



Department of Trade and Industry

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8 July 2005

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Dear John Costyn

Response on the Revision of Guidelines on Green Supply Offerings (Third-Party Accredited Certification)

I am writing, on behalf of the Department of Trade and Industry Standards and Technical Regulations Directorate, in response to the above consultation, in order to support the submission that you have already received from the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS).

At 3.39 of the consultation document, you seek views on third-party verification for green supply in Great Britain, the form this system should take, the possible organisation or organisations that should carry this out, and the preferred funding mechanisms. **UKAS proposes a system of conformity assessment carried out by UKAS accredited certification bodies.** Certification bodies that hold UKAS accreditation, have been independently assessed to agreed international standards of competence and impartiality by UKAS, a body which is itself subject to regular assessment and to oversight by Government.

UKAS operates under a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the DTI, which recognises UKAS as the sole national body for the accreditation of certification, testing, calibration and inspection to a particular series of standards. This includes the certification of environmental management and audit systems. (More information can be found under 'Conformity assessment and Accreditation' at www.dti.gov.uk/strd/strdpubs.html)

Continuation 2

The Government actively encourages certification bodies to become accredited by UKAS. The Government also encourages organisations; particularly government departments, agencies, regulators and local authorities, to use UKAS accredited certification bodies (wherever these are an option) when seeking certification.

We consider that UKAS is uniquely placed to work with Ofgem, the Gas and Electricity Consumer Council (Energywatch); your MoU partner, and stakeholders, to develop a system of accredited third-party verification that will meet the requirements needed for the scrutiny of green supply offerings in Great Britain. UKAS is very experienced in environmental verification schemes. For example UKAS played a significant role in the development of third party verification of Green House Gas emissions data for both the UK Emissions Trading Scheme (direct participants and Climate Change Levy agreement participants) and the EU Emissions Trading Scheme. We would be very happy to discuss with you the sort of assurances that the third-party certification approach could offer and we could arrange for you to meet with UKAS to discuss the possible development of a system of third-party verification.

DTI's Standards and Technical Regulations Directorate are responsible for the Government's relations with UKAS, and we are keen to promote the delivery of goal-based regulation through the use of conformity assessment to standards leading to UKAS accredited third-party certification. The market already has a wide acceptance of voluntary management system approaches and these can be improved by further alignment with regulatory requirements that are subject to accredited third-party certification. Accredited conformity assessment gives independent assurance about compliance, which can support or even displace conventional regulatory inspection.

UKAS accredited certification would provide customers with the assurance of independent evaluation and validation to a recognised standard and would act to increase confidence and remove uncertainties.

We would welcome the publication of this letter and our response.

Yours sincerely

Lois Hicks
Standards and Technical Regulations Directorate
Department of Trade and Industry

Continuation 2

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