assessment bodies is needed. In this way, the risks caused by non-compliant construction products will be reduced.

Abbreviations

CABs - Conformity Assessment Bodies using ISO/IEC 17011 and associated standards ISO/IEC 17025, ISO 17034, ISO/IEC 17065 [2].

CE - Mandatory marking of certified products within the European Economic Area

CTPC - Permanent Technical Council For Constructions

ISC – Romanian State Inspectorate for Constructions

NB - Notified Body – a body involved in the assessment and verification of constancy of performance, according to Regulation (EU) no. 305/2011.

RENAR - Romanian Accreditation Body

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