

ACTIV FIRE

ACTIVE FIRE PROTECTION - EQUIPMENT LISTING SCHEME

October 2007

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**CSIRO Industrial Research Services,
Verification Services and ActivFire Scheme**

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Welcome

Welcome to the first electronic Newsletter from CSIRO's Verification Services. It is planned that this communication tool will become a regular feature with the prime purpose of informing current and potential future customers about what is happening in the field/s of certification of specific interest to them.

These eNewsletters will be sent out to people with a known interest in the field. To subscribe (or unsubscribe) to this newsletter, simply click through to the eNews service on the ActivFire web site www.activfire.gov.au/eDocsDistribution.asp

You will receive no more eNews unless you once again request them. Feel free to pass them on to colleagues who might also be interested.

We would be happy to receive any comments about eNews including its presentation format, ease of reading along with any suggestions for future topics or questions about existing matters.

Simply send us an email to eDocs@activfire.gov.au

Now for some important information about changes arising from proposed amendments to the Building Code of Australia...(see page 2) ●

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Background

In the late 1980s the current ActivFire Scheme started listing products in the Register of Fire Protection Equipment. Since that time it has operated cooperatively with the Australian fire protection sector to provide a level of product surety across the industry's supply and installation chain.

The operation of the ActivFire Scheme has developed over this time to meet the broader requirements of the building industry in Australia, resulting in a stable, thorough and cost effective service for determining product conformance.

It is expected that the 2008 Edition of the Building Code of Australia (BCA) will delete specific ActivFire references from its Evidence of Suitability provisions. This change to the BCA will have a significant impact on the way the ActivFire Scheme operates in relation to the fire protection and building industries across Australia.

Whilst other Evidence of Suitability provisions may still be relevant, it is considered necessary that the ActivFire Scheme begin to operate under a Certification Body accredited by the Joint Accreditation Scheme – Australian and New Zealand (JAS-ANZ). ●



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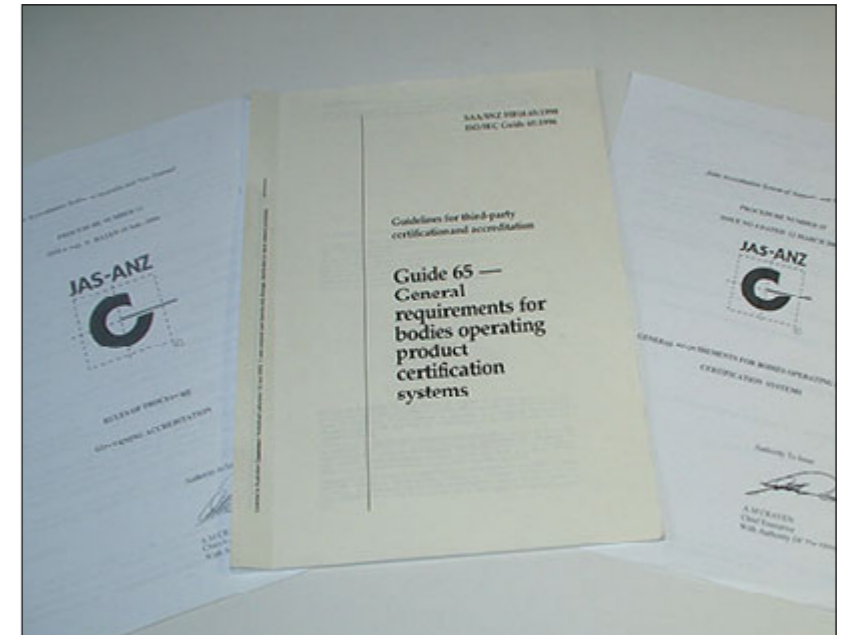
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ISO Guide 65

JAS-ANZ accreditation requires that bodies operating product certification systems must meet the requirements of the international standard ISO Guide 65 (also published as AS/NZS 3843:1998) and the International Accreditation Forum guidance document GD5: 2006.

Detailed requirements are specified for many facets of the Certification Body including;

- Structure and organisation
- Policies and procedures
- Personnel employed (including competency, qualifications, independence),
- Operation
- Quality systems employed, and
- Surveillance systems. ●



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Changes to ActivFire

Over the coming months, the structure, operation, policies, procedures, personnel and sample testing schemes (surveillance) under which the ActivFire Scheme operates will, where required, be changed to align with the specific and mandatory requirements ISO Guide 65.

In some cases, these changes may impact on the relationships that exist between the current ActivFire Scheme, the testing body and the product manufacturers and/or suppliers. Such changes are beyond the control of CSIRO. The CSIRO Verification Services team will make every effort to minimise any inconvenience that may result. ●



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Certification versus Evaluation

Close cooperation between CSIRO's product evaluation (Fire Systems) group and the ActivFire Scheme has in the past enabled a level of coordination which simplified the fire protection equipment testing/listing process in Australia.

The application of ISO Guide 65 will require a clear, demonstrated separation of, and independence between the certification process and the evaluation process. This required separation will more tightly control the extent to which direct coordination between such activities is possible. ●



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Product Migration

To minimise disruption to customers, it is proposed to establish the ISO Guide 65-based product certification system whilst still maintaining continuity of the existing product listings.

As the new structure becomes operational, product types will be migrated progressively to the new system (eg. smoke alarms and fire detectors, then fire panels, fire sprinklers, etc.). At this stage, the sequence of the migration has not been finalised and further information will be provided in future newsletters. ●



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Newsletters

Communication is an important part of any change process. ActivFire will continue to work closely with its customers as the various requirements of ISO Guide 65 are implemented throughout the organisation.

In addition, the need for some form of regular communication is recognised as important.

This series of newsletters will provide information and updates regarding the process. They are intended to inform customers of the process and highlight issues which will occur as changes are implemented. ●



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Contacts

If you have any questions regarding this change process, please do not hesitate to contact the appropriate staff.

Contacts for the management and staff of CSIRO's Industrial Research Services, Verification Services and ActivFire Scheme are provided below.

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