

# Benefits of Selecting Accredited Metal Building Manufacturers and Erectors



An Architect's Guide to Accreditation Programs for the Metal Building Industry Administered by The International Accreditation Service®

In the next few years, perhaps 50% of one and two-story commercial building projects in the U.S. will incorporate metal building systems, primarily motivated by the material's economic and environmental benefits. Metal buildings and systems are durable, energy efficient and easy to erect, often offering lower costs than conventional solutions.



Are you ready?

## Begin with the Bottom Line

Metal buildings are mainstream. Due to energy efficiency, sustainability, lifecycle, design innovations and costs, metal buildings are trending for everything from stadiums, schools and churches, to strip malls, manufacturing plants and car dealerships.

To design metal buildings effectively, architects must have strong working relationships with experienced building constructors and manufacturers whom they can trust and whose work has been meticulously vetted by a third party.

Architects need to be confident in the level of competence offered by companies producing metal building systems and in the companies that construct them. International Accreditation Service® (IAS) accreditation of metal building manufacturers and erectors provides that needed assurance.

By choosing accredited manufacturers, the architect and building owner will know that the building system manufacturer adheres to the most comprehensive quality-assurance accreditation program available and that the accreditation is designed exclusively for metal building system manufacturers.

By choosing an accredited building construction firm, architects and owners can be confident that the highest standards and best practices for promoting safety, training, quality and consistency are being practiced.

## We're Here for Architects.

At the International Accreditation Services (IAS), we understand the building industry and are committed to helping architects receive the best possible outcomes from metal building manufacturers and metal building contractors/erectors. To that end, we created two accreditation pathways to verify the quality and value that your building system partners bring to the table. The following provides an overview of the bottom-line details you need to know.

## Who are We?

The International Accreditation Service (IAS) is a 501(c)(4) registered body and wholly-owned subsidiary of the International Code Council (ICC).

IAS has worked with metal building assemblers, metal building manufacturers, industry professionals and building departments to develop many widely accepted accreditation programs including AC478, AC473 and AC472. IAS accreditations are recognized by federal, state and local governmental bodies.

The IAS accreditation programs for metal building systems are recognized by the Metal Building Contractors and Erectors Association (MBCEA) and the Metal Building Manufacturers Association (MBMA).

*For both building manufacturers and contractors, accreditation ensures competence and compliance with industry benchmarks.*

## Here's How Your Clients May Benefit by Choosing an Accredited Manufacturer

Building owners have found that purchasing a building from an accredited manufacturer has

provided the following:

- Compliance with special inspection requirements in Chapter 17 of the International Building Code®.
- Expedited acceptance of plans by code officials.
- Better protection for occupants and contents.
- Lower insurance rates.
- Lower maintenance costs.
- Lower utility costs.
- Better resale value.



*A unique characteristic of the AC472 Accreditation Program is that it audits the integrity of design engineering and manufacturing processes.*

## IAS AC472: Accreditation for Manufacturers of Metal Building Systems

AC472 Accreditation assesses metal building manufacturers based on requirements in Chapter 17 of the International Building Code.



### Ten Reasons Why Architects Value Manufacturer Accreditation

1. Aligning with only accredited suppliers helps protect your good name by guaranteeing that an audited supplier is on the project.
2. AC472 covers structural welding, cold formed steel fabrication and engineering. In fact, accreditation assures that the building components are designed by professional engineers with demonstrated knowledge of building systems and applicable codes, and that all structural welding operations are overseen by certified weld inspectors.
3. Accreditation sets standards for best practices, safety and quality—items critical in facilitating positive outcomes for all participants in the building process including owners, designers, stakeholders, manufacturers and construction companies.
4. To achieve accreditation, the manufacturer must put in place a comprehensive quality-assurance program unequalled in the marketplace today. The IAS accreditation criteria addresses quality management system elements for engineering, fabrication and shop practices, personnel requirements, materials certification, process control and technical requirements. When seeking accreditation, manufacturers must commit to continually improving services every single year.
5. The accreditation process mandates detailed quality control requirements that must be independently inspected in the factory at least annually for a company to retain its accreditation.
6. Building officials can deem AC472-accredited manufacturers as approved fabricators, as defined in Chapter 17 of the International Building Code, which eliminates the need for additional inspections and may result in cost savings to verify code compliance of metal building fabrication. Design and detailing must verify code compliant engineering.
7. Accredited firms must operate under a documented management system developed in concert with an IAS-accredited inspection agency. That agency then conducts unannounced inspections to verify continued compliance with these criteria. The management system includes the manufacturer's written fabrication procedures and quality control manuals which provide a basis for control of materials and workmanship.
8. All accredited facilities must have an engineer responsibly in charge and the engineers who approve the design must be licensed in the state in which the building is assembled.
9. Raw material must be traceable in terms of both type and grade, assuring quality products to enhance the value of your client's long-term investment.
10. Each accredited firm must have processes in place to anticipate and accommodate changes within the industry, and meet the customers' expectations.

## IAS AC478: Accreditation for Metal Building Assemblers



Metal building construction is largely unregulated and there are a plethora of contractors. Verifying the safety and quality of the erection and construction of these systems is not easy. Even metal building assemblers struggle to distinguish themselves from their competitors.

As you know, it is a common practice to award construction to the lowest bidder. But as you've undoubtedly experienced, setting the bar low can lead to cost overruns and delays in project completion due to lack of preparedness, poor planning, inconsistency in quality and an inadequately skilled labor force. The IAS AC478 accreditation process establishes an industry standard to identify those construction companies who do the right thing and who are committed to safety, training and quality.

### Ten Reasons Why Architects Value Contractor Accreditation

1. AC478 accreditation is focused on assembly procedures, inspections, quality assurance, training regiments and commitment to safety.
2. Accreditation verifies compliance to quality standards by requiring documented safety and training programs, management systems, job-site specific assembly plans and project-safety analysis for each project.
3. Independent auditors evaluate every metal building assembler seeking accreditation and analyzes their processes and actions across multiple areas (erection activities, personnel qualifications and compliance with project specifications).
4. Architects express confidence that metal buildings erected by accredited firms will be assembled according to specifications, costs and deadlines.
5. A level of assurance is established that the metal building assembler meets or exceeds industry standards (OSHA, ASCE, AISC, IBC, etc.).
6. Architects show confidence that accredited assemblers have the appropriate protections in place to ensure staff competence and supervision, privacy, handling of complaints, etc.
7. The understanding that assemblers subject themselves to on-site assessments in order to maintain their accredited status is confirmation of their professionalism, transparency and willingness to continuously improve.
8. Accredited builders have an assigned safety manager, designated by management, with demonstrated competence in establishing, maintaining and implementing a safety program with consistent results. That safety manager is required to have direct access to the highest level executives.
9. Architects appreciate knowing that accredited firms must conduct internal audits that reflect the effectiveness of the management system, safety and training programs while management reviews must outline action plans for improvement based on customer comments, back charges, OSHA documentation and changes in code requirements.
10. Architects understand that the accreditation process is time consuming and costly, and that only the firms with the desire to verify their consistent quality and integrity will invest in the effort.

"The metal building and assembly industry has changed considerably in the last 30 years. We believe accreditation will ultimately help our industry deliver better quality in-place products—and that's good for everyone—the manufacturers, the erectors, customers and the public."

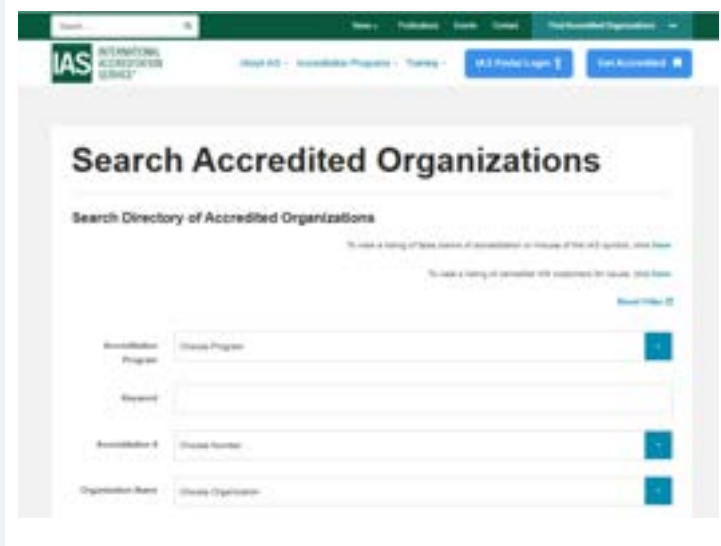
David J. Gochenaur,  
President, Merit Builders, Inc.



## Find Accredited Companies

Architects can access a list of accredited companies or search for a specific accredited company on the IAS website.

1. Visit the IAS website at [www.iasonline.org](http://www.iasonline.org)
2. Click on "Find Accredited Organizations" in the top toolbar, right side
3. Select Accreditation Program and choose Metal Building Assemblers (AC478) or Metal Building Systems (AC472)
4. Select other search criteria (organization name, city, state, etc.)
5. Click Search



## Learn More

Read Articles, watch videos and get template language to use for specifying IAS Accredited AC472 and AC478 companies, visit [www.iasonline.org/metal](http://www.iasonline.org/metal)



IAS is a member of the ICC Family of Solutions

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