

Guidelines for ROs/BOs for Utilization of Agents for Inspections

Pre Assignment

1. On appointment as Agent, the Agency shall sign an Agreement with the concerned Regional Office of BIS. The agreement shall be valid for one year from the date of signing and may be renewed based on the requirement of BIS, performance of the Agent and as per agreed terms and conditions.
2. Agents shall inform the location of their office and provide bio-data (including photograph) of their technical personnel proposed to be deployed for each branch of BIS for inspections with qualification and experience details. The information shall be scrutinized for compliance to the guidelines.
3. Before permitting any officer of the Agency to take up inspection on behalf of BIS, he shall accompany BIS officer for at least 3 surveillance inspections of different products for which there is large concentration in the BO. During these inspections, he shall be imparted thorough on-the-job training on all aspects of inspections. This shall also apply to existing officers of the agency who have not gone through this on-the-job drill.
4. A copy of relevant standards (print out to be taken from BIS Intranet marked as for BIS use only) along with copy of relevant scheme of Testing and Inspection shall be provided to the agent. These copies may be retained by the agents. However, the agents would be expected to build up their own library of relevant standards and STIs over a period of time.
5. The relevant extracts of Operating Manual of Product Certification shall be provided to the agents. Other relevant information necessary for conduct of inspections may also be shared by the Head (BO) with the Agent/ Officer, on request.
6. The BO shall ensure that inspections assigned are carried out by the Officer of suitable discipline only.

Identification of Agents/Auditors

7. The identity card to the agent's officers are to be provided by the agents themselves. The officer shall show his identity card along with approval letter from BIS appointing them as BIS agents, on request.
8. The Agent shall themselves prepare their own Punch and seals for sealing the samples. The impression of the seals shall contain BIS logo. In addition following information shall also be included at the bottom of logo:-
 - a) Agent's auditor's specific allotted number to be assigned by the Agent.
 - b) Name of the Agent in abbreviated form followed by the letter in bracket designating the Region where the Agent is empanelled e.g. RITES (N) etc.
9. The agents shall indicate the impression of the seal in the test request itself so that it can be verified by the concerned laboratory.

Assigning Work

10 While assigning the work to Agents, their skill, expertise, discipline and training be kept in mind. BO Head may interact with officers of the Agents to ensure that they are capable to carryout inspections as per OMPC to the satisfaction of Head BO. The work shall be allotted to the Agent only for the area and discipline for which they have been appointed by BIS.

11. While allocating the inspections to the outsourced agencies or ex-BIS officers, approximate time likely to be consumed for the allotted inspections may also be indicated. The agent shall be expected to comply with the same, without compromising on quality of inspection. However, this would further subject to availability of production/samples for factory testing and also unit in operation etc. Normally the work for 2 to 3 mandays/2 to 3 units should be allotted in an area so that in case of one unit being closed or no production etc, the available time could be utilized for other inspections. Wherever it is felt that outsourced agencies have not fully utilized the day but claimed the charges for the same & where option of utilizing the remaining time of the day was available, appropriate deduction in the bill may be made (also see item 25-27)

12. BIS officers posted in the branch are to be utilized to the fullest extent. Inspections are to be allotted to the outsourced agencies only if it is beyond the capacity of the available officers in the BO and also taking into account the requirements of Certification Regulations and the STI. Additional Inspections required for specific products like Packaged Drinking Water, Cement and other products under Mandatory Certification and instructions issued from HQ from time to time may also be assigned to them. LPG Inspections and other such inspections may also be allotted to them with communication to related statutory authorities.

Inspection Report

13. The inspection report shall be submitted by the agents in Hard Copy. Reports of inspections shall reach BIS within 5 days (excluding closed days) of the audit.

14. Inspection reports received from the Agent shall be thoroughly scrutinized for their completeness as well as quality of inspection. The deficiencies in carrying out inspection should be pointed out immediately to the Head of the Agency and corrective action monitored. The officer may also be summoned for any discussion/directions. A central record of such communications may be kept to facilitate review of work of agencies. In case of major discrepancies, appropriate deductions be made from the payment in terms of agreement

Drawal of samples

15. Samples collected by the auditor shall be packed, sealed and coded properly as per BIS guidelines before the same are despatched for testing in BIS Laboratories or as directed by BIS. If the sample is convenient to handle, it may be handed over to concerned BO along with test request giving declared parameters, type/grade etc. properly written for despatch to concerned laboratories. The samples which cannot be carried shall be left with the licensee for delivery to the concerned lab through courier.

Monitoring

16. Outsourced agents should not be allowed to pick and choose inspections and are required to carry out inspections as assigned by the BO.

17. DDGRs/HODs are fully empowered to stop using any agency/Auditor which does not perform satisfactorily and in accordance with the agreed guidelines and terms and conditions. However, it would be necessary that before doing this, the feedback/ deficiencies are documented and brought on record. Any negative feedback even from licensees like making demands in cash or kind should also be documented even if the complaint is not in writing. CMD-1 shall be kept informed of all such feedback.

18. BO Head may obtain the officer-wise schedule from the Agency and arrange witnessing of inspections occasionally. At least one inspection shall be witnessed every month. Agent inspection may be witnessed by BO Head or Group leader nominated by him.

19. Supervisory inspections shall also be done by BO Head for inspections done by the Agents. Such inspections shall generally be carried out within one week of the date of inspection.

20. ROs/BOs shall have monthly/bi-monthly meetings with the controlling officer of the Agency and review the performance. All issues aimed at improving the quality of inspections and overall performance of the Agency should be discussed in such meetings. Minutes of such meetings shall also be sent to CMD-I.

Record Keeping by ROs/BOs

21. The record of the agent's auditors shall be maintained by the respective Regional Office and is not required to be maintained at HQs.

22. If there is any need felt by the agent to interact personally with BIS with regard to allocation of inspections and collection of details for the audits, no additional cost shall be borne by BIS for such visits other than agreed inspection charges.

23. To facilitate review of work of Agents, appropriate records may be maintained by BOs/ ROs. This would come handy while considering extension of their contracts.

Entry in CMMS

24. Presently, entry in CMMS including auditor's time-in and time-out of the factory is to be done by the concerned BO. However, ITS department is being requested to examine the possibility of providing access to the agents so that they can also directly enter the data without additional workload on BOs.

Payments

25. Audits /Inspections of licensees and applicants under Product Certification Scheme of the Bureau of Indian Standards will be allotted by the controlling Branch Office of BIS. For such inspections/audits, Agent shall be paid @ Rs3000/- per day for visits within 200 km and @ Rs.4000/- per day (plus taxes) for visits beyond 200 km from the location of the Branch Office of the First Party and subject to other conditions laid out in this Agreement. Decision of BIS on location distance shall be final and binding. No disputes will be entertained on this account.

26. BIS or the licensee shall not pay for any expenses relating to the visit (like travel and accommodation etc.) other than the agreed inspection charges.

27. Payment will be released by the concerned Branch Office on production of monthly bills by the Agent. BO may also ensure timely submission of all related inspection reports by the auditors before release of payment. It is expected that Heads of the Branches who sanction the payment will ensure that every day is fully utilized by the officer by examining the inspection reports. If on a particular day, less than 4 hrs work is done by the Auditors and more work in the nearby area was available and could have been done, no payment be made for such a day.
