



Step-by-Step to AC478

You have a documented management system¹, you are well-run Assembler committed to safety, training and education. Your procedures include the following:

- site-specific project plans
- daily jobsite checklists
- JSA's (Job Safety Analysis)
- Site layout plan
- Quality control plan
- narratives regarding the erection plan
- standards and documentation regarding the qualifications of personnel

Well, guess what you are ready to seek Accreditation! The first thing you need to do is contract with an accredited Inspection Agency. Look to the IAS web-site for a list of companies. This contract is between you and the Agency; it is completely independent of the MBCEA. Expect to pay an annual fee (approx. \$1000) and a site inspection fee (approx. \$1200). The agency you select will verify your management system meets the AC478 standard and will ultimately attest to the IAS that your company is ready. They will prepare a cross reference matrix with you and sign a letter of sufficient compliance (a statement similar to this: *I _____, have reviewed the "Insert Company Name" Management System with respect to IAS AC478 and attest that it is sufficient to allow scheduling of an on-site joint assessment with IAS. I also confirm that the current cross-reference matrix addresses the general requirements of AC478.*)

After your accredited Inspection Agency and you are comfortable that you are ready, you need to formally apply to the IAS. The application form is available on-line. You will send your completed application, documented management system, cross reference matrix and letter of sufficient compliance, along with the applicable fee to the IAS. Fees have been structured based on number of field personnel. If you regularly have fewer than 16 guys in the field you will pay one rate, 17-32 is a slightly higher rate and greater than 32 is slightly more. The current structure assumes a full on site assessment in Years 1, 2, 4, 6, 8, etc. This rate is higher due to the travel involved for an on-site inspection. After the first two years, the IAS will only conduct a desk assessment - meaning they will review your paperwork only; they will not come on-site. As a result, the fee for years 3,5, 7, etc. is less.

After the IAS has received and reviewed your application, they will issue a file number and assign an assessor to ensure sufficient documentation is present. You may be contacted for clarification of your documented management system, if necessary. The IAS will then agree a date for the on-site assessment.

¹ We know this is the one document that the typical Assembler does not have, but the MBCEA has a draft document that you can tailor and make your own! It is in the Members Only Area of the MBCEA website.

At the meeting, an Assessor will verify objective evidence that the plans you submitted have been effectively implemented (see article below on embracing your management system). Additionally, IAS assessors will observe the inspection agency and their method of determining compliance of your procedures and the implementation of, in regard to the requirements of AC478.

At the end of the meeting you will be given a report of their findings. You may need to improve a few areas or present more evidence. Ultimately, an accreditation certificate will be issued to you and posted on the IAS web-site. Then, and only then, can you declare that you are an Accredited Assembler of Metal Building Systems. You can begin to market yourself as having achieved this designation and can bid jobs that require this.

For more information: www.iasonline.org

P.S. Everything you need is in the Members Only Area of the MBCEA website.