



CASCO STATEMENT ON COVID 19

The current COVID-19 situation is causing unprecedented levels of uncertainty for businesses, consumers, regulators and governments. Conformity assessment, delivered by numerous members of the conformity assessment community, has a vital role in delivering assurance to these groups.

Conformity assessment is a demonstration that specified requirements are fulfilled. When people trust the effectiveness of specified requirements to deliver real benefits, then demonstrations of fulfillment of the specified requirements by bodies who are competent, consistent and impartial have a proven ability to reduce uncertainty and risk.

CASCO with its unique Toolbox ([ISO/IEC 17000 series of standards](#)), is enabling all the Conformity Assessment community to continue to serve the market, regulators, companies and end users in a flexible way providing continued confidence in fulfilment of requirements in this critical and extraordinary period which the world is currently facing.

CASCO standards set requirements for the competence, consistent operation and impartiality of bodies performing conformity assessment activities to ensure its ability to reduce uncertainty and risk. Thus, a body fulfilling CASCO standards can systematically deal with external events such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Specifically:

1. The Conformity Assessment Bodies are operating utilising **competent people** continuously trained in accordance with the latest available technologies, standards and safety protocols.
2. The Conformity Assessment Bodies are governed with **established management systems** enabling them to operate in all types of environments, including pandemic periods, in a consistent and effective manner.
3. The **risk-based approach** is an important element to focus on to protect the health and safety of all those involved in the delivery of conformity assessment. The risk-based approach also applies to maintaining the impartiality of the conformity assessment bodies and conducting of their activities to continuously provide reliable results.
4. The use of **alternative approaches (e.g. remote auditing/assessment methods)** is considered a reliable tool to support the continuous delivery of the conformity assessment services in spite of several lockdowns, travel restrictions and partial productions, processes and services shut-downs.

Many bodies performing conformity assessment activities demonstrate their fulfillment of CASCO standards by internal, peer, customer, regulatory or independent recognition processes. CASCO will continue to work and communicate with a range of stakeholders to ensure that CASCO standards continue to support the reliability of the conformity assessment system. This involves dialogue with key organizations such as the IAF and ILAC as well as others.

The overall CASCO approach to standards for conformity assessment helps to ensure effective conformity assessment and will contribute to reducing uncertainty and risk when unforeseen events and disruptive changes arise. CASCO will continue to respond to the needs of the market in these extraordinary circumstances.

For further information, please contact the CASCO secretariat casco@iso.org