

SSPC: The Society for Protective Coatings

QUALIFICATION PROCEDURE NO. 1

Standard Procedure for Evaluating Painting Contractors (Field Application to Complex Industrial Structures)

1. Scope

1.1 This procedure describes a method for evaluating the qualifications of industrial field painting contractors and defines a minimum standard for qualification.

1.2 The objective of this procedure is to determine if a painting contractor has the personnel, organization, qualifications, procedures, knowledge, and capability to perform surface preparation and coating application of the required quality under the conditions and restrictions specified by the owner for complex structures.

1.3 The procedure encompasses the field application of coatings in the industrial market. Specialty applications, such as lining materials, bituminous products, galvanizing, etc., are not covered by the requirements of this standard procedure.

1.4 The procedure does not include surface preparation and coating application conducted exclusively at the contractor's facility (i.e., shop painting). Shop painting is covered by the latest revision of SSPC-QP 3, "Standard Procedure for Evaluating the Qualifications of Shop Painting Contractors." Also see Section 6.1 of this standard procedure.

2. Description

2.1 DEFINITIONS:

Contractor: An individual or firm whose primary business is providing surface preparation and coating application services in the industrial, marine, and heavy commercial markets.

Auditor: 1) The person or persons performing audits on behalf of the auditing agency or qualifying agency. 2) The body possessing the necessary technical competence to review contractor submittals, conduct on-site audits of applicants, and report results to the qualifying agency in compliance with the requirements of this procedure and the written requirements of the formal audit program.

Qualifying Agency: The body responsible for development, maintenance, sponsorship and operation of a program to ensure uniform compliance with the provisions of this standard procedure.

Complex Structure: Complex structures are those constructed of steel or concrete, such as metal producing and rolling mills, bridges, and processing facilities, including chemical and petrochemical processing plants, pulp and paper

mills, power plants and substations, and food and beverage plants and terminals.

Qualification: The procedure by which written assurance is given that an applicant conforms to the prescribed set of conditions or requirements of this standard procedure.

Procedure: The sequence of steps taken to carry out a particular course of action.

2.2 TYPES OF STRUCTURES: Complex structures encompass a wide range of structural types and configurations. Although the required evaluation functions are similar for all complex structures, the specific skills (e.g., rigging or pollution controls) may be quite different for painting a bridge and painting a process facility.

This procedure does not in any way differentiate between contractors engaged in work in different industries and on different structures. Owners may wish to select contractors with the specific skills and experience required for the particular job at hand. Some industrial subcategories with which specific skills may be associated are listed below:

- Marine/splash zone: These include structures proximate to and remote from both coastal and inland shorelines
- Proximate includes waterfront structures, locks, dams, ship hulls, bulkheads, piers, etc.
- Remote includes offshore platforms and structures, etc.
- Bridges and towers.
- Metal and manufacturing facilities.
- Chemical and processing facilities: These include chemical and petrochemical plants, pulp and paper mills, food and beverage plants, and water and waste facilities.
- Power generation facilities and distribution structures.

2.3 FUNCTIONS TO BE EVALUATED: The procedure identifies four functional areas to be evaluated: Management Procedures, Technical Capabilities, Quality Control, and Safety and Health. General requirements for each of these function areas are presented in Section 3.

2.4 EVALUATION PLANNING: The qualifying agency must develop criteria and/or rating plans to evaluate each contractor against this standard. The qualifying agency shall also determine which of the specific, critical items within the four function areas are to be evaluated for subsequent follow-up or evaluations, ensuring the items evaluated are the

same for all contractors. The sequence of steps for conducting an evaluation within a certification program is outlined in Section 4. The evaluation, in each instance, will be performed by the auditor.

3. General Qualification Requirements

3.1 MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES: The applicant must demonstrate adequate procedures for disseminating company policy and for personnel, administrative and financial management as follows:

3.1.1 Contractor Policy: The contractor shall have:

- a. Written policies on quality, safety, and health.
- b. Written procedures for disseminating company policies within the organization. The contractor shall demonstrate that procedures are followed.

3.1.2 Organization and Personnel: The contractor shall have:

- a. Organizational chart showing division of responsibility within the contractor's company.
- b. List of names, titles, duties, and job descriptions for key personnel (management, technical, quality control, safety). The job description shall state the experience, licenses, certifications and training and refresher courses required for each position.

3.1.3 Administrative and Management Procedures:

The contractor shall provide:

- a. A brief, written description of the contractor's method of financial record keeping.
- b. Procedures used for contract estimating and scheduling, and for cost accounting.
- c. Procedures used to review specifications and other bid documentation.
- d. Formal procedures for learning about and meeting current federal, state and local environmental, health, and safety regulations.

3.2 TECHNICAL CAPABILITIES: The contractor must employ qualified personnel; have adequate technical resources; have suitable job conversion procedures; and have appropriate equipment, facilities, and experience. The contractor shall provide the following:

3.2.1 Personnel Qualifications:

- a. Records of training that is available to and utilized by qualified workers, including training required to meet regulatory requirements.
- b. A method for monitoring proficiency of workers performing surface preparation and coating application and relevant documentation.
- c. Qualified site personnel, including surface preparation and coating application personnel.

3.2.2 Technical Resources:

- a. A list of technical societies, trade bodies, or other industry groups (universities, major manufacturers, consultants) with which the contractor is associated. Current membership certificates or correspondence shall be maintained to verify the association.
- b. Verification that the company maintains a library of current technical standards appropriate for types of work performed.

3.2.3 Procedures: Formal procedures which are used to convert job specifications into field work orders, job plans, etc., including procedures for:

- a. Logging receipt of specifications and revisions and recording who gets copies, as well as removing obsolete or superseded documents from the workplace.
- b. Documenting communication which notes exceptions to specifications or other clarifications.
- c. Communicating specification requirements to site based personnel.
- d. Quality assurance programs (where used). Work procedures should specifically define quality assurance methods and criteria.
- e. Safety and health compliance program.

3.2.4 Equipment, Facilities, and Experience:

- a. List types of materials that have been applied within the previous 18 months.
- b. Listing of current (site based) jobs and jobs recently completed on complex structures within the previous 18 months which support the contractor's suitability for certification. The list should include the following:
 - Client name, address, and principal contact
 - Description of the work performed
 - Materials applied
 - Equipment used
 - Types and number of personnel employed
 - Any special requirements or provisions (e.g., safety or environmental)
- c. List of contractor-owned or leased equipment utilized.
- d. Formal description of maintenance and repair procedures utilized for equipment, including repair logs.

3.3. QUALITY CONTROL: The contractor must demonstrate that it uses qualified personnel and proper inspection and recording procedures for job quality control.

3.3.1 Personnel Qualifications: Documentation that personnel performing quality control related functions are qualified, including records of training and experience of qualified supervisor and inspectors, and a description of qualification requirements for inspectors as well as a detailed job description.

3.3.2 Inspection Procedures and Recording Systems: The contractor must demonstrate the following:

- a. Records of standards and specifications for coating inspection work are available and utilized.
- b. An implemented system for maintaining and filing inspection reports is in place.
- c. Inspection equipment and calibration standards and procedures are available and properly utilized by on-site Q.C. personnel.
- d. Procedures to stop non-conforming work are utilized by on-site Q.C. personnel.
- e. Procedures for verifying proper coating application are available and utilized by on-site personnel.
- f. Procedures to ensure that each major operation (e.g., surface preparation, primer, intermediate and topcoat application) is inspected are available to on-site personnel and utilized.

3.4 SAFETY AND HEALTH: The contractor must operate a proper and compliant safety and health program, maintain safety records and provide access to safety resource material as follows:

3.4.1 Safety Procedures and Record-Keeping Systems:

- a. Document all safety education meetings and related activities.
- b. Hold and document pre-job safety meetings.
- c. Report accidents in accordance with regulations.
- d. Operate a formal procedure for determining the proficiency of the safety and loss control program.
- e. Provide formal safety procedures and training for operating specialized equipment.
- f. Provide adequate personal protective equipment and operate a formal system to check the effectiveness and maintenance of the equipment.
- g. Make available employees trained in first aid on all sites where work is performed on complex structures.
- h. Enforce all safety rules.
- i. Keep records of non-compliance with federal, state, and local regulations, and document that corrective actions are taken to avoid repeat violations.

3.4.2 Resource Materials:

- a. Maintain a list of available safety resource materials.
- b. Operate a formal procedure for acquiring safety information and materials.
- c. Operate a formal procedure to ensure that safety information and materials referenced in submittals are available to on-site personnel.

4. EVALUATION SEQUENCE

4.1 SUBMITTAL OF WRITTEN APPLICATION PACKAGE: The initial step is to request an application form and instructions. The request, along with an application fee must be submitted to the qualifying agency.

The application process involves gathering required information about the contractor or shop as described in the application form. This information and documentation will be submitted to the qualifying agency at the same time as the formal application for qualification.

4.2 REVIEW OF APPLICATION PACKAGE: The contractor's application package is reviewed by the qualifying agency using guidelines for evaluation that have been established by that agency. The evaluation items are based on Sections 4 and 5 of this document.

4.3 ON-SITE AUDIT OF CONTRACTOR: Subject to satisfactory evaluation of the application package referred to Sections 4 and 5 and on a date mutually agreed upon by the contractor and the qualifying agency, the qualifying agency's will visit the contractor's premises and ~~complex structure~~ job site where surface preparation and coating application is being performed to investigate and rate the following areas directly and indirectly affecting quality of work provided: Management Procedures; Technical Capabilities; Quality Control; and Safety and Health. The auditor will perform the following:

- Confirm data submitted with the application for qualification.
- Conduct interviews with key supervisory personnel and some subordinate employees.
- Observe and rate the organization and operation, including management procedures, technical capabilities, quality control, and safety and health programs and procedures.
- Examine and rate equipment and facilities.

The on-site audit will usually require from one to three days to complete.

4.4 EXIT INTERVIEW: Following the site audit, and before the auditor leaves the site, an exit interview will be held. At the exit interview, the auditor will review observations and the evaluation with the contractor, including discussions of deficiencies and omissions, if any. A written list of deficiencies and omissions will be provided to the site supervisor, who will be asked to confirm receipt of the list. Every attempt will be made by the auditor during the exit interview to fully explain how the evaluation was conducted.

4.5 EVALUATION OF APPLICATION AND DETERMINATION OF STATUS: At the conclusion of the evaluation process, the auditor will report the findings to the qualifying agency, which will make the final decision regarding applicant status based on the following options:

4.5.1 Qualify: The auditor has determined that the contractor has met or exceeded the requirements of Sections 4 and 5 above. The qualifying agency will make final determination of the contractor's qualification status based on the audit results and disciplinary or other evaluation criteria defined in the application materials. Upon review of all information, the

qualifying agency will issue a certificate identifying the contractor by name and by location of the contractor's home office. Subsequent annual reconfirmation is subject to the qualifying agency's requirements.

4.5.2 Withhold Qualification: Based on audit results and other factors, the qualifying agency has determined that the contractor or shop has not met the requirements of Sections 4 and 5 above. If qualification is withheld, the qualifying agency shall submit to the contractor or shop an itemization of deficiencies that resulted in the decision to withhold qualification. The contractor or shop will be allowed 90 days after notification to submit corrective actions, and request an audit to verify that corrective actions have been implemented as stated by the contractor or shop.

4.6 METHOD OF APPEAL: If a contractor disputes the qualifying agency's decision, the contractor may appeal, utilizing the following steps of recourse:

- The contractor shall notify the qualifying agency within 10 working days after the exit interview, identifying the specific reasons for the appeal.
- The contractor may arrange with the qualifying agency to have a second independent auditor acceptable to both parties brought in at the contractor's expense to inspect and re-evaluate the contractor for compliance with the standard's requirements.
- In the event the foregoing step fails to resolve the dispute, a mutually agreed-upon arbitration panel consisting of three persons (one person chosen by the contractor, one by SSPC, and one agreed upon by both parties) with expertise in protective coating operations will convene to hear evidence and make a final decision. If the arbitration panel finds for the contractor, the cost of all fees and expenses of the arbitration will be shared by the contractor and the qualifying agency. If the arbitration panel does not find for the contractor, the contractor will be responsible for payment of all fees and expenses. Any other costs incurred by any party to the dispute will be borne by that party.

4.7 RECONFIRMATION OF QUALIFICATION:

4.7.1 Internal Audit: The contractor shall at his own expense perform an annual internal audit, based on the requirements of Sections 4 and 5 above, following initial qualification. The results of this internal audit will be forwarded to the qualifying agency, with a copy retained on file by the contractor or shop, and will be made available to the auditor upon request during any announced or unannounced audits.

4.7.2 Reconfirmation of Qualification - Owner Comments: Owners for whom the contractor performs work will be

given an opportunity to comment on the qualified contractor's performance by completing an owner comment form provided by the qualifying agency. Comments will be in the form of replies to specific questions asked of owners regarding performance on specific jobs. All owner replies will be treated as confidential.

4.8 REVOCATION: Failure to satisfactorily complete the annual internal audit or pass unannounced audit(s) or failure to meet disciplinary or other evaluation criteria established by the qualifying agency will be cause for suspension or revocation of certification.

4.9 QUALIFICATION PERIOD: The qualifying agency shall determine the time period for which qualification shall be valid, and the requalification schedule during the qualification period.

4.10 QUALIFYING AGENCY FILES: The qualifying agency will maintain a list of certified contractors, as well as pertinent information submitted by owners and users who have utilized the contractor's services. This information will assist in the validation process during the certification term.

All information gathered will be used only for purposes intended. Information determined to be proprietary in nature will be treated as confidential.

5. Disclaimer

5.1 While every precaution is taken to ensure that all information furnished in SSPC guides and standards is as accurate, complete, and useful as possible, SSPC cannot assume any responsibility, nor incur any obligation, resulting from the use of any materials or methods specified therein, or of the procedure itself.

5.2 This procedure does not attempt to address all problems concerning safety and health associated with its use. The user of this procedure, as well as the user of all products or practices described herein, is responsible for instituting appropriate health and safety practices and for ensuring compliance with all governmental regulations.

6. Note

SSPC has developed a "Standard Procedure for Evaluating the Qualifications of Painting Contractors to Remove Hazardous Paint" (SSPC-QP 2) and a "Standard Procedure for Evaluating Qualifications of Shop Painting Contractors" (SSPC-QP 3). In the future, additional qualification procedures may be established for linings and critical underwater service, and other specialized structures or industries.