WEIGHLOG

SCALE MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION, INC.
6724 Lone Oak Blvd. • Naples, Florida 34109
http://www.scalemanufacturers.org

Winter 2008

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Avery Weigh-Tronix, Inc.

Cardinal Scale Manufacturing Company

Fancor, Inc.

ITW Food Equipment Group

Hottinger Baldwin Measurements

Mettler-Toledo, Inc.

Sartorius Corporation

Systems Associates, Inc.

Vishay Transducers

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CONFORMITY ASSESSMENT

The Verified Conformity Assessment Program, or VCAP, is a program to ensure compliance of certain device types with environmental requirements. These device types are those devices whose performance can be affected by changes in their physical environment. The intent of the VCAP is to provide a level of assurance that these devices perform at a level equal to or better than the device that was evaluated by NTEP.

Many NTEP Certified devices must meet NIST Handbook 44 requirements for influence factors. It is not possible to verify these requirements during the Initial Verification in the field. Therefore, manufacturers of metrological devices (instruments) and/or components (modules) which are subject to Influence Factors, as defined in NIST Handbook 44, must have a Verified Conformity Assessment Program (VCAP) in place to ensure that these metrological devices (instruments) and/or components (modules) are produced to perform at a level consistent with that of the device and/or component previously certified.

The Verified Conformity Assessment Program audit will be a site-specific verification that will focus on the site that controls testing of the device.

For weighing devices that are subject to influence factors, NTEP will require an initial on-site audit of the manufacturer's quality system and on-site random testing and/or review of a production device(s) (instrument(s)) by the Registrar to verify that all items listed below are currently implemented and functioning to verify compliance to the appropriate sections of NIST Handbook 44.

Devices that must meet this requirement are limited to:

1. Load Cell (T.N.8.)
2. Indicating elements (T.N.8.)
3. Weighing/Load Receiving elements with non-NTEP load cells (T.N.8.)
4. Complete Scales (T.N.8.)
5. Automatic Weighing Systems (T.7.)
6. Belt-Conveyor Scales (T.3)
7. Automatic Bulk Weighing Systems (T.7.)

Jim Truex, attending his first SMA meeting since being named NTEP Administrator, advised SMA Fall Meeting attendees of the following timeline:

> July - December 2008 – Refine VCAP procedures. Answer incoming questions. Refine/develop appeals process. Notify all CC holders of updated plan, Q&A, etc.

Continued on next page

OFFICERS & DIRECTORS

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Cardinal Scale Manufacturing Company

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STAFF

Meeting Coordinator
Kimberly MacLaren

January - December 2009 – LC manufacturers to put VCAP QM system in place. Conduct audit by certified body. Submit audit report to NCWM/ NTEP.

January - March 2010 – NTEP to evaluate incoming Certification body reports.

April - November 2010 – NTEP to contact manufacturers not meeting VCAP and encourage compliance before annual maintenance fee is due in November. Continue to evaluate incoming reports.

November 2010 – CCs declared inactive if CC holders fail to meet VCAP.

The CC holder will be responsible for providing proof of VCAP certification, by a Certification Body, to NTEP. NTEP will not pay any costs associated with accreditation, audits, testing or certification.

In the eyes of NTEP, the CC holder is responsible for the product, including taking responsibility for assuring that production devices meet type. NTEP expects the CC holder to take responsibility for the integrity of the certificate and product (device, instrument, main element, component, etc.). NTEP is expecting private label certificate holders to verify with the manufacturer under contract that VCAP requirements are being met. It is expected CC holders will have QA procedures in place, including controls over the supplier, purchase and compliance of the product covered under the private label agreement.

SMA welcomes the progress the NCWM had made on VCAP the last few months. Implementation of VCAP will address concerns that production devices are representative of devices submitted to NTEP for evaluation.

SMA Fall Meeting

SMA's Fall Meeting convened, at the Big Cedar Lodge, Ridgedale, Missouri, just a few minutes from Branson, the setting was ideal and despite a weakening economy the mood was upbeat. Todd Lucas, chair of the NCWM S&T Committee and Steve Cook, NIST technical advisor worked with the SMA Technical Committee on Wednesday in a discussion of the agenda items of the S&T Committee. The exchange provided an excellent opportunity for all to hone in on the issues and discuss the agenda items in detail. Additionally, Jim Truex, NTEP Administrator, updated the membership on the status of VCAP. Following two days of technical committee meetings, the general business session met on Friday. At the open session, items of mutual interest were discussed with Steve Gill, Missouri, Jack Kane, Montana (NCWM) and Steve Cook, NIST, very ably substituting for Carol Hockert. SMA Technical Committee chair, Lou Straub, reported on the results of the committee's deliberations. At the executive session SMA positions were adopted, the state of the industry was discussed and the membership approved a EMI/RFI document.

SMA TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Chair
Lou Straub
Fancor, Inc.

Vice Chair
Darrell Flocken
Mettler-Toledo, Inc.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Terms Expire 2009

Doug Biette
Sartorius Corporation

Nigel G. Mills
ITW Food Equipment Group

Tal Rahav
Vishay Transducers

Terms Expire 2010

Darrell Flocken
Mettler-Toledo, Inc.

Leon Lammers
Avery Weigh-Tronix, Inc.

Terms Expire 2011

Stephen Langford
Cardinal Scale Manufacturing Company

Mark Knowles
Hottinger Baldwin Measurements

Lou Straub
Fancor, Inc.

SMA NTEP Questions for 2008

The NTEP Directors Questions for 2008 have been compiled and published and will be available on the SMA web site in the next few weeks.

Since 1997, the Scale Manufacturers Association and the National Conference on Weights and Measures have invited state directors attending their regional Weights and Measures association meetings to comment on a series of three to four questions regarding the NTEP program implementation in their jurisdictions. The candidate questions for each year have been solicited from SMA, NIST/OWM, NCWM, and State Directors. Those candidate questions are balloted and scored by degree of interest. The top three or four questions are then chosen as the questions for that year. In order to ascertain the degree of uniformity and interpretation of selected W&M practices, the same questions are asked at each regional meeting. The following questions were discussed in the 2008 round:

Question 1: NIST Handbook 44 was first published in 1949; however, only 39 States adopt the handbook on an annual basis. The other states are a year or more behind in the adoption process. State to state will vary in how HB 44 is interpreted; in some cases it is different from county to county and inspector to inspector within the same state. How can the SMA help promote the uniform enforcement of the most recent edition of HB 44?

Question 2: How is the tare for a thin sheet of wax paper weighing 0.002 lb handled on a legal for trade price computing scale of 30 x 0.01 lb capacity? Are your inspector's trained to check proper tare application for scales used in direct sale to a customer? If you require that tare be rounded upward (to 0.01 lb), would your inspector's detect a situation where a wax paper weighing 0.002 lb. were rounded down to zero tare?

Question 3: Suppose company 1 has a weighing or measuring system and next to it is a computer with a self written software program that manages transactions using data from that device. For each transaction the operator of company 1 hand enters the device readings into the computer system. Company 2 across the street also has a very similar system, computer, and self-written software program, but his system and computer are connected by a communications cable so that data is automatically transferred to the computer.

• Does your state now require the software program at company 1 or company 2 have an NTEP certificate? Please explain your states justification for the decision for each
company.
• If your answer is not the same for both companies, how do you explain that to the company that has to have a certificate?
• What is the extent of your state's jurisdiction over the transactions processed by the computer system at both companies?
• Do you include examination of the computer system at both companies in initial or subsequent verifications of the device?

UPCOMING MEETINGS OF INTEREST

NCWM Interim Meeting
The Hilton
Daytona Beach, FL
January 11-14, 2009

SMA Annual Meeting
Westin Hotel
Ft. Lauderdale, FL
April 22-24, 2009

CWMA Annual Meeting
Millennium Hotel St. Louis
St. Louis, MO
May 3-6, 2009

NEWMA Annual Meeting
South Portland Sheraton
Portland, ME
May 11-14, 2009

NCWM 94th Annual Meeting
Marriott Plaza Hotel
San Antonio, TX
July 12-16, 2009

WWMA Annual Meeting
Hotel Encanto
Las Cruces, NM
September 20-24, 2009

CWMA Interim Meeting
TBD
September 2009

Weighing Sector Meeting
TBD
September 2009

SWMA Annual Meeting
TBD
October 2009

NEWMA Interim Meeting
TBD
October 2009

SMA Fall Meeting
O'Hare Hilton Hotel
Chicago, IL
November 11-13, 2009

SMA Positions on the Interim Report NCWM Specifications and Tolerances Committee Interim Meeting of the 94th NCWM, January, 2009

310 GENERAL CODE

310-1 G-S.8. Provision for Sealing Electronic Adjustable Components, G-S.8.1. Access to Calibration and Configuration Adjustments, and G-S.8.2. Automatic or Semi-automatic Calibration Mechanism.

The SMA supports the intent of the item and recommends the following language:

G-S.8.1. Access to Calibration and Configuration Adjustments. - A device shall be so designed that:

(a) The application of the physical security seal shall ensure that the calibration and configuration modes are disabled, or

(b) The calibration and configuration adjustments are protected by an approved category 1, 2, or 3 method of sealing, and the device shall clearly and continuously indicate and print, if equipped with a printer, that the calibration and configuration adjustment modes are enabled.

During the calibration and configuration adjustment mode, electronic devices shall either;

- The device shall not provide metrological indications that can be interpreted, or transmitted into memory, or printed while it is in the calibration and/or configuration adjustment mode as a correct measurement value, or
- The device shall clearly and continuously indicate that it is in the calibration and/or configuration adjustment mode and record such message if capable of printing in this mode.

(Nonretroactive as of January 1, 200X)
(Added 200X)

310-2 Appendix D – Definition of Electronic Devices, Software-Based

The SMA opposes this item. There is no longer a technological basis for making this distinction in device types.

310-3 G-S.1. Identification – (Software)

The SMA opposes this item.
Rationale: With no basis for different device types, there is no need to have different methods of identification.

310-4 G-N.3. Verification of Testing Standards

The SMA supports the original language presented in Pub 16 for the July 2008 meeting.
G-N.3. - Verification (Testing) Standards. - Field standards used in verifying weighing and measuring devices shall comply with requirements of NIST Handbook 105 Series standards (or other suitable and designated standards) or the accuracy requirements expressed in Fundamental Considerations, Paragraph 3.2. (i.e., one-third of the smallest tolerance applied).
(Added 200X)
Rationale: We are concerned about the impact of the three words “the most current” used in the current proposal.

310-5 G-T.1. Acceptance Tolerances

The SMA opposes this item. "Metrological adjustment" does not have the same significance as a "major reconditioning or overhaul".

Rationale:

The implication of failing a test using acceptance tolerances may create an unnecessary economic burden on the device owner.

320 SCALES

320-1 S.2.1.6. Combined Zero-Tare ("0/T") Key, S.2.3. Value of Tare Indication and Recorded Representations, S.2.4, Preset Tare Mechanism, Appendix D; Definitions for Tare Mechanism, Gross Weight Value, Net Weight, Net Weight Value, Tare, and Tare Weight Value

The SMA appreciates the work of the Tare Work Group but recommends the item be withdrawn.

Rationale:

The item began with a weighing sector item dealing with the proper rounding of a tare value, on multiple range devices, when changing ranges. This discussion lead to the development of the "mathematically correct" item (320-2 in the 2008 S&T Agenda and subsequently adopted) and the creation of the Tare Work Group. The work group's focus was to determine if any similar situation exists in the handbook that would not be addressed with the "mathematically correct" agenda item. The work group expanded their efforts to include harmonization to OIML R76 requirements related to tare. It is our feeling that these changes do not address any problem and can only lead to confusion in the current regulatory and product development fields.

320-2 T.N.4.6. Time Dependence (Creep) for Load Cells During Type Evaluation and T.N.4.7. Creep Recovery for Load Cells During Type Evaluation

The SMA recommends the following change to T.N.4.7.

(a) ~~0.5~~ 0.83 times the value of the load cell verification interval (0.5v) for Class I, II, III and IIII load cells, or

Rationale:

0.5 times the load cell verification interval comes from OIML R60 in an attempt at harmonization. Because of the difference between the US and European markets (i.e. 5000 vs 3000 divisions for Class III) the tolerance should be multiplied by 5/3 to maintain consistency in the level of performance.

320-3 S.1.7. Automatic Zero-Setting Mechanism.

The SMA supports the item with the 4% limitation removed.

Rationale:

There is no limitation to either the zero-tracking or semi-automatic zero-setting mechanism.

324 AUTOMATIC WEIGHING SYSTEMS

324-1 S.2.1.7. Automatic Zero-Setting Mechanism

The SMA supports the item with the 4% limitation removed.

Rationale:

There is no limitation to either the zero-tracking or semi-automatic zero-setting mechanism.

324-2 S.2.2. Value of Tare Indication and Recorded Representations and S.2.3. Preset Tare Mechanism

The SMA appreciates the work of the Tare Work Group but recommends the item be withdrawn.

Rationale:

The item began with a weighing sector item dealing with the proper rounding of a tare value, on multiple range devices, when changing ranges. This discussion lead to the development of the “mathematically correct” item (324-1 in the 2008 S&T Agenda and subsequently adopted) and the creation of the Tare Work Group. The work group’s focus was to determine if any similar situation exists in the handbook that would not be addressed with the “mathematically correct” agenda item. The work group expanded their efforts to include harmonization to OIML R76 requirements related to tare. It is our feeling that these changes do not address any problem and can only lead to confusion in the current regulatory and product development fields.

360 OTHER ITEMS

Item 360-2: Developing Items

Part 2, Item 1 Scales: S.1.4.6. Height and Definition of Minimum Reading Distance, UR.2.10. Primary Indicating Elements Provided by the User, UR.2.11. Minimum Reading Distance and Definitions of Minimum Reading Distance and Primary Indications

The SMA recommends that this item be withdrawn.

Rationale:

Lack of support from both regulatory officials and manufacturers.