

PCI 4000 Certification Program Guidelines

Purpose

PCI Certification is an extensive audit program that evaluates the candidate's business practices, process elements, equipment, maintenance practices and quality control capabilities. Certified coaters can show, through demonstrated audit performance measurement, that they have the capabilities to correctly clean, coat and cure products to meet manufacturer's recommendations.

Certification is not a determination of the quality of the powder coated product that is produced. It strictly certifies that the coater has the capabilities and competencies to produce a high-quality powder coated product.

Eligibility

PCI 4000 Certification is designed for and available to all Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEM) applying powder coatings. PCI membership is not required, although member companies in good standing qualify for substantial discounts.

Benefits

Certified OEMs are afforded a number of benefits. PCI Certification reflects to the marketplace that a qualified third-party has reviewed and approved their powder finishing processes. It resonates a clear message that they are dealing with a conscientious, quality-focused manufacturer. In addition, the audit can be used as a basis for a continuous improvement process to enhance their powder coating operation, and to meet ISO continuous improvement requirements. They also receive access to the PCI Certified logo to promote certification status and benefit from the image elevation associated with the high standards of certification.

Objectives

The PCI 4000 Certification process is intended to improve and enhance an OEM's ability to apply powder coatings, optimize their performance, contribute towards raising the standards of the industry, and recognize the merits of a capable OEM.

Application Process

Applicants must complete and submit an audit application including acknowledgement of OSHA/NFPA compliance requirements. Applications will not be processed without completion of the safety acknowledgement. A primary contact for all audit related activities must be identified on the application. A secondary contact must also be provided.

The on-site audit duration is a minimum of 1 day, maximum of 2 days per facility. Applicant provides three potential dates for the on-site audit with application, at least 30 days out from date of application. Applicant selects the audit type and associated base fee. Audit fee is due at time of application. Upon payment receipt, candidate will receive detailed audit questions. A pre-audit telephone consultation between the applicant and auditor is available to review facility set up, answer questions, and finalize onsite audit date.

On-Site Audit

All audits are performed at the applicant facility by a PCI retained auditor and will include a meeting with certification applicant company representatives, review of applicant records, logs and procedures, and a

process review. The audit will be performed using PCI scoring developed for the purpose of assessing line operation capability. Upon audit completion, the auditor submits the finalized score sheet to PCI.

Overview of Evaluated Competencies

Note: For each evaluated competency applicants will be required to provide supporting documentation such as logs, record keeping procedures, etc.

Surface Preparation

Processes used, equipment condition, maintenance procedures and adequacy for substrates being treated. Testing procedures to confirm satisfactory pretreatment results are also evaluated.

Ovens & Curing

Equipment condition, calibration and preventive maintenance procedures and documentation. Documentation and tracking of recipes for operation parameters/oven set points per requirements.

Booth & Recovery

Location and condition of application area. Compressed air quantity and quality, as well as system location and distribution design. Powder reclamation process. Condition of collection booth and related equipment, maintenance and cleaning procedures.

Powder Application

Application equipment condition and maintenance. Good earth grounding practices. Color change process. Operator PPE.

Incoming Quality Control

Documentation and evaluation of parts prior to coating. Powder coating inventory usage, storage conditions and evaluation procedures. Technical and safety data maintenance and availability. Reject process.

Training

Training process for all powder coating personnel, including operators and supervisors.

Maintenance

Program, schedule, and documentation process for equipment maintenance.

Process Management

Job tracking for the entire coating process, including documentation of line speed, coating data, unique specifications and requests, production schedule, part hanging, quality tests, etc.

Final Quality Control

Existence of a quality management program and quality manual. Definition of quality parts vs. rejects, documented and tracked. Root cause analysis process.

Loading, Unloading & Packaging

Loading and hanging process supports coating objectives. Rack and conveyor condition. Part handling, evaluation and touch up process. Packaging specifications and consistency.



Post-Audit

The PCI Program Administrator will inform the applicant of their certification status within 10 business days of audit completion.

Auditor travel expenses and any additional audit fees will be invoiced with payment due to PCI within 30 days of date of invoice.

Passing Certification Applicants

Will be provided with a certification package including letter of congratulations, certificate, press release template, PCI 4000 Certified logo, and logo usage guidelines.

Certified companies will be listed on www.powdercoating.org.

Certification Maintenance Audit

Upon passing the on-site certification audit, the certified company is required to complete an annual Certification Maintenance Audit for the next two years. Certification maintenance is a self-audit. The PCI Certification Program Administrator will notify the certified company contact on file of the certification maintenance audit requirements, including associated fee, deadline for completion and submission, and required self-audit forms.

The Certification Maintenance Audit is required by all PCI certified companies in order to maintain their certified status. Those that do not complete the Certification Maintenance Audit will have their certification revoked.

Full Re-certification

A full, onsite audit following the process of the initial onsite audit, is required in year four.

Non-Passing Certification Applicants

Applicants that do not pass the on-site audit will be provided with a corrective action plan (CAP) and will have six months from the date of notification to implement the CAP. Proof of CAP implementation should be provided to the Certification Program Administrator in the form of documentation, photographs, etc. The auditor will review the rectifications and update that audit score sheet accordingly. All rectifications must meet with auditor approval. In some cases, a second on-site audit may be required and will be performed at a reduced rate plus auditor expenses. CAP rectifications submitted by non-passing applicants more than six months after the date of CAP notification will be considered a new on-site audit and subject to full audit fees plus auditor expenses.