

State of Conformity Assessment for Equipment Requiring Type Approval in Ethiopia

ITU Regional Seminar for the Africa Region on Conformance and
Interoperability Testing Centre(s)
Accra (Ghana), 4-6 July 2011

Introduction and background

- Until late 1999, the function of telecommunications operation and regulation had been performed by the Ethiopian Telecommunications Authority, which was later on restructured and renamed as the Ethiopian Telecommunications Corporation (ETC).
- The Development of the sector compelled the operation and regulatory functions to be separated, and therefore, the Ethiopian Telecommunication Agency (ETA) was established by Telecommunications Proclamation Number 49/1996 as a regulatory entity.

Introduction and Background...

- The powers and duties given to ETA, among others include:
 - To specify technical standards and procedures for the provision of telecommunication services;
 - To regulate types of telecommunication equipment which may be connected to a telecommunication system.

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Introduction and Background...

- Due to Government structural changes introduced, the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology is established as per proclamation No. 691/2010.
- The Ministry is fully mandated to regulate and license Telecom, IT and postal services.

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Introduction and Background...

- The powers and duties given to the former Ministry of Transport and Communications with respect to matters relating to the communication sector, as well as the powers and duties given to Ethiopian Telecommunication Agency with respect to matters relating to the telecommunications sector are given to the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT).

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Introduction and Background ...

- The former Ethiopian Telecommunication Agency which was regulating the Telecom Sector and Ethiopian ICT Development Agency, which was dealing with ICT services development and regulation, are now merged to form the ministry of Communication and Information Technology.

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Introduction and Background

- Now Regulations of Telecom, IT and postal services are being executed by Communications and Information Technology Standardization and Regulatory Directorate structured within the Ministry.

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Standardization and Type Approval

- Pursuant to telecommunication Proclamation No. 49/1996, the MCIT may, by public notice ,specify any telecommunication equipment that requires the MCIT's approval before it may be connected to a telecommunication system.
- MCIT has the mandate to type approve telecommunication equipment imported into and/or manufactured in the country.

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Standardization and Type Approval...

- So far by the former ETA and the newly established Ministry, standards and Technical specifications for GSM mobile terminals, 3G WCDMA mobile terminals, CDMA Mobile and Fixed Wireless Terminals, Short Range Devices, Quality of Service (QoS), National Numbering Plan, telecommunication line terminal equipments and different customer premises equipments are developed.

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Standardization and Type Approval...

- With Regard to type approval, ETA so far granted type approval for more than 1300 models of corded telephones, 600 models of cordless telephones, 700 models of cellular mobile phones, 400 models of fax machines, 140 models of PABX machines, 10 models of Satellite phones and several network devices such as modems, routers and other devices that have interface with the national telecommunication infrastructure.

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Conditions for Type Approval

- Type Approval is granted to a product that meets a minimum set of regulatory, technical and safety requirements.
- Type approval is required before a product is allowed to be sold or used in the country.

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Significance of type approval

- Any user, importer, manufacturer and/or distributor of radio communication and telecommunication equipment shall obtain approval from MCIT before putting the equipment on market or using the equipment.

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Bodies to have Type Approval

- Generally ,the following bodies should obtain type approval from MCIT.
- Individuals who import customer premise equipments to be connected to telecommunication system.
- Importers of telecommunication network equipments and customer premise equipments(CPE)

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Bodies to have Type Approval...

- Telecommunication service providers that import telecommunication network and customer premise equipments
- Organizations and institutions that import telecommunication equipments for their own use, and
- Organizations that are allowed to use radio communication equipments.

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Type Approval Procedures

- Type approval has to be obtained before the equipment are imported, placed on the market and connected to the public telecommunication network.
- Equipment Type Approval is based on Document Evaluation. The Applicant will signify that conformity assessment has been carried out on the equipment to the Ministry's Standards and Technical Specifications. The Applicant declares equipment conformity based on results of conformity assessment, supported by test reports and technical documents.

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Type Approval Procedures ...

- If the application is found to be incomplete, additional technical details or clarifications will be requested by the Ministry. The requested technical details or verifications must be provided by the supplier promptly. The Ministry will reject the application request and turndown the file if the supplier fails to respond within thirty (30) days from the date of Agency's notice for request of information.
- When the Ministry completes the verification or technical evaluation and satisfied that the said equipment has complied with the stipulated requirements, the Ministry will issue a type approval certificate and enter a record in the Ministry's list of type approved equipment. The Ministry will publish the list and the same will be available to the public.

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Type Approval Procedures ...

- The equipment, once type approved and entered in the list of type approved Equipment, is permitted for sale and connection to the Public telecommunication network.
- All telecommunications equipment granted with the type approval by the Ministry will be connected to the public telecommunication networks without inspection by telecommunications network operators, and the network operators have no right to refuse the connections.

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Criteria for approving types of equipments

- Safety to life and health
- Maintenance of the telecommunication network including conditions regarding data protection.
- Electromagnetic compatibility
- Appropriate use of electromagnetic frequency spectrum

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Criteria for approving types of equipments...

- Interoperability/compatibility between the telecommunication equipment and the telecommunication network, and
- If the equipment is imported for commercial purpose, the importer's material, financial and human resource capacity to supply spare parts, provide maintenance, and after sales services for the equipment imported.

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Requirements for Type Approval

- Application letter.
- Equipment's user manual and technical specification written in English.
- Invoice, Airway bill, Bill of lading and packing list
- custom's receipt for equipment received or put at custody.
- If the applicant is a telecommunication equipment importer, he has to possess a terminal equipment maintenance license from the ministry.

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Requirements for Type Approval...

- The original, or a certified copy, of the laboratory test report, in English or translated to English, pertaining to the testing of interface and attachment parameters issued by any accredited test laboratory;
- The original, or certified copy, of the test report in English or translated to English, pertaining to electrical safety issued by any accredited test laboratory;
- The original, or certified copy, of the test report in English or translated to English, pertaining to Electromagnetic Compatibility/ Interference issued by any accredited test laboratory;

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List of Equipment Requiring Type Approval

- PBAX/key Telephone Systems
- Fax machine
- corded/cordless/DECT phones
- CDMA FWA Telephone
- VSAT/Earth station Equipment
- GSM/CDMA/WCDMA MOBILE PHONES
- GMPCS
- Switching Equipment
- Transmission Equipment

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List of Equipment Requiring Type Approval

- XDSL and cable Modem
- DSLAM
- Network Access Server
- Router
- Network Access Server
- MSC Equipment
- Ethernet Switch
- GSM/CDMA/WCDMA BSC/BTS Equipment
- Wireless Access Systems/WAN/RHLAN/Bluetooth
- ISDN PRA and ISDN BA Equipment

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Problems Observed

- No designated testing and conformity assessment laboratory. Hence samples are not tested and approval is conducted based on document screening only.
- Lack of testing and measuring instruments and/or equipments.
- Lack of Technical skill to conduct type approval.
- unavailability of compliance and conformity assessment institutions in the country and in the region.

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Conclusion and Recommendations

- Establish designated testing laboratory in the country and/or in the region.
- upgrade skills of standardization and type approval engineers through training and acquiring knowledge transfer from best performing regulatory institutions.
- Enhance the capacity of regulators through capacity building programs.
- Establish a system which makes use of regional harmonized standards and equipment compliance and conformity assessment schemes.

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Thank you

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