

## 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 onsite audit duration is a minimum of 1 day, maximum of 2 days. Applicant provides three potential dates for onsite 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 and expectations.

A pre-audit telephone consultation is conducted between applicant and auditor to review facility set up, answer questions, and finalize onsite audit date.

## **Onsite Audit**

All audits are performed at the candidate 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.*

### Pretreatment

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

### Ovens & Curing

Equipment condition, calibration and preventive maintenance procedures and documentation. Process for set point changes and cure cycle requirements for different masses.

### Application Area

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

### 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 Control

Job tracking for the entire coating process, including documentation of line speed, cure temps, pretreatment, coating data, production schedule, etc.

### Final Quality Control

Definition of quality parts vs. rejects. Testing process and frequency. Existence and condition of specific QC area. 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 5 to 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, banner, PCI 4000 Certified logo, and logo usage guidelines.

Certified companies will be listed on [www.powdercoating.org](http://www.powdercoating.org) and in *Powder Coated Tough* magazine.

### **Certification Maintenance Audit**

Upon passing the onsite 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 onsite audit may request a re-audit within six months of the original audit date. The re-audit will be performed at a reduced rate plus auditor expenses. Audit requests submitted by non-passing applicants more than six months after the initial audit date will be considered a new audit and subject to full audit fees plus auditor expenses.