



# Do your inspection services meet your requirements?

Do you commission or procure the inspection of products, equipment, plants or buildings and processes? If you do, you will want to make sure that the organisation undertaking that inspection has the people, facilities, technical expertise, management systems and track record to undertake the inspection professionally and competently.

The competence of the inspection body you appoint may be crucial to maintaining your reputation as a responsible organisation. It is therefore surprising that organisations are still tempted to use the service of inspection bodies whose competence has not been confirmed by an independent, authoritative third party. The United Kingdom Accreditation

Service (UKAS) is the sole accreditation body recognised by Government to assess, against internationally recognised standards, organisations that provide inspection services. UKAS combines a depth of technical knowledge and expertise built up over many years with scientific and technical specialists operating across a range of inspection activities.



## What are your inspection needs?

There are well over 250 UKAS accredited inspection bodies in the UK mainly in the following broad sectors: Engineering, Food and Asbestos. So whatever your inspection needs are in these areas, there is more than likely a UKAS inspection body accredited to the international standard ISO/IEC 17020 qualified to do the job.

Typically, inspections will cover product design, products, materials and equipment, installations, plant, processes and services. Some of these areas will be covered by legislation that demands regular inspection is undertaken, for example in the areas of:

- Lifts and Cranes
- Hoists

- Machinery
- Pressure systems
- Electrical installations
- Escalators
- Non destructive testing
- Ventilation equipment
- Pre-shipment inspection
- Petroleum tanks



# Why you should use a UKAS accredited inspection body?

There are a host of reasons why you should use a UKAS accredited inspection body. Here are some of the most important:

**Minimise risk** – While risk can never be removed altogether, employing the services of a UKAS accredited inspection body will help reduce the risk of accidents and injuries.

**Keep your reputation** – Properly inspected machinery and premises will send a signal to your customers about your professionalism and integrity.

**Reduce costs** – Properly inspected equipment is more reliable, leading to improved productivity and reduced downtime.

**Demonstrate credibility** – A UKAS accredited inspection body is able to demonstrate a full audit trail for the inspection, can call upon best practice within its sector and will

only use the services of trained and experienced evaluators.

**Defend against litigation** – The use of a UKAS accredited inspection body is a powerful demonstration that you have exercised all due diligence in the selection and appointment of an inspection body.

## ISO 9001 Certification does not ensure technical competence and validity



It is not widely known that anybody can set-up as an inspection body. In some areas there are few rules, regulations or minimum standards. Fortunately, there is an assured way to check the technical competence of an inspection body. The internationally recognised standard for the competence of inspection bodies is ISO/IEC 17020:1998. It is the standard against which UKAS accredits inspection bodies. It is the standard you should look for.

ISO/IEC 17020 should not be confused with the quality management systems standard ISO 9001: 2008. The latter is the generic standard for quality management systems applicable to all organisations irrespective of type, size, product or service provided. It does not require evaluation of the technical competence of an inspection body. ISO 9001 should not be regarded as an 'acceptable' alternative to ISO/IEC 17020. This is because with certification to ISO 9001 the emphasis is on establishing an organisations compliance with requirements for a quality management system, it does not contain technical requirements for personnel and operations.

Identifying a UKAS accredited ISO/IEC 17020 inspection body is simple, each UKAS accredited inspection body is permitted to display the national accreditation inspection symbol.

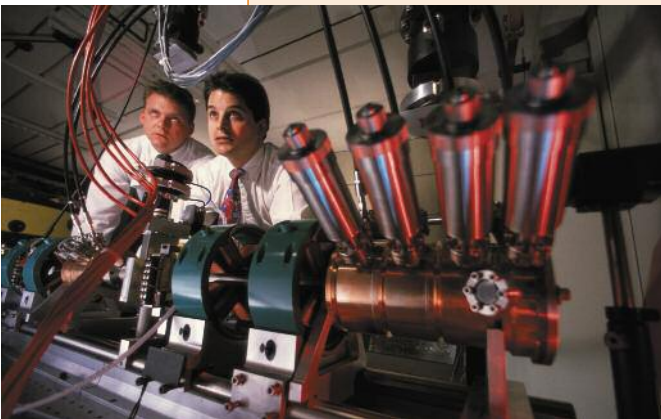
## The Bureau Veritas Group, Government Services and International Trade Division



*“ It is important that the information collected from our physical verifications, coupled with a documentary review and possible laboratory testing, is correct. Governments rely heavily on the accuracy of this data to ensure conformity of the products with their national or international safety standards. Accreditation by UKAS gives governments the confidence that our services are technically competent and deliver precise data. This confidence is necessary for them to create robust and speedy trade facilitation programmes.”*

**Tony Mouawad**, Executive Vice President

## PHS Compliance



*“ Accreditation allows our customers the ability to distinguish between a proven, competent evaluator that ensures that the selection of a laboratory, certification or inspection body is an informed choice and not a gamble. UKAS accreditation means the evaluator can show to its customer that it has been successful at meeting the requirements of international accreditation standards.”*

**Paul Caddick**, Managing Director

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*“ Potentially explosive atmospheres can quickly become extremely hazardous whenever there is a source of ignition present, particularly electrical equipment. It only takes one spark for that potential to become a reality. Therefore it is essential that the integrity of any electrical installation in this type of environment is maintained throughout the course of its life. In order to achieve this, the electrical equipment requires regular periodic inspection and/or regular supervision by skilled personnel, having UKAS accreditation provides confidence that all these inspections have been considered properly.”*

**Phil Wright**, Chief Engineer

# What are the risks of using an inspection body that is not accredited to ISO/IEC 17020?

- Inexperienced staff – competence is built on qualifications, knowledge and experience
- Insufficient resource leading to inadequate and incomplete work and possibility of incorrect inspection results being reported
- A lack of impartiality
- No comeback (no formal complaints procedure, no accountability to UKAS)
- Lack of due diligence/ exposure to future claims
- Use of inappropriate inspection equipment

## How do I know what scope an organisation is accredited for?



All organisations accredited to ISO/IEC 17020 for Inspection are listed on the UKAS website. An organisation is only accredited for the activities that are listed on their schedule.

UKAS has formally been appointed as the National Accreditation Body for the United Kingdom under the EU Regulation (No) 765/2008. The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) works with UKAS to ensure that it operates in the public interest and meets the obligation imposed by the Regulation.



## Look for the UKAS symbol

Make an informed choice and have confidence in your suppliers by looking for the UKAS symbol. Only organisations accredited to ISO/IEC 17020 for inspection are permitted to display the inspection symbol, one of the national accreditation symbols.

A full list of UKAS accredited inspection bodies can be found at [www.ukas.com](http://www.ukas.com)

Alternatively contact **UKAS Corporate Communications**:  
Tel: +44 (0)20 8917 8400 Fax: +44 (0)20 8917 8500 Email: [info@ukas.com](mailto:info@ukas.com)

**BIS**  
Department for  
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For further information visit [www.ukas.com](http://www.ukas.com)