Press Release

Issued: 21 December 2020

EU/International Recognition of PCN certification (UKAS Accreditation) from 1st January 2021

The PCN Scheme is an international programme for the certification of conformance of non-destructive testing personnel which satisfies the requirements of a number of European and international standards.

ISO 9712 is the internationally recognised and widely accepted standard for qualification and 3rd party certification of NDT personnel and the UK's departure from the EU does not affect the validity of PCN certificates issued – PCN certification will continue to be widely accepted and highly respected throughout the industrialised world.

Brexit will not affect PCN and UKAS will remain a full member of European and International Mutual Recognition Agreements (such as the European cooperation for Accreditation, International Accreditation Forum and International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation), which means that all UKAS accredited certificates and reports (with the exception of those related to EU Regulations/Directives and Schemes - see below) shall continue to be recognised within Europe and around the world.

There will be no impact on ISO standards including ISO 9712 as ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies) and has no different affiliation to Europe or any other country including the UK.

European Pressure Equipment Directive (PED)

Please note that the following statement only applies to personnel using their PCN ISO 9712 certification to carry out non-destructive tests on permanent joints for

pressure equipment in categories III and IV in accordance with section 3.1.3 of schedule 2 under the European Pressure Equipment Directive (PED).

Amid the continuing negotiations about the UK's future relationship with the EU, there is one thing we know for sure: the UK will no longer be part of the EU and, unless there is a specific agreement or further transition period, UK bodies will not be in a position to perform conformity assessment tasks pursuant to Union product legislation. At the time of writing, the outcomes of the current UK-EU negotiations are eagerly awaited, particularly given the added challenge of the current Covid crisis.

Meanwhile, BINDT is in discussion with European organisations to enable certificates to be issued by a third-party organisation recognised by a Member State pursuant to Article 13. These talks are at a very advanced state and it is anticipated that a solution will be in place early in 2021. More information will be provided when arrangements have been finalised.

[ENDS]

Notes for editors

About BINDT

The British Institute of Non-Destructive Testing (BINDT) is a UK-based professional engineering institution working to promote the advancement of the science and practice of non-destructive testing (NDT), condition monitoring (CM), diagnostic engineering and all other materials and quality testing disciplines. Internationally recognised, it is concerned with the education, training and certification of its members and all those engaged in NDT and CM and through its publications and annual conferences and events it disseminates news of the latest advances in the science and practice of the subjects. For further information about the Institute and its activities, visit http://www.bindt.org

What are NDT and CM?

Non-destructive testing is the branch of engineering concerned with all methods of detecting and evaluating flaws in materials. Flaws can affect the serviceability of a material or structure, so NDT is important in guaranteeing safe operation as well as in quality control and assessing plant life. The flaws may be cracks or

inclusions in welds and castings or variations in structural properties, which can lead to a loss of strength or failure in service. The essential feature of NDT is that the test process itself produces no deleterious effects on the material or structure under test. The subject of NDT has no clearly defined boundaries; it ranges from simple techniques such as the visual examination of surfaces, through the well-established methods of radiography, ultrasonic testing and magnetic particle crack detection, to new and very specialised methods such as the measurement of Barkhausen noise and positron annihilation spectroscopy.

Condition monitoring (CM) aims to ensure plant efficiency, productivity and reliability by monitoring and analysing the wear of operating machinery and components to provide an early warning of impending failure, thereby reducing costly plant shutdown. Condition monitoring originally used mainly vibration and tribology analysis techniques but now encompasses new fields such as thermal imaging, acoustic emission and other non-destructive techniques. The diagnostic and prognostic elements, in addition to increasingly sophisticated signal processing, is using trends from repeated measurements in time intervals of days and weeks.

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