



**Standard for Accreditation of
Welding Fabricators for
AWS Certified Welding
Fabricator Program**



American Welding Society



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Foreword

(This Foreword is not a part of AWS QC17, *Standard for Accreditation of Welding Fabricators for AWS Certified Welding Fabricator Program*, but is included for information purposes only.)

This standard was developed by the Certification Committee in response to an industry demand for certification for welding fabricators.

The AWS Certification Committee was formed in 1975. The Committee is composed of representatives throughout industry and academia who have interests and experience in the certification of welding fabricators. This is one of several documents produced by the committee covering welding personnel and facilities.

Comments and suggestions for the improvement of this standard are welcome. They should be sent to the Secretary, AWS Certification Committee, American Welding Society, 550 N.W. LeJeune Road, Miami, Florida 33126.

Official interpretations of any of the technical requirements of this standard may be obtained by sending a request, in writing, to the Certification Department, American Welding Society. A formal reply will be issued after the appropriate personnel following established procedures have reviewed it.

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Standard for Accreditation of Welding Fabricators for AWS Certified Welding Fabricator Program

1.0 Scope

1.1 This Standard establishes the procedure by which a Welding Fabricator (WF) may seek, obtain, and maintain accreditation from AWS to participate in the AWS Certified Welding Fabricator Program. This standard also defines the requirements for a company's compliance with welding related functions as described in B5.17, *Specification for the Qualification of Welding Fabricators*.

2.0 Definitions

For more detailed definitions of terms, refer to AWS A3.0, *Standard Welding Terms and Definitions*. Terms used in this Standard are defined as follows.

accreditation. Certification as being able to meet a prescribed standard.

accredited facility. A facility that has applied to the AWS designated third-party agency and received accreditation.

audit. A planned and documented activity performed by AWS qualified assessors to determine compliance and effectiveness of implementation of the quality control manual.

AWS. American Welding Society.

certificate. A document issued to the facility on successful completion of the requirements accreditation.

certification. The act of determining, verifying, and attesting in writing to the qualification of personnel or a company in accordance with specified requirements.

corrective action. Measures taken to rectify conditions adverse to quality and, where necessary, to preclude repetition.

concern. Documents or procedures that are not up to date or evidence of a system that may not be implemented accurately.

fabrication. The act of assembling, manufacturing, or constructing in accordance with a specification, Code, plan, or drawing.

finding. A procedure or document that does not meet the qualification standards.

inspector. A person who performs an inspection function to verify conformance to specific requirements.

nonconformance. A deficiency in characteristic, documentation, or procedure that renders the quality of an item or activity not in compliance with the quality control manual and governing specifications.

quality control (QC) manual. Document stating the quality policy and describing the quality system of an organization as detailed in B5.17, *Specification for the Qualification of Welding Fabricators*.

verification. The act of reviewing, inspecting, testing, checking, auditing or otherwise determining and documenting whether items, processes, services, or documents conform to specified requirements.

3.0 Function

3.1 The Certified Welding Fabricator (CWF) is a fabricator who has complied with the standard and has been granted a certificate by AWS.

3.2 The AWS CWF shall operate an internal quality control program, in accordance with a Quality Control Manual, meeting the requirements of AWS B5.17 *Specification for the Qualification of Welding Fabricators*.

4.0 Application

4.1 Copies of the Application for Accreditation, Quality Control Manual Checklist and the On – Site Audit Checklist will be provided along with this standard.

4.2 An Application for Accreditation shall be completed and submitted to AWS. Along with the application, the fabricator shall include a copy of their quality control manual. The assessor will review the QC manual prior to the on site audit.

4.3 After review of the fabricators QC manual, application for Accreditation and preparation of the Quality Control Manual Checklist by the assessor, the assessor shall notify the fabricator as to the date of the audit.

4.4 All fixed sites shall be assessed independently.

5.0 Examination Requirements

5.1 Objectives. An assessment establishes whether or not the WF complies with the accreditation criteria. Assessors may provide advice in responses to questions or on the basis of observations to provide help to improve the WF's potential of being in compliance.

5.2 Agency. AWS will perform on site assessments. All personnel conducting assessments will be properly trained and qualified by AWS.

5.3 Opening meeting. An opening meeting shall be held at the fabricators location with key personnel. The assessor shall discuss the following at the opening meeting:

1. The objectives as stated in 5.1.
2. The assessor shall explain the steps of the audit
 - a) Opening meeting
 - b) QC manual review
 - c) Shop review, observations of operations specified within the fabricators quality control manual
 - d) Closing meeting
3. All information seen, discussed and the outcome of the audit shall be confidential.

5.4 QC manual review. After the opening meeting, the assessor shall review the quality control manual with the fabricator. The assessor's review shall be documented on the Quality Control Manual - Checklist. Those key personnel not directly involved in preparing the QC manual may be excused.

5.5 Shop review. Assessors are given an On-Site Audit Checklist to follow in performing an assessment. The checklist is intended to ensure that assessments are conducted as uniformly and completely as possible while verifying the implementation of the QC manual.

5.6 Closing meeting.

5.6.1 At the conclusion of an assessment, the assessor will review the On-Site Audit Checklist with the fabricator, identifying all nonconformances that must be corrected before the assessor can recommend certification.

5.6.2 All nonconformances will be noted on separate corrective action request forms. The assessor and the fabricator will agree on a date by which each of the nonconformances will be corrected, such a date will not exceed one month from the date of the closing meeting. The fabricator will sign each of the corrective action requests to acknowledge receipt and understanding of the corrective action requests. The assessor will work with the fabricator to resolve each of the individual corrective action requests. The resolution will be noted on the corrective action request form. Resolutions of the corrective action request will be forwarded

to the AWS Certification Department. The corrective action request may be reviewed upon any subsequent audit.

5.6.3 At the conclusion of the closing meeting, the assessor shall inform the fabricator of his/her recommendation for certification, pending the resolution of any outstanding Corrective Action Request. The assessor's recommendation is presented to the AWS Certification Committee, which has the final decision on certification.

5.6.4 At the time of the closing meeting, the fabricator will be asked by the assessor, to sign the On-Site Audit Checklist, indicating fabricators review. The fabricator's signature indicates his/her review only and does not necessarily indicate approval. The assessor shall review with the fabricator the appeals procedure in accordance with Section 8.0 of this standard.

6.0 Certification of Accreditation

AWS shall issue to each WF applicant who complies with the requirements of this standard, a serialized (unique number) certificate stating the applicant has met the AWS certification requirements. Accreditation shall be valid for three (3) years unless revoked for reasons defined in 8.0, Revocation. The certificate shall indicate the expiration date of certification.

7.0 Appeals Procedure

The fabricator has the right to appeal any aspect of the accreditation process to the AWS Certification Committee. Such appeals shall be made in writing and should list the specific adverse action that is being appealed, the relevant sections of the AWS B5.17 or QC17 standards, and the fabricator's suggested resolution. Any supporting Corrective Action Request (s) or other correspondence should also be included in the appeal. The decision of the AWS Certification Committee will be final. Appeals should be directed to the AWS Certification Committee at the following address:

Certification Department
American Welding Society
550 N.W. LeJeune Road
Miami, Florida 33126

8.0 Revocation

8.1 Committee. The Certification Committee shall have the power to suspend, refuse the renewal of, or revoke the WF's certification for misrepresentation of facts or violation of Code of Ethics and to place on probation, or to reprimand the certificate holder, if found guilty of an unauthorized practice in a proceeding conducted in accordance with the

“Administrative Procedure for Alleged Violation” (available from the AWS Certification Department).

8.2 Courts. The Committee may apply to any court of competent jurisdiction for further enforcement of its administrative decisions and rulings.

9.0 Reinstatements

Reinstatement of a revoked certificate shall be allowed with no penalty or prejudice to the fabricator, provided the cause for such revocation has been rectified to the committee's satisfaction.

10.0 Recertification.

10.1 The WF shall be responsible for the following:

Maintaining a current address with the Certification Department for mailing of correspondence relative to the fabricator's application, examination, and certification/recertification.

Submitting either an Application for Accreditation postmarked prior to the expiration date of the current certificate, or a written request for Application for Accreditation postmarked at least three months prior to the expiration date.

10.2 The WF shall be recertified every three (3) years by meeting the requirements of this standard.