CERTIFICATION

QB Certification Reference System: Connection hoses

Identification No.: QB 10
Revision No.: Revised No.14
Effective date: 18/01/2021

The English version is provided for information. In case of doubt or dispute, the French version only is valid.

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This certification reference system was approved by the CSTB Technical Department on 18/01/2021.

It cancels and replaces all previous versions.

As a certifying body accredited by the COFRAC under number 5-0010 (scope of accreditation available at www.cofrac.fr), CSTB undertakes to draft certification reference systems that meet appropriate requirements with regard to the quality of the products, their suitability for use and their durability.

This certification reference system may therefore be revised, in whole or in part, by CSTB, after the interested parties have been consulted.

MODIFICATION HISTORY

Modified Part	Revision no.	Effective date	Modification made
Entire document	10	02 April 2009	Regulatory updates Dates of missing normative references specified
Entire document	11	29 October 2012	Inclusion of measures taken from standard NF EN 13618 Regulatory updates Dates of missing normative references specified
Entire document	12	10 March 2016	Inclusion of measures taken from standard NF EN 13618 Update of specific measures for compliance with reference standard NF EN ISO CEI 17065 Changes made in relation to revision No. 10 are shown in red in the text.
Entire document	13	20 December 2018	Inclusion of addendum No.1 QB10 rev12 Update to regulatory requirements (§2.1.) Taking the new QB reference system template into account
Entire document	14	18 janvier 2021	Inclusion of addendum N°1 QB10 rev13 Part 5 : Glossary : Commercial Extension – Suspension (details) Update § 3.4 : Sampling § 4.3 : Addition of the CAPE laboratory of CSTB in Nantes as the Brand's laboratory for shore hardness testing

Part 1
Application

1.1 Scope of application

At this time, this certification reference system concerns connection hoses composed of elastomers, synthetic materials or corrugated stainless-steel pipes that can be manually shaped to adapt to the layout of the components in the installation to be assembled.

The connection hoses are designed for use in one of three types of circuits:
- domestic hot or cold water distribution (family A),
- domestic hot or cold water distribution and heating or cooling water distribution (family B).
- for heating or cooling (family C).

The various types of connection hoses are defined in Technical Document 10-01 (§2)

The QB mark strives to check:
- the safety characteristics for people, pets and goods when required in consideration of the normal, routine use of the products,
- and/or the suitability for use,
- and/or the durability of the products,
- and/or any additional characteristics that enable them to stand out in the market.

Certified connection hoses under the NF EN 13618 standard benefit from a positive assessment of their suitability for use, in reference to, for example, a Technical Appraisal or any other positive collegial technical assessment of a construction procedure including connection hoses and compatible with the other procedures with which this procedure is combined to build a structure.

Note: a construction procedure covers the whole process from design to execution, leading to the processing of a product or the use of a service for the execution of parts of works.

The field of use for connection hoses is specified in the positive assessment of suitability for use.

1.2 Certification added value

Certification is recognition from a third party that the characteristics are compliant, demonstrating the added value of the connection hoses.

The certified characteristics of the connection hoses application are defined in the Technical Document DT 10-01 §3.1

CSTB is responsible for assessing the certified characteristics, using the following control measures :

	Admission	**Continued monitoring**
Production audit carried out by a qualified technical auditor: - Verification that the production inspections and records have been completed: raw materials, production, finished products, - Verification of the quality management provisions: metrology, packaging, storage, traceability, product marking, processing of non-conformities and customer complaints, - Supervision of certified characteristics tests carried out by the applicant, where applicable.	***Yes***	***Yes*** ***Frequency:*** ***2 annual audits (*)***
Tests carried out by a laboratory recognised by the certifying body (independent and competent): - Samples taken by the certifying body and taking place on the applicant's/holder's site	***Yes***	***Yes*** ***Frequency:*** ***2 annual test campaigns***

(*) The applicable verification regime for connection hoses is the half-yearly regime for the 12 months subsequent to admission, followed by the simplified half-yearly regime. The audit frequency may then be increased to 2 annual audits whenever critical non-conformities are observed.

1.3 Applying for certification

Any legal entity:

- manufacturing products within the scope defined above and that can comply with the technical requirements described in Part 2 of this document,
- or distributing products within the scope defined above for which the manufacturer complies with the technical requirements described in Part 2 of this document,

may request the right to use the QB mark – Connection hoses.

Such requests are referred to as “applications” while the entities making them are referred to as “applicants”.

Before applying, applicants must make sure that they meet the conditions defined in this certification reference system, concerning their product and the sites in question. It is the applicants’ responsibility to make sure that the regulations applicable to their product are respected.

They shall commit themselves to meeting the same conditions during the whole duration of use of the QB mark.

Note: When an applicant has subcontracted production

The applicant may subcontract part of the manufacture of their products covered by this certification reference system.

If so, they undertake to:

- be responsible for the effectiveness of the production control system as a whole in accordance with this certification reference system;
- be able to provide, on the one hand, the specifications that define the inspection operations that they impose on their subcontractor in order to comply with the requirements in this certification reference system and, on the other hand, the evidence regarding the subcontractor’s success in complying with the said requirements.

Failure to comply with all of the commitments may lead to a halt to or suspension of the examination of applicants’ dossiers.

Part 2
Certification Scheme

The certification scheme for the Connection hoses application consists of this certification reference system, which references:

- the QB mark General Requirements, which set the organisation and conditions for use of the mark;
- the standards and the additional technical specifications indicated in §2.2.
- This certification reference system is consonant with the framework of the certification of products and services other than alimentary, as provided for in the French Consumer Code (articles R-433-1 to R 433-2 and L 433-3 to L 433-11). It specifies the conditions for applying the General Requirements of the QB mark to the products defined in Part 1.

2.1 Regulations

The granting of the right to use the QB mark can in no way substitute CSTB's responsibility for the legal responsibility of the company that holds the QB mark usage right.

As regards the regulatory requirements covered by this certification reference system, the applicant/holder shall submit to the certifying body during the certification audits the documentary evidence defined in the regulations and attesting to the compliance of their product with the regulatory requirements.

Note: if the documentary evidence is not managed or stored on the site where the audit is being conducted, this evidence shall be submitted to the certifying body, using any appropriate means, before the certifying body ends its assessment.

The applicant/holder is held responsible to the certifying body for any inaccurate, deceptive and/or non-compliant documentary evidence with regard to the definition of documentary evidence as laid down in the regulations.

It is not the certifying body's role to prove a product's compliance with the regulatory requirements listed in this document. That role falls exclusively to the bodies approved by the authorities in charge of applying each of the regulations concerned.

The main regulations applicable for launching products on the French market and for which the applicant/holder shall submit to the certifying body a document attesting to the conformity of their product to the regulations are listed below :

Regulations	Documentary evidence required
Decree of 29 May 1997 relating to the materials and objects used in fixed installations for the production, treatment and distribution of water intended for human consumption, as modified by the Decrees of 24 June 1998 and 22 August 2002.	The ACS (Attestation of sanitary conformity) materials or accessories, as defined in the circular DGS/SDA 2002 n° 571 of 25/11/02, is proof of compliance with the regulation.
Article L121-2 of the Consumer Code : "A commercial practice is deceptive if it is committed in any of the following circumstances : 2 ° "When it is based on false or misleading allegations, indications or presentations relating to one or more of the following : b) The essential characteristics of the good or service, i.e. : its substantial qualities, its composition, its accessories, its origin, its quantity, its method and date of manufacture, the conditions of its use and its suitability for use , its properties and the results expected from its use, as well as the results and main characteristics of the tests and controls carried out on the good or service "	Commercial name of the product Commercial presentation of the product (brochures, website, etc.)

2.2 The standards and additional specifications

In addition to the requirements set out in the previous paragraphs, the products shall comply with the complementary specifications laid down in the following documents:

- Technical Document TD10-01: standards (*) and additional technical requirements,
- Technical Document DT 10 02 : Pictograms
- Technical Appraisal or any positive assessment of suitability for use.

(*) For the references that indicate a date of implementation or an index, only the version cited is applicable. For references that do not indicate a date of implementation or index, the most recent version of the reference document applies (including any amendments).

The Assessment Committee may rule on the use of a test standard in a version previous to that currently valid. In this case, the version and date on which this standard was published will be specified in the relevant technical document.

2.3 Declaration of modifications

This paragraph specifies the information that the holder of the right to use the QB mark must provide to CSTB and the procedures they must follow in the event of any modifications to:

– the holder;

– the manufacturing plant;

– the quality organisation of the manufacturing plant;

– the product.

Failure to respect this obligation as observed by CSTB may lead to a suspension or withdrawal of the right to use the QB mark.

In any cases not provided for above, CSTB determines whether the modifications bring the certification into question and whether it is necessary to carry out a complementary quality assurance operation.

Depending upon the results of the examination, CSTB communicates the appropriate decision.

2.3.1 MODIFICATION CONCERNING THE HOLDER

The holder shall communicate in writing to CSTB any legal modification of their company or any modification in their company name.

In the event of a merger, liquidation or absorption of the holder, all rights to use the QB mark, from which the holder might benefit, automatically stop.

A new admission application may be submitted and its examination may be streamlined depending upon the modifications made.

2.3.2 MODIFICATION CONCERNING THE MANUFACTURING UNIT

- <u>For production transfers</u>:

Any transfer (total or partial) of the manufacturing unit of a certified product to another production site entails an immediate halt in the QB marking by the holder on the relevant products.

The holder shall declare this transfer in writing to CSTB, which will organise an audit of the new production unit and, where appropriate, have tests carried out.

The visit may be streamlined or even cancelled if the new manufacturing unit is already known to CSTB.

The procedures for assessing and deciding whether to renew the certification are the same as those for admission as described in Part 3 of this certification reference system.

- <u>For production process modifications</u>:

The holder must demonstrate that the modification of the production process does not have an impact on the performance of the product's certified features (see §2.4.2 : §8.5.6. 9001 V15); they inform CSTB of this.

2.3.3 MODIFICATION CONCERNING THE MANUFACTURING UNIT'S QUALITY ORGANISATION

The holder must declare in writing to CSTB any modification relating to their quality organisation that may affect the production process's compliance with the requirements of this certification reference system.

In particular, they must declare any changes to the certification of the quality management system. If the distribution is carried out by a third party, where appropriate, the holder shall undertake to immediately inform CSTB of any modification made to the distribution of their products and, in particular, any halt in supply by the designated third party.

Any temporary halt in the internal quality assurance operation for a certified product entails an immediate halt in the QB marking of this product by the holder, who must inform CSTB of this. CSTB then communicates to the holder a decision to suspend the right to use the QB mark for a specific period of time following which, if the right of use cannot be re-established, this holder's right to use the QB mark will be withdrawn.

2.3.4 MODIFICATION CONCERNING THE CERTIFIED PRODUCT

Any modification to the certified product relative to the application dossier that is likely to have an effect on the product's compliance with the requirements in the certification reference system must be declared to CSTB in writing.

According to the modification declared, CSTB determines whether this is a certification extension application.

2.3.5 TEMPORARY OR DEFINITIVE HALT IN PRODUCTION

Any definitive or temporary halt in the manufacture of the certified products (or range of products) or any abandonment of a right to use the QB mark shall be declared in writing to CSTB, specifying the time necessary to sell off the inventory of the QB-labelled products. The suspension or withdrawal of the right to use the QB mark is communicated to the holder of the QB mark by CSTB. When the period indicated by the holder expires, the product is removed from the list of certified products.

Any temporary halt in the manufacture of the certified products (or range of products) must be the subject of a suspension of the right to use the QB mark for a maximum period of 6 months, renewable once, if applicable. The total duration of the suspension of the right to use the QB mark for these products must not exceed one year. The lifting of the suspension may only be announced following one or more assessments (audit and/or testing).

2.3.6 MODIFICATION CONCERNING THE DISTRIBUTION CIRCUIT

The holder shall commit to informing CSTB of any modification to the distribution of the certified products as soon as they become aware of such modification and, in particular, whenever they stop supplying a distributor who holds the right to use the QB mark, which means that the right to use the QB mark is no longer maintained.

The distributor whose right to use the QB mark has been maintained shall commit to informing CSTB of any modifications in their supplies that would result in the right to use the QB mark no longer being maintained.

The distributor's right to use the QB mark can only be validated after a new examination in accordance with Part 3 of this certification reference system.

2.3.7 MODIFICATION CONCERNING THE APPLICABLE STANDARDS AND SPECIFICATIONS

Should a standard be removed due to safety reasons, CSTB shall inform of this withdrawal of the right to use the QB mark, thus entailing an immediate halt by the manufacturer in the QB marking related to its production as well as the withdrawal of its QB-labelled products from marketing channels.

2.4 Quality management provisions: audit rules

2.4.1 PURPOSE

Applicants/holders and their distributors whose right to use the mark has been maintained are all responsible, within their respective roles, for the right to use the QB mark relative to the product in question.

The applicant/holder shall implement all the necessary ways and means to permanently guarantee the product's conformity with this Certification Reference System. In addition, they must manage their external service providers by using all appropriate methods to assess all the component elements of a product or external service(s) for which they are the applicant or holder of the right to use the certification mark.

This paragraph sets the minimum provisions that the applicant/holder shall implement in terms of quality management to ensure that the products are manufactured in accordance with this certification reference system at all times.

The quality system depends in part on the establishment by the applicant/holder of a set of organisational measures ensuring conformity of the delivered products with the additional specifications and standards, if applicable. These measures are described in paragraph 2.4.2 below.

2.4.2 MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR QUALITY MANAGEMENT

Applicants/holders shall have implemented the ways and means that they possess, the existence and effectiveness of which are assessed based on the requirements of standard NF EN ISO 9001

If the manufacturing unit is not NF EN ISO 9001-certified, the applicant/holder must document the introduction of a range of organisational provisions and a production control system to ensure compliance with the additional specifications and standards for the delivered products that, at the minimum, meet the requirements in this certification reference system.

The audits are carried out according to Table 1 below. This table indicates the specific requirements in Standard NF EN ISO 9001, which must be verified as part of the certification.

As part of an audit, all the necessary requirements identified on the shaded lines in Table 1 below shall be audited. All other requirements pertaining to quality management shall be audited over a period of 3 years.

Possible reduction:

If the manufacturing unit has a certified quality management system that conforms to standard NF EN ISO 9001, the audits may be “streamlined”. Only the requirements identified on a “shaded” line in Table 1 are to be audited.

This reduction is possible as long as:

- the ISO 9001 certificate includes within its scope and domain the sites and activities covered by the certification mark; and
- the ISO 9001 certificate is issued by a certifying body accredited by the COFRAC or by a member of the EA (European cooperation for Accreditation) or by a member of the IAF (International Accreditation Forum) - see signatories on the COFRAC website www.cofrac.fr; and
- the last ISO 9001 audit report from the body is forwarded to CSTB prior to the body’s audit or is examined during the body’s audit.

Table 1 (Applicable Requirements)

§ ISO 9001 : 2015	EXIGENCES	PREUVES MINIMALES ATTENDUES	APPLICABLES (NA = non applicable)
5. Leadership			
5.3.	Organisational roles, responsibilities and authorities	* Organisation chart * Description of responsibilities and authorities (examples: organisation chart, job sheets, etc.) * Person appointed to be responsible for organising and effectively implementing the production system	■ <To be used for persons responsible for inspection or with a direct impact on critical points in making the product.> All items except: * ISO 9001 V15: §5.3 c,d
7.4.	Communication		NA
7. Support			
7.1.4.	Environment for process implementation	Evidence of maintenance of the work environment. Examples: storage of a product and its components to protect them from bad weather, adapted ambient conditions, etc.	■ <To be considered for processes related to the products/services to be provided>
7.1.5.	Resources for monitoring and measuring	* List of the inspection, measuring and test equipment used on the product/service production site and/or in the laboratory, * Identification of equipment used to determine its validity, * Verification or calibration schedule for equipment that has an impact on the validity of the results (in particular, the equipment used to perform tests on certified characteristics), * Evidence of the verification and/or calibration operations (e.g. equipment data sheet, verification or calibration report, etc.), * Evidence of connection to national or international standards (where possible), * Validation of software used to monitor and measure the specified requirements, where appropriate.	■ <To be considered for processes related to the products/services to be provided>
7.2.	Competencies	* Compliance with test methods and inspection provisions. * Actions planned to acquire the necessary competencies (training, tutoring, etc.), where appropriate.	■ <To be used for persons responsible for inspection or with a direct impact on critical points in making the product.>

§ ISO 9001 : 2015	EXIGENCES	PREUVES MINIMALES ATTENDUES	APPLICABLES (NA = non applicable)
7.5.	Documented information	* List of internal and external documented information. Examples: Procedures, operating methods, test methods, inspection examination, quality records, * Evidence of control of internal and external documents Example: Availability of the applicable version of the test method, the reference system, the inspection provisions, etc.	■ <To be considered for processes related to the products/services to be provided> Note: Quality Manuals are no longer required.
8. Carrying out operational activities			
8.4.	Control of processes, products and services from external providers	* List of service providers * Contract/order defining the requirements of the applicant/holder of the certification * Evidence of the verification of raw materials, components ***(1)***, services purchased * Evidence of the verification of subcontracting conditions: transport, handling, tests ***(2)***, etc.	■ <To be used for raw materials, bought-in components and external services affecting the quality of the product/service> <u>External providers:</u> * supplier of raw materials, components, services integrated into the product/service * subcontractor of external services (ex: tests, handling, transport, etc.) *<u>(*) Specific case of applicants/holders subcontracting part of their production</u>* *CSTB audits the subcontractors (as provided for in the certification reference system)* All items except: * ISO 9001 v15: §8.4.1.
8.5.1.	Control of production and provision of services	* Information defining the characteristics of products and services. Examples: product plan / description of the service, etc. * Information defining the activities to be carried out and the results to be obtained. Examples: operating procedure(s), working instructions, test method(s), certification reference system (expected performance)	■

§ ISO 9001 : 2015	EXIGENCES	PREUVES MINIMALES ATTENDUES	APPLICABLES (NA = non applicable)
		* Monitoring and measurement activities. Examples: monitoring plan, inspection procedures and instructions, test method(s), etc. * Conservation of documented information proving the conformity of products/services with the acceptance criteria *(same as §8.2.4. ISO 9001 v08 and §8.6. ISO 9001 v14)*	
8.5.2.	Identification and traceability	* Identification/Marking of the product in accordance with the requirements in the Certification reference system *Marking of commercial documents in accordance with the requirements of this Certification Reference System.	■ <To be considered in all cases for identification (and for traceability, where relevant)>
8.5.4.	Preservation	Verifying that the product is preserved throughout the production line (identification, handling, storage, packaging, transport, etc.)	■
8.5.6.	Control of changes *(in production/provision of service)*	* Evidence of control of modifications in the manufacturing process/provision of service, in particular the impact of modifications on the product's performance ***(3)***: - review of modifications, - person authorising the modification and all necessary actions.	■
8.6.	Release of products and services	* Provisions for the inspection of products/services; records of inspection results and of conformity with the acceptance criteria ***(4)*** * Names of the persons having authorised release of the finished products/services	■
8.7.	Control of non-conforming outputs	* Provisions for processing non-conformities, including customer complaints, and implementation of those provisions ***(5)*** * No dispensation granted as regards the performance of a certified characteristic	■
9. Evaluation of performances			
9.3.	Management review	Management review report	■
10. Improvement			
10.2.	Non-conformity and corrective action	* Implementation of corrective actions to deal with non-conformities pertaining to the certified product, including customer complaints ***(6)*** * Effectiveness of the actions taken.	■

(1) Inspection of product components

Applicants/holders are required to carry out an inspection of all components used in the manufacture of their certified products upon reception, and in all cases prior to use.

The internal "reception" inspection established by the applicant/holder shall cover:

- inspection methods for products upon receipt that assess their compliance and/or regularity in relation to the expected characteristics,
- including, as applicable, rules for collecting product samples.

This inspection shall cover all control actions carried out by the supplier. For example: compliance sheet issued after a systematic pre-delivery inspection, which the applicant/holder requires the supplier to perform; supplier certified according to Standard NF EN ISO 9001 for relevant products or certified supplies; etc.

(2) Subcontracting tests

Applicants/holders may subcontract the tests to an external laboratory, on the condition that the subcontracting relationship is governed by a contract or an order. Subcontracting is only permitted if the following conditions are met:

- subcontracting the tests does not result in a disruption to the production process (due to waiting time for results, for example);
- the conditions for subcontracting the tests are formalised in the contract or order and must define the applicable test method, testing frequency, requested waiting times for results, notification of results in writing, the procedure in case of non-compliant results and the type of equipment used;
- the subcontractors' laboratory where the test is carried out must be accredited according to standard NF EN ISO/CEI 17025, otherwise the party requesting the test (holder of the certification mark) must ensure that the equipment used is compliant (calibration, test configuration, etc.) and the staff carrying out the test have the necessary skills.

(3) Approach for assessment of the additional requirement in Standard ISO 9001 version 2015 relative to Standard ISO 9001 version 2008

Within the framework of the Product Certification audit, the only additional requirement referred to concerns the requirements of §8.5.6 in Table 1: "Control of changes in production/provision of service".

(4) Inspection during production and on finished products

The applicant/holder shall possess the methods necessary for the checks and tests defined by the standards, reference documents and additional specifications mentioned in Paragraph 2.2 of this reference system. The applicants/holders agree to carry out reliable and regular verification of their production:

- inspection of product components,
- checks during production,
- verifications and tests carried out on finished products.

<u>During production</u>

Inspection during production shall be arranged by the applicant/holder. This applies to the product in its intermediate states at the main production stages, as well as compliance with the setting instructions for the production tools (production machines, equipment).

Inspection instructions shall be formalised and made available to the operators. The results of the inspections are recorded upon each inspection. If the inspection results indicate that the product does not meet the requirements of this Certification Reference System, the necessary corrective actions must be implemented immediately.

On finished products

Applicants/holders are required to verify the characteristics of the finished products before delivery and are responsible for arranging this inspection. The inspections and tests of finished products manufactured by the applicant/holder are carried out according to the standards and additional specifications mentioned in this certification reference system.

The various characteristics to be inspected are measured using the operating procedures specified in the reference standards cited in paragraph 2.2 of this certification reference system.

Inspections of finished products are carried out by the applicants/holders themselves in their own manufacturing plant.

Applicants/holders shall take random samples at the end of the production line and carry out the checks and tests on these samples. The samples taken must be representative of the various dimensions of the products covered by this certification reference system.

The method for collecting the samples required for testing must be clearly specified in the applicant's/holder's quality plan and must not be left to the sole discretion of the operator.

Applicants/holders shall record the results of the previous inspections. Should the results of the normal inspections prove to be insufficient, these latter shall be reinforced and the causes of failure shall be detected in order to remedy this by supplementing the production inspections, where appropriate.

§5 of Technical Document 10-01 provides additional clarifications regarding checks performed by the manufacturer.

(5) Provisions for handling non-conformities

These include:

- an analysis to identify the cause of the anomaly,
- an analysis to determine the impact of the anomaly on production since the previous inspection,
- management to ensure that the implementation of the corrective actions is effective,
- and in the unlikely event that non-compliant products are delivered to a customer, the latter shall be notified immediately so that appropriate measures can be taken.

(6) Customer complaints

The customer complaint record is audited; to allow this, holders must retain:

- a record of all complaints and appeals pertaining to products covered by this certification reference system;

– a record of the corrective measures adopted, in particular when complaints have revealed a manufacturing anomaly.

The holder shall be able to show the auditor extracts from these records of complaints involving products covered by this certification reference system.

2.5 Marking – General provisions

Marking is an integral part of product certification.

Beyond the identification of a certified product and its traceability, the marking of a product with the logo of the collective certification mark ensures optimal protection for users and protects holders from wrongful use and counterfeits.

It is not, under any circumstances, permitted to refer to the QB mark without having obtained the right to use said certification mark or to submit counterfeit products for certification.

The reproduction or use of CSTB logos is only authorised through strict application of the QB graphic charter and with the support of the right of use, authorised by a valid certificate or with the prior consent of CSTB.

Moreover, mentioning the main certified characteristics is intended to make the technical characteristics covered by the mark transparent to consumers and users. It thereby serves to emphasise the certification and its content.

The purpose of the marking rules described below is to guide the holder in complying with Regulatory Requirements and Certification Requirements. The General Requirements of the QB mark define the conditions of use, the conditions of validity of the right to use the QB mark and the procedures for penalties in the case of wrongful use.

Without prejudice to the penalties provided for in the QB mark General Requirements, any incorrect declaration of the certified characteristics and any fraudulent use of the QB logo will result in legal action against the holder for deceptive marketing.

2.5.1 THE QB LOGO

The QB logo will ensure the identification of all certified products throughout the transition period and shall assure this identification beyond this transition period.

The holder undertakes to respect the graphic charter of the QB mark. The QB logo and its graphic charter are available from the application administrator.

The certified product must have a distinct designation and identification from non-certified products.

The holder shall not use the QB logo except to single out certified products without there being any risk of confusion whatsoever with other products, especially non-certified products.

To prevent any confusion between certified products and non-certified products, applicants/holders must ensure that the trade names used are not identical or similar (for example: “Prod+” for a certified product and “Prod” for a non-certified product).

It is recommended that the holder remit to CSTB in advance any marking projects or material upon which the certification mark appears.

If the product cannot be marked for technical reasons, CSTB must be contacted. QB may be marked alone and in full.

2.5.2 THE MARKING PROCEDURES

This section describes both the terms for affixing the QB logo and the marking of certified characteristics.

The requirements of article R 433-2 of the Consumer Code stipulate that marking must comply with the provisions outlined in the following paragraphs and, whenever possible, include the following information :

Connection hoses

http://evaluation.cstb.fr

List of certified characteristics defined in the Technical Document DT 10-01 §3.1

It is recommended that consumers be informed about the primary reasons for and advantages of using a certified product. The certified characteristics must appear on at least one of the materials (product, packaging or communication media).

Marking a product with the QB logo not only identifies it as a certified product and makes it traceable but also makes the mark more defendable and facilitates tracking and prosecution for illegal copies.

2.5.2.1 Marking of certified products

All certified products manufactured after the date indicated on the approval of the right to use the QB mark (via an admission or extension procedure) and which comply with the requirements of this Certification Reference System, must be marked, at a minimum, with the mark logo (unless not possible for technical reasons).

Specific provisions for marking certified products are defined in §4 of Technical Document 10-01.

***NOTE*: If there is a code for identifying the product, the code must be given to CSTB.**

2.5.2.2 Marking on the packaging of the certified product or on the product's accompanying document(s), if applicable

All packaging for certified products or accompanying documents must include all the marking components defined in paragraph 2.5.2.: mark logo, name of the application, reference to the website and list of certified characteristics if possible.

Additional provisions are set out in §4 of Technical Document 10-01.

2.5.2.3 Marking on communication media and documentation (Technical or commercial documents, posters, advertising, websites, etc.)

The generic use of the QB mark through its reproduction in the holders' correspondence is forbidden, unless the holder has the right to use the QB mark for all of its products.

References to the QB mark in communication material or documentation must be made in a way that does not allow for any confusion between certified products and other products. They shall include all the marking components defined in paragraph 2.5.2: logo of the mark, name of the application, reference to the website and, if possible, the list of certified characteristics.

Additional provisions are set out in §4 of Technical Document 10-01.

For the French market, this information must be provided in French (Law No. 94-665 of 4 August 1994 regarding the use of the French language). If necessary, the information can also be given in one or more other languages.

For the proper interpretation of this paragraph, the holder should be advised to submit to CSTB, in advance, all communication materials and documentation where the certification mark is expected to be used.

The pictograms defined in DT 10-02: "Connection hoses: Pictograms" are used to optimize the visual communication of the characteristics certified on all the certificates of the products concerned.

The pictograms can only be used in addition to the QB certification mark, in accordance with the procedures defined in Technical Document DT 10-02.

2.6 Conditions for terminating marking or for removing the mark in the case of suspension, withdrawal or abandonment

If any product is accidentally not in conformity, the product and its packaging shall not be marked with the QB logo or the logo must be crossed out or concealed to prevent any risk of confusion.

Planning retroactive removal of the mark and possible withdrawal from shops;

Validating these quantities/batch numbers/lead times;

Defining the means for checking removal of the mark (customer commitment, etc.);

Estimating the risks of improper use of the mark, for example:
- certification proof or otherwise of compliance with the regulations
- certification on products/services at risk
- very competitive market with self-monitoring

Depending on these risks, possibly triggering an on-site inspection (company or shop) paid for via the usage right or informing public authorities.

Part 3
Certification Process

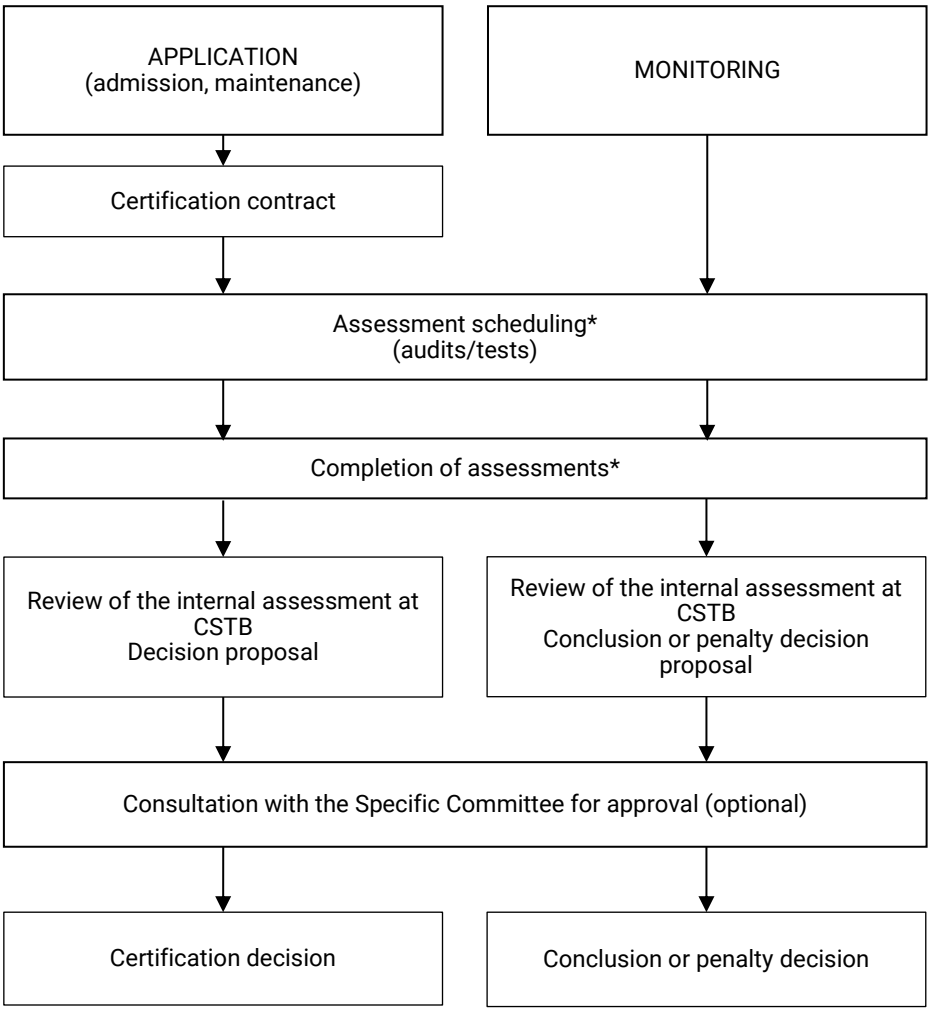
3.1 General

– Definition of the applicant (see Part 5);

– Definitions of the various types of applications (admission application / complementary admission application / extension application / maintenance application):

  - An application for admission is made by an applicant not having the right to use the QB mark for the Connection hoses application.
    It corresponds to a product (or a range of products) originating from a specific design process and/or manufacturing unit and/or a specific sales location, defined by a trademark and/or with a specific reference to the product submitted and the technical characteristics ;
  - A complementary admission and/or extension application is made by a holder and applies to a new/modified product at the same manufacturing site ;
  - A maintenance application is made by a holder and applies to a QB-certified product intended to be sold under another trademark and/or with a specific reference to the product without any modification to the certified characteristics (commercial extension) ;
    A new application for admission for a product (or a range of products) following the withdrawal of the right to use the QB mark as a result of a sanction in the event of deceptive marketing practices in application of Articles L 121-2 to L121-5 from the French Consumer Code.

3.2 Process for handling certification applications



(*) If the product subject to a certification application benefits from a Technical Appraisal

In its product certification admission procedure, CSTB recognises the audit and test reports prepared as part of the Technical Appraisal examination.

The conditions for obtaining certification and the certification follow-up procedure are described in Parts 1 and 2 of the Appendix to this certification reference system.

3.3 Audits

3.3.1 ADMISSION AUDITS

The purpose of audits is to ensure that the measures defined and implemented by the applicant in the manufacturing unit meet the requirements in Part 2 of this certification reference system and technical document TD 10 01.

This entails checking, before admission, the existence and effectiveness of the quality-related measures that have been taken, as well as the product inspections performed by the applicant. These are the admission audits conducted by the auditor.

If the applicant subcontracts part of its production, CSTB reserves the right to carry out an audit on the premises of the subcontractor(s) based on this certification reference system.

All the resources (premises, installations, equipment) required by the auditor to carry out their mission shall be placed at their disposal free of charge, along with persons qualified to implement them.

In the event of any dangerous situation as per the certifying body's safety requirements, the auditor reserves the right to withdraw.

An audit report shall be prepared and addressed to the applicant.

(*) If the product subject to a certification application benefits from a Technical Appraisal

In its product certification admission procedure, CSTB recognises the audit completed as part of the Technical Appraisal examination.

3.3.2 FOLLOW-UP AUDITS

Follow-up audits are intended to check that the provisions defined are still being maintained following admission.

1- VERIFICATION OF THE TECHNICAL FILE

The information in the technical file are examined and verified.

Verification of the quality assurance system

Follow-up audits are intended to check that the provisions defined are still being maintained following admission.

Verification of the quality assurance system covers the various points provided in Appendix 1 of the QB Certificate General Requirements for building products.

For companies whose quality assurance system is certified by a recognised body, verification of the quality system can be simplified and limited to the following points:

- Inspection operations,
- Personnel, installations and equipment,
- Traceability,
- Tests,
- Recording inspection results,
- Customer complaints.

2- INSPECTION OPERATIONS

The auditor carries out at least the following audits, taking account of the information collected during the previous audit, the results of the last checks and any remarks made by the Specific Committee:

- verification of the actual application of the corrective measures announced as a result of any observations made during the previous audit;
- verification of compliance with the holder's quality requirements as set out in this certification reference system;
- verification of the self-inspection records since the last audit, statistically for at least one certified product and for the products sampled for the mark laboratory's tests;
- verification of the commercial documents: the audited sites must present or send the commercial documents (catalogues, website, etc.) to CSTB;
- the audited sites must keep the commercial documents available (catalogues, website, etc.). Failure to comply with this requirement will be considered a deviation;
- verification of changes to the characteristics of the certified products.

An audit report is prepared and given to the holder.

Inspections on the product or component

- Verification of the appearance, colour, etc.
- Inspection of compliance of the marking
- Verification that the products satisfy the regulations relative to the materials and products used in water distribution installations intended for human consumption.

The audit normally lasts 1 day(s) per manufacturing unit.

The audit duration may be adapted according to the risk: level of development of the quality system, organisation of the company (process, laboratory, etc.).

Normal monitoring:

The normal frequency is 2 annual audits per manufacturing unit benefiting from the right to use the QB mark.

Heightened monitoring:

In the event of any violation of the requirements in this certification reference system, or if the Specific Committee makes a justified request, a heightened monitoring procedure can be initiated for a specified period. This monitoring can be adjusted up to double the normal frequency of audits, with or without increased inspections by the holder and sampling for test purposes in the manufacturing unit and/or in the distribution network.

In addition, any critical deviation observed during an audit, whether combined with a sanction or not, may justify a transition to heightened monitoring. The latter will be initiated by CSTB, possibly after recommendation from the Specific Committee, for a specified period, and may or may not include stricter inspections by the holder and sampling for test purposes.

Reduced monitoring:

The applicable verification regime for connection hoses is the half-yearly regime for the 12 months following admission, the simplified half-yearly regime.

Components and systems

Two verification regimes are provided for, the arrangements of which are specified in the following table.

Verification regime	Number of audits per year	Number of series of tests at the CSTB laboratory per year
Half-yearly	2	2
Simplified **half-yearly**	1	2

The Technical Document defines the verification regime for each family and type of component or system.

In the case of simplified annual or half-yearly regimes:

CSTB will ensure that the interval between two inspections is not less than 9 months and not more than 15 months,

3.4 Sampling

Samples are taken by the auditor for the purpose of conducting tests in the CSTB laboratories as provided for in the Technical Appraisal or positive assessment of suitability for use and allowing the certification of the characteristics indicated in the Technical Document relative to the different product families as defined in Part 1.

In the following cases, on-site sampling during the audit can be replaced by sampling by email or post:

- simplified half-yearly verification regime for the half-year which is not the subject of an audit,
- if the audit is carried out late in the half year or year,
- for better planning of test campaigns at the CSTB laboratory.

In this case, the samples are sent to CSTB by the holder by request of the relevant CSTB manager or auditor.

The samples are taken so as to check the entire range on offer by rotation.

The samples taken during an audit must be shipped to the Mark laboratory within 1 month as from the date of the audit or the date of the sample by email.

In the event of a stock-out concerning the types or DN selected by the auditor*, or the manager in the case of sampling by email or post, the manufacturer undertakes to send the samples to CSTB within the time-frame set with the auditor or manager.

If this deadline is not respected, the manufacturer must contact the manager/auditor to inform him/her.

Failure to comply with these measures may lead to a penalty and/or additional management fees as provided for in Part 3 of the administrative appendix, §3.7.

*In this case, by request of the auditor, the manufacturer includes a copy of the inspection sheet produced for the batch in question with its dispatch.

The minimum sample quantities to be taken according to the product families are given in §7 of the Technical Document DT 10-01, relative to the various product families as defined in Part 1.

When production has been carried out since the last sampling, but no sample is available at the factory, a deviation is notified. If in the following semester, no sample is available while there has been a new production, the certificate is suspended.

Without production for 3 consecutive semesters, the certificate is suspended.

In this case, the requirements of §2.6 apply

3.5 Tests

3.5.1 ADMISSION TESTS

The tests are carried out in accordance with the standards and complementary specifications set out in Part 2 of this certification reference system and Technical Document TD 10 01.

A test report is prepared and remitted to the applicant.

The tests are carried out under the responsibility of the mark's laboratory(ies).

(*) If the product subject to a certification application benefits from a Technical Appraisal

In its product certification admission procedure, CSTB recognises the test reports completed as part of the Technical Appraisal examination.

3.5.2 TESTS ON THE CERTIFIED PRODUCT (FOLLOW-UP)

The tests are carried out in accordance with the standards and complementary specifications set out in Part 2 of the certification reference system and Technical Document TD 10-01.

For the purpose of inter-comparison tests between the manufacturer's laboratory and the CSTB laboratory, the inspector may carry out tests at the factory or have them carried out in his/her presence.

In the event of an additional audit, the tests required by the detected non-conformity shall be conducted by the mark's laboratory.

A test report is prepared and remitted to the holder.

Those tests on certified characteristics are carried out in a laboratory of the mark.

Part 4
Stakeholders

The organisations involved in the procedure for granting the right to use the QB mark and in monitoring the certified products are specified below.

4.1 The certifying body

The QB mark is the property of the CSTB, which is a certifying body. CSTB specifies the governance rules and the operating conditions applicable to the marks. Furthermore, it takes responsibility for the application of the reference system and the decisions made in this context.

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4.2 Auditing bodies

The audit functions for the manufacturing unit and, as the case may be, on the utilisation premises, are carried out by the following body(-ies), designated the audit body(-ies):

Centre Scientifique et Technique du Bâtiment (CSTB)
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🗐: +33 (0)1 64 68 84 44

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The auditors have the right of inspection on the premises of any applicant or holder in the context of their mandate.

4.3 Test bodies

Whenever the quality assurance operations carried out within the framework of QB mark usage include tests on products, such tests are carried out at CSTB's request by the following laboratory, referred to as the laboratory of the mark:

Centre Scientifique et Technique du Bâtiment (CSTB)
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11, rue Henri Picherit
BP 82341
44323 NANTES Cedex 3

Tel : (33) 02 40 37 20 78
Fax : (33) 02 40 37 20 40

http://evaluation.cstb.fr/

4.4 Subcontracting

The different functions described in Paragraphs 4.2 and 4.3 may be carried out, after an opinion from the Specific Committee where appropriate, by other auditing bodies or recognised laboratories with which CSTB has established a sub-contracting contract.

The client is informed of the subcontracting of a service when the assessment activity programme is established. If necessary, the client is formally informed before any activity is started.

SUBCONTRACTED AUDIT BODIES (specific measures)

The following requirements must be satisfied for subcontracted audit bodies:

- External auditors are subject to the same qualification procedure as CSTB internal auditors.

- Subcontracted audits may not exceed 25% of the total volume of audits performed as part of this certification.

- Only sites admitted to the mark for a full 3 years may be audited by the body subcontracted by CSTB.

- The measures concerning the audit body subcontracted by CSTB may be reconsidered each year and ruled on in the assessment committee report.

- An audit cannot be carried out more than 3 times in succession by the subcontracted audit body.

4.5 Specific Committee

An impartial consultative authority is established called the Specific Committee, the Secretariat of which is provided by CSTB.

The Specific Committee is requested to give its opinion on the following:

– the initial draft of the certification reference system or the revised version, as specified in the Consumer Code,

– the preparation of advertising and promotional activities that fall within its competence,

– the selection of bodies participating in the certification process and the examination and implementation of recognition agreements.

It can be consulted about any other question pertaining to the application concerned, and in particular about any interpretation of the certification reference system with a view to taking decisions regarding dossiers in accordance with the certification reference systems and at CSTB's request.

The composition of the specific Committee is established to respect representation between the different parties concerned, which does not lead to any of them dominating and which guarantees their relevance.

The **"Water cycle"** Specific Committee common to all the different QB applications related to the conveyance of water in the building has been set up. The applications covered by this Committee are:

"Water distribution or drainage pipes" - QB 08

- "Connection hoses" - QB 10

The composition of the specific Committee is established to respect representation between the different parties concerned, which does not lead to any of them dominating and which guarantees their relevance.

It is composed as specified below:

- A Chairperson chosen from the members of the colleges defined below;
- A Vice President: a representative of CSTB.
- Manufacturers College (Holders): from 4 to 7 representatives;
- Users/Specifiers College: from 3 to 6 representatives;
- Technical and Administrative Bodies' College: from 2 to 4 representatives.

The representatives of audit bodies and mark laboratories have the right to participate in the meetings of the Specific Committee.

The Specific Committee issues decision notifications and its members may not receive any remuneration for the functions entrusted to them.

Members are appointed for a term of three years. This appointment is renewable by tacit agreement for further successive periods of one year, not exceeding three renewals, unless notice of termination is given without due cause by CSTB or the member, by registered letter with acknowledgement of receipt, three months prior to the scheduled end of the ongoing period at the time of renewal.

The Specific Committee's Chairperson can change every year.

The members of the Specific Committee formally undertake to maintain the confidentiality of information, particularly personal data, disclosed to them.

When appropriate, the Specific Committee may decide to set up working groups or subcommittees and define their missions and responsibilities. The composition of the working groups must be validated by the Specific Committee. The working groups are composed of at least one representative of the "Manufacturers" College, one representative of the "Users/Advisors" College and one representative of CSTB. It may call upon professionals, external individuals or holders that are not members of the Specific Committee.

Part 5
Glossary

Admissibility: Study of a dossier enabling the application to be examined. Admissibility relates to the administrative and technical parts of the dossier.

Admission: Application through which applicants request, for the first time, the right to use the QB mark for a product; they declare that they understand this certification reference system and undertake to respect it.

Applicant/Holder: Legal entity that controls and/or is responsible for respecting all the requirements defined in the QB mark certification reference system. These requirements cover at least the following steps : design, manufacture, assembly, quality control, marking, packing and market release and specify the critical points in the different steps.

Any person who modifies the container and/or content of the product (for example, packets or loose cement distribution) becomes an applicant and may not be considered as a retailer. Therefore, this person must make a usage right admission application.

Audit: See Standard NF EN ISO 9001.

Certification reference system: Technical document defining the characteristics that a product, a service or a combination of products and services shall have and the methods for verifying compliance with these characteristics, as well as the methods for communicating about the certification (including the content of the information).

Certification scheme: Specific certification system for a defined category of products to which the same specified requirements and specific rules and procedures apply.

Distributor: Body that distributes the applicant's/holder's products and that does not modify the conformity of the product to the requirements of the QB mark.
Distributors may be of the following types:

- distributors who distribute the product under the holder's trademark. In that case, no action is to be taken for the QB mark.
- distributors who distribute the product after changing the trademark. The applicant/holder shall make an application for maintenance of right of use.

If the distributor does not wish to have explicit reference to the manufacturer, then an application for admission to the QB mark shall be made by the distributor. In that case, the manufacturing plant is not mentioned on the certificate.

Depending on the various operations carried out by the applicant/holder or the distributor, the sites audited and the audit duration within the framework of initial certification or monitoring are to be defined case by case.

Granting of the right to use the QB mark / Maintenance of right to use :	This is a request made by a distributor to market a product certified under another trade name. The term "maintenance of right to use" can also be used to refer to it.
Holder:	Legal entity that controls and/or is responsible for respecting all the requirements defined in the certification rules (reference system) for the QB mark - Connection hoses. These requirements cover at least the following steps : design, manufacture, assembly, quality control, marking, packing and market release and specify the critical points of the different steps.
Maintenance /Commercial extension	Application by which a holder requests the maintenance of their right to use the QB mark for a product intended to be marketed by a distributor under a different mark and/or trade reference, but without modifying the certified characteristics.
Observation:	Remark aiming to draw a holder's attention to a minor non-conformity so as to avoid any deviation that might result in a warning.
Product:	Element resulting from a process or manufacturing process, coming from a specific manufacturing unit, defined by a specific trademark and/or trade reference, with specific technical characteristics.
Renewal:	Application through which the holders request the renewal of their right to use the QB mark before the end of validity of their QB certificate.
Representative:	Public body or individual based in the EEA who represents the applicant/holder outside the EEA and has a written mandate from them signifying that they may act on their behalf and specifying under which context (missions and associated responsibilities and financial aspects, complaints, contact for the certifying body, among others) in the QB mark certification process according to the provisions in the certification reference system. The representative may be the distributor or importer; their different functions are clearly identified. The concept of a representative is indispensable for all applicants outside the EEA. For certain markets, the concept of a distributor may not be relevant.
Subcontracting:	Company that carries out some of the production steps for the certified products, under the control of the QB mark holder.

Suspension:	Decision communicated by CSTB that temporarily and for a set period of time cancels the authorisation to use the QB mark. The suspension may be issued as a sanction or in the event that the right to use the mark is temporarily abandoned by the holder. Suspension is accompanied by a prohibition on affixing the mark to future productions. It shall be for a maximum 6-month period, renewable once, following which a withdrawal of the right to use the QB mark shall be announced if no action has been taken by the holder. Sanction notifications which affect the right of use (suspension/withdrawal) are signed by CSTB Management. Examples of cases of suspension at the request of CSTB: ACS expired, change of raw material without first informing CSTB, total or partial transfer of the production unit without first informing CSTB, abuse of the right of use of the QB mark, non-compliant tests, absence of samples available during sampling, etc..
Warning:	Non-suspensive sanction declared by CSTB. The product is still marked, but the holder must correct the observed deviations within a defined time period. When a warning is accompanied by an increase in the number of inspections, the actions must be initiated within a specified time period. The warning may only be renewed once.
Withdrawal of the right of use:	Decision communicated by the CSTB to cancel the right to use the QB mark. A withdrawal may be decided on as a sanction or in the case of abandonment of the QB mark usage right by the holder.