

IAS accreditation differentiates PCI-certified plants


PCI-certified plants are now eligible for accreditation to the International Accreditation Service (IAS) AC157 “Accreditation Criteria for Fabricator Inspection Programs for Reinforced and Precast/Prestressed Concrete” directly through PCI at a significant cost savings over applying directly to IAS.


This eligibility results from the alignment of PCI’s plant certification requirements with those of IAS AC157 so that PCI-certified plants have demonstrated compliance with the key technical provisions of AC157 accreditation as well. Members of the Plant Certification Committee, Quality Activities Council, and PCI staff have worked diligently along with our partners at IAS over the past few years to make the necessary changes to PCI’s certification program to meet AC157 requirements.

Section 1704 of the *2021 International Building Code* states that special inspections are required of fabricated structural, load-bearing members “except where the fabricator has been approved to perform work without *special inspections* in accordance with Section 1704.2.5.1.”

Section 1704.2.5.1 states, “*Special inspections* during fabrication are not required where the work is done on the premises of a fabricator approved to perform such work without *special inspection*. Approval shall be based on review of the fabricator’s written fabrication procedures and quality control manuals that provide a basis for control of materials and workmanship, with periodic auditing of fabrication and quality control practices by an *approved agency* or the *building official*.”

AC157 accreditation provides a mechanism to become an approved fabricator without requiring approval of the building official on each project. PCI has now made this as easy as filling out an application, completing a cross-reference checklist of the quality system manual to AC157 requirements, and submitting the required IAS fee. Minor revisions to the quality system manual will be required to incorporate specific IAS program references. AC157 also requires two 2-day audits, so additional audit fees may be necessary for plants receiving 1-day audits. PCI has worked out a partnership with IAS that allows PCI members to get AC157 accreditation for about half the cost of getting accredited by IAS directly. More information and an application can be found in the Plant Certification section of the PCI website at https://www.pci.org/PCI/PCI-Certification/Plant_Certification/IAS-AC157.aspx.

Alignment of PCI plant certification requirements with AC157 criteria is unique. It demonstrates the level of attention to quality control necessary to be PCI certified and differentiates PCI-certified plants in the marketplace. We are pleased to be able to provide this value to certified plants and to further demonstrate why architects, engineers, and owners should specify PCI-certified plants for all of their projects. There is no equivalent. 



Bob Risser, PE
PCI President and CEO