

Compliance FAQs: Fastener Quality Act (FQA)

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What is the Fastener Quality Act?

The enactment of the Fastener Quality Act (FQA) was the result of a number of high-profile fastener failures in the 1980s. An investigation by the Congressional Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations found alarming shortcomings in industry standards, quality control and safety inspection. In addition they found that many overseas suppliers were supplying counterfeit safety certificates and passing off cheap parts as higher quality.

On November 16, 1990, the FQA, Public Law 101-592, was signed by President George H.W. Bush. The FQA was enacted to

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On November 16, 1990, the FQA, Public Law 101-592, was signed by President George H.W. Bush. The FQA was enacted to protect public safety by: (1) requiring that certain fasteners sold in commerce conform to the specifications to which they are represented to be manufactured, (2) providing for accreditation of laboratories engaged in fastener testing, and (3) requiring inspection, testing and certification in accordance with standardized methods.

The FQA makes it a violation to knowingly falsify or misrepresent the record of conformance for the lot of fasteners; the identification, characteristics, properties, mechanical or performance marks, chemistry, or strength of the lot of fasteners; or the manufacturer's insignia.

Since its enactment, the FQA has been amended three times (Pub L. 104-113, Pub L. 105-234, and Pub L. 106-34) to further clarify and define the requirements of the original FQA.

The law and amendments has been codified at [15 USC 5401 et. seq.](#). Regulations for implementing the FQA can be found at [15 CFR 280.](#)

What types of fasteners are covered under the Act?

Fasteners covered under the FQA are defined as limited to metallic bolts, nuts, screws and studs (having a nominal diameter of 6 millimeters/0.25 inch or greater) or direct tension-indicating washers that are through-hardened (or meet a consensus standard that calls for through-hardening) and manufactured to standards and specifications of consensus standards organizations or government agencies that require a grade mark.

Many fasteners are exempted from coverage including those:

- that are part of an assembly;
- that are ordered for use as a spare, substitute, service or replacement part unless that part is in a package containing more than 75 of any such part at the time of sale or that part is contained in an assembly kit produced and marked as ASTM A 307 Grade A;
- produced in accordance with the ASTM F 432 standard;
- specifically manufactured for an aircraft if the quality is approved by the Federal Aviation Administration or by a foreign airworthiness authority;
- manufactured in accordance with the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) 9000, 9001, 9002, or TS16949: Quality system (QS) 9000; or other fastener quality assurance system defined by law; or

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- manufactured in accordance with the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) 9000, 9001, 9002, or TS16949; Quality system (QS) 9000; or other fastener quality assurance system defined by law; or
- manufactured to a proprietary standard.

To encourage the use of quality management systems such as QS 9000, fasteners are exempt from the FQA if they are manufactured in a facility using such a system. If an accreditation organization chooses not to follow ISO guidelines for registration and accreditation, they may submit documents to the NIST director that establish their own guidance/requirements for (1) accredited bodies to register manufacturing systems as meeting FQA quality assurance requirements; (2) accreditation of testing laboratories; and (3) approval of accreditation bodies to accredit testing labs.

What are the requirements of the FQA?

Testing to verify that a lot of fasteners conforms to the grade identification marking called for in the consensus standard or standards that the lot of fasteners has been manufactured must be done by an accredited laboratory.

A fastener is required by the applicable consensus standard(s) to bear an insignia identifying its manufacturer. The manufacturer must:

- Record the insignia with the [U.S. Patent and Trademark Office](#) (USPTO) prior to any sale or offer for sale of the fastener, and
- Apply the insignia to any fastener that is sold or offered for sale.

The insignia must be readable, and must be permanent.

The manufacturer must also create a record of conformance to demonstrate compliance to consensus standards or specifications.

What is required on the record of conformance?

The following are required to be on the record of conformance:

- The name and address of the manufacturer
- A description of the type of fastener
- The lot number

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- The lot number
- The nominal dimensions of the fastener (including diameter and length of bolts or screws), thread form, and class of fit
- The consensus standard or specifications to which the lot of fasteners has been manufactured, including the date, number, revision, and other information sufficient to identify the particular consensus standard or specifications being referenced
- The chemistry and grade of material
- The coating material and characteristics and the applicable consensus standard or specifications for such coating
- The results or a summary of results of any tests performed for the purpose of verifying that a lot of fasteners conforms to its grade identification marking or to the grade identification marking the lot of fasteners is represented to meet

How long must I retain the record of conformance?

Manufacturers and importers must retain the record of conformance for fasteners for 5 years, on paper or in photographic or electronic format in a manner that allows for verification of authenticity. Upon request of a distributor who has purchased a fastener, or a person who has purchased a fastener for use in the production of a commercial product, the manufacturer or importer of the fastener must make information in the record of conformance available to the requester.

How do I submit an application for recordal of an insignia?

Each manufacturer must submit by U.S. mail, fax, or email a [written application](#), along with the prescribed fee, for recordal of an insignia on the Fastener Insignia Register.

U.S. Mail:

Director, USPTO
ATTN: FQA
600 Dulany Street
MDE 10-A71
Alexandria, VA 22314-5793
Fax: 571.273.8950

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Alexandria, VA 22314-5793
Fax: 571.273.8950
Email: tmfqa@uspto.gov

Once the new application is received the manufacturer will receive a Certificate of Recordal depicting the mark, the owner's information, and the date of recordal from which renewals are to be calculated.

How long is the certificate valid?

Certificates of recordal remain in an active status for five years. The certificate holder must file the prescribed maintenance fee and the maintenance application within six months prior to the expiration of each five-year period running consecutively from the date of issuance.

If the maintenance application is not filed in time, the certificate of recordal will be designated inactive. However, such certificate may be designated active if the certificate holder files the prescribed maintenance fee and application and the additional surcharge within six months following the expiration of the certificate of recordal.

After 6 months following the expiration date, the holder must file a new application along with the prescribed fee and a copy of the expired certificate.

How do I report fraudulent fasteners?

To combat the manufacture, sales or distribution of fasteners that are fraudulent under the FQA, NIST has established a hotline for reporting alleged violations of the law. The FQA violation hotline can be reached at: 1-800-424-2980. This hotline is only for reporting alleged violations, not for obtaining general FQA information. Please [email](#) us for general FQA information.

How are laboratories that are engaged in fastener testing accredited?

Laboratories that perform fastener testing must be accredited. The amended law no longer requires the Commerce Department's National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) to approve organizations that accredit fastener testing laboratories. Instead there is a self-declaration process that must be followed to demonstrate that they meet requirements of applicable standards or equivalent.

Self-Declaration Forms:

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laboratories. Instead there is a self-declaration process that must be followed to demonstrate that they meet requirements of applicable standards or equivalent.

Self-Declaration Forms:

- [Self-Declaration form for Laboratory Accreditation Program](#) [See Section 3(1)(B) of Act]
- [Self-Declaration form for Quality System Registrar Accreditation Program](#) [See Section 3(7)(B)(iii)(I) of Act]
- [Approval Request form for publishers of document\(s\)](#) setting forth guidance or requirements as an alternative to ISO/IEC Guide 25, ISO/IEC 17025, ISO/IEC Guide 58, ISO/IEC Guide 61 or ISO/IEC Guide 62 [See Section 10 of Act]

Where can I find a list of laboratory accreditation organizations that meet the requirements of ISO/IEC Guide 58?

In addition to the NIST laboratory accreditation program ([NVLAP](#)) and pursuant to 15 U.S.C. 5411a and 15 CFR 280.102, the following laboratory accreditation organizations have affirmed to NIST that they meet the requirements of ISO/IEC Guide 58 (or another document approved by the Director) and shall continue to meet such requirements. This acknowledgment of the accreditor's affirmation should not be construed as NIST approval/recognition of the accreditation organization or their accredited laboratories.

Accreditation Commission for Conformity Assessment Bodies
Suite # 113-114, Level 1, Master Mind IV
Royal Palms, Aarey Colony
Goregaon East, Mumbai - 400 065, India
Contact: Dilip H. Deshmukh, Chief Executive Officer
Phone: +91-22-28794410
Fax: +91-22-28794411

American Association for Laboratory Accreditation
5301 Buckeystown Pike Suite 350
Frederick, MD 20704-8307 USA
Contact: Ms. Janneth A Ignacio, Program Manager
Phone:(301) 644-3248
Fax:(301) 662-2974

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Assured Calibration and Laboratory Accreditation Select Services
209 N. 14th Street Suite 502
Arlington, VA 22201 USA
Contact: Mr. Keith Greenaway, Executive Vice President
Phone: (703) 351-9139
Fax: (703) 351-9460

Chinese National Laboratory Accreditation
12F, 333, Section 2, Tunhua S. Road
Taipei 106 TAIWAN
Contact: Neng-Jong Lin, Chairman CNLA Council
Phone: +886 2 2737 5564
Fax: +886 2 2737 5769

Comite Francais D'Accreditation
37 re de Lyon
Paris 75012 FRANCE
Contact: Mr. Daniel Pierre, Director
Phone: +33 (0)1 44 68 82 20
Fax: +33 (0) 1 44 68 82 21

Deutsches Akkredieiterungssystem Prufwesen GmbH
Albert-Einstein-StaBe 16
Berlin D-12489 GERMANY
Contact: Rudolf Brinkmann, Diplom-Ingenieur
Phone: +49 30 670591 10
Fax: +49 30 670591 15

International Accreditation Service, Inc.
5360 Workman Mill Road
Whittier, CA 90601 USA
Contact: C. P. Ramani, P.E.
Phone: (562) 699-0541 ext. 2254

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Japan Accreditation Board for Conformity Assessment
Osaki West Bldg. 1st Fl
8-8 Osaki 2-Chome, Shinagawa-ku
Tokyo 141-0032 JAPAN
Contact: Mr. Yuichiro Isu, Executive Director
Phone: +81-3-5487-0240
Fax: +81-3-5487-2050

Korea Laboratory Accreditation Scheme
2 Joongag-dong, Kwacheon-shi
Kyunggi-do, 427-010 Republic of Korea
Contact: Doug-Young Joo, Administrator
Phone: +82 2 507 7649
Fax: +82 2 507 6875

Laboratory Accreditation Bureau
11627 Coldwater Rd., Suite 101
Fort Wayne, IN 46845 USA
Contact: R. Douglas Leonard, Operations Manager
Phone: (260) 637-2705
Fax: (260) 637-2791

Perry Johnson Laboratory Accreditation, Inc. (PJLA)
755 West Big Beaver Road, Suite 1325
Troy, MI 48064 USA
Contact: Tracy Szerszen
Phone: (248) 519-2603 or toll free 1-877-369-5227 (LABS)
Fax: (248) 247-3483

Standards Council of Canada
200 - 270 Albert Street
Ottawa, Ontario K1P6N7 CANADA
Contact: Gordon MacMillan

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Swiss Accreditation Service
Lindenweg 50
CH 3003 Bern-Wabern SWITZERLAND
Contact: Hauspeter Ischi
Phone: +41 31 323 35 11
Fax: +41 31 323 35 10

United Accreditation Foundation, Inc.
3510 Colmar
Norfolk, VA 23509 USA
Contact: Dr. Tejwant Chandi
Phone: +1-757-557-6795
Fax: +1-757-557-6795

United Kingdom Accreditation Service
21-47 High Street
Feltham, Middlesex
TW13 4UN UNITED KINGDOM
Contact: Mr. Larry Candler, Assessment Manager
Phone: +44 (0) 20 8917 8444
Fax: +44 (0) 20 8917 8500

Where can I find a quality system registrar accreditation organizations that meet the requirements of ISO/IEC Guide 61?

Pursuant to 15 U.S.C. 5411a and 15 CFR 280.102, the following quality system registrar accreditation organizations have affirmed to NIST that they meet the requirements of ISO/IEC Guide 61 (or another document approved by the Director) and shall continue to meet such requirements. This acknowledgment of the accreditor's affirmation should not be construed as NIST approval/recognition of the accreditation organization, their accredited registrars, or facilities with quality systems registered by accredited registrars.

Accreditation Commission for Conformity Assessment Bodies
Suite # 213-114, Level 1, Master Mind IV
Royal Palms, Aarey Colony
Goregaon East, Mumbai - 400 065, India
Contact: Dilip H. Deshmukh, Chief Executive Officer
Phone: +91-22-28794410
Fax: +91-22-28794411

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Chinese National Accreditation Board
7F, No. 20, Nanhai Road
Taipei 100 TAIWAN
Contact: Mr. Hung Ing Shyan, Chief Executive
Phone: +886-2-2397-1742
Fax: +886-2-2397-1744

Comite Francals D'Accreditation
37 re de Lyon
Paris 75012 FRANCE
Contact: Mr. Daniel Pierre, Director
Phone: +33 (0)1 44 68 82 20
Fax: +33 (0) 1 44 68 82 21

Deutsches Akkredileterungssystem Prufwesen GmbH
Albert-Einstein-Str. 16
Berlin D-12489 GERMANY
Contact: Rudolf Brinkmann, Diplom-Ingenieur
Phone: +49 30 670591 10
Fax: +49 30 670591 15

Swiss Accreditation Service
Lindenweg 50 CH 3003
Bern-Wabern SWITZERLAND
Contact: Hauspeter Ischi
Phone: +41 31 323 35 11
Fax: +41 31 323 35 10

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3510 Colmar
Norfolk, VA 23509 USA
Contact: Dr. Tejwant Chandi
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