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Frequently Asked Questions

IAS AC786 Accreditation Criteria for Approval of Fabricators of Container-Based Structures

Intermodal Shipping Containers are no longer used for just shipping and storage. They are used for pop-up shops, baseball dugouts, hotel rooms, housing, and more. The IAS Approval Program for Fabricators of Container-Based Structures provides verification that approved fabricators meet requirements as described in Chapter 17 of the IBC.

1. Does IAS AC786 accreditation help fulfill code requirements?

Yes. The program is based on the requirements in Chapter 17 of the International Building Code. Therefore, code officials can accept IAS accreditation as sufficient evidence that manufacturers are in compliance with those requirements of the IBC code, eliminating the need for redundant in-shop inspections. AC472 does not eliminate the need for inspections at the construction site during assembly of the building. The program is based on the IAS Accreditation Criteria for Inspection Programs for Manufacturers of Metal Building Systems (AC472).

2. With conventional construction, I receive a set of design calculations and drawings stamped by a registered professional engineer. Why isn't that adequate for container-base structures?

The IBC code (Chapter 17) does not reference container-base structures specifically, it references Special Inspection of Fabricated items. In conventional construction, the facility fabricating the parts should have special Inspections of the fabricated parts. AC786 is specific to container-base structures.

The only way to be assured that these functions are being properly integrated is to require that the supplier have AC786 accreditation for container-based structures.

3. Did code officials have a role in developing the IAS AC786 accreditation program?

Absolutely. The IAS AC786 accreditation criteria went through an open public hearing where it was subject to review, revision and final approval by code officials that make up the IAS Accreditation Committee. The criteria is also subject to continuous review and revision at periodic IAS accreditation committee meetings.

4. Why require an accredited fabricator?

IAS is a subsidiary of the International Code Council. Obtaining an AC786 accredited fabricator provides an extra level of assurance that the building supplier's quality and fabrication processes all conform to high-quality standards and are evaluated by a respected independent third party.

Other advantages, which expedite the building approval process, include: building officials that deem AC786-accredited fabricators of container-base structures satisfy the requirements that Special Inspections are not required per Chapter 17 of the International Building Code; elimination of additional inspections; cost savings to verify compliance of fabrication; and assurance that the fabricator's staff has a well-qualified management system in place.

5. What if I already have a program in place for approving container-based structures?

It is critical to satisfy the requirements of Special Inspection, and that Special Inspections are not required where the fabricator is Approved in accordance with section 1704.2.5.1. To complement and supplement your program, we recommend that you also require approvals for fabricators to be accredited to IAS AC786. This will help standardize assessments across jurisdictions around the country, which could result in new businesses coming to your community.

The authority having jurisdiction (AHJ) has the responsibility and final approval authority, The IAS AC786 was developed as a service to building jurisdictions to compliment and supplement your approval process with a transparent review of the fabricators documented quality system of procedures and processes and to attest their written documentation is effectively and consistently implemented throughout the fabricators facility. The IAS AC786 accredits the fabricators internal inspection program.

6. How does a fabricator apply for accreditation?

The IAS Request for Quote, Application, accreditation criteria and related documents are available on the IAS website.

7. How does IAS AC786 save fabricators money?

The IAS accreditation programs for similar fabricators have made a significant impact on fabricators' bottom line due to the management system required for accreditation. For example, the accreditation criteria requires training and job qualifications for personnel, as well as formal policies and procedures for acquiring materials, calibrating equipment, welding and inspecting jobs. All of these steps enable fabricators to improve quality and production and lower costs by reducing time and materials required for reworking jobs due to errors. AC786 establishes a benchmark that code officials can clearly understand and accept.

8. How does IAS AC786 accreditation help to best utilize a building department's resources?

Building departments and jurisdictional officials that accept the IAS AC786 accreditation program save staff time and resources that would otherwise be required to manage the application process, assessments, maintenance and publication of an approved list of fabricators that are qualified to modify and fabricate container-based structures.

9. How do I contact IAS?

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