



Australian Government

**National Measurement
Institute**



CONSULTATION PAPER ON THE PATTERN APPROVAL OF POINT OF SALE SYSTEMS

MAY 2011

INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF THIS DISCUSSION PAPER

The National Measurement Institute (NMI) approves measuring instruments in use for trade and legal purposes. This paper seeks feedback on an appropriate method for the approval of point of sale systems.

THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

The NMI would like to fully understand and assess the impact of changing the method of approving point of sale systems and seeks feedback from interested parties on the proposed changes to the certificate system for these devices.

SUBMISSIONS

Submission should be received by close of business 3rd June 2011 and can be lodged either by:

- by emailing your submission with the subject heading “Pattern Approval Consultation 2011 and [company name]” to the following email address patternapproval@measurement.gov.au

or

- by mailing your submission with the subject heading “Pattern Approval Consultation 2011 and [company name]” to –

Pattern Approval
National Measurement Institute
PO Box 264
Lindfield NSW 2070
Attention: Manager

BACKGROUND

In 1983 NMI (then the National Standards Commission) introduced a general supplementary certificate of approval, S1/0 (and later an update S1/0A), for Auxiliary Indicating Devices.

The certificate required that simple printing and indicating devices which are connected to a measuring instrument in use for trade complied with the requirements in the certificate and were marked with the approval number.

Since then technology has evolved and auxiliary devices have become more sophisticated. Software configurable systems are now the norm and functionality is in many instances moving from the measuring instrument into the auxiliary device. These devices now have functions which are defined in the pattern approval requirements documents for the instruments to which they are connected.

These devices are currently approved according to the general supplementary certificate, S1/0A. But due to the increasing sophistication and inherent software configurability of these types of devices, it is becoming harder to ensure compliance with the S1/0A requirements. Issues of non-compliance are difficult to address as the manufacturer is very often unknown to NMI.

PROPOSAL

In order to more effectively control these types of devices and software systems, it is proposed that they are re-incorporated into the current certificate system.

The NMI has developed two proposals with a view to addressing this issue and invites interested parties to comment.

DEFINITIONS

Family of Devices

A family of devices will cover a single model or series of models, or single software version or series of software versions, provided they are not substantially different in their operation.

Simple Printers and Summing Indicators

These are devices which replicate exactly the measurement data from a trade approved measuring instrument for display in electronic or printed form.

POS Systems & Transaction Processing Systems

These are systems which connect to trade approved measuring instruments and do more than just replicate the measurement data. Such systems may perform functions such as price calculation based on measurement data or may have a stored tare functionality. Systems which process payment or invoicing information only, do not require pattern approval.

Systems which control the operation of the measuring instrument (such as fuel dispenser consoles) or which store calibration data etc for the measuring instrument will continue to be assessed by NMI for pattern approval and are excluded from this discussion paper.

PROPOSAL 1

The general certificate for Auxiliary Indicating Devices shall be updated and re-issued as S1/0B and its use shall be clarified so that it is restricted to **simple printers and summing indicators**. Manufacturers of such devices shall be required to comply with this certificate of approval and mark devices with this number without informing NMI.

Manufacturers of **POS Systems & Transaction Processing Systems** shall be required to submit an application for pattern approval together with a declaration of compliance and limited documentary evidence. If a simple assessment confirms that the equipment is suitable to be included in this scheme, a certificate of approval will be issued and the equipment will be required to be marked with an approval number and verified before use.

Fees for this process are likely to be between \$700 and \$900 per device or family of devices.

PROPOSAL 2

The general certificate for Auxiliary Indicating Devices shall be updated and re-issued as S1/0B and its use shall be clarified so that it is restricted to **simple printers and summing indicators**. Manufacturers of such devices shall be required to comply with this certificate of approval and mark devices with this number without informing NMI.

Manufacturers of **POS Systems & Transaction Processing Systems** shall be required to submit an application for pattern approval. The NMI will assess against the relevant requirements document for the measuring instrument to which it is to be connected, a certificate of approval will be issued and the equipment will be required to be marked with an approval number and verified before use.

Fees for this process will be dependent on functionality, but are more likely to be in line with fees for pattern approval of measuring instruments, i.e. \$13-14,000 per device or family of devices.

It is proposed that equipment which was installed and verified prior to the proposal taking effect will not be required to comply with the new scheme but will continue to be required to comply with S1/0A, including the marking requirements.

Question 1:

- a) Do you or your business support the proposal to place more controls around the pattern approval of point of sale systems?
- b) Do you or your business support either of the proposals outlined above? Would you favour an alternative proposal?

Question 2:

Other than the cost of pattern approval, what benefits and costs will the preferred proposal have on you or your business?