THE Open GROUP

Common Operating Environment (COE) Platform Certification Program

Certification Policy

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Certification Policy

Common Operating Environment (COE) Platform Certification Program

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Program

The Open Group's COE Platform certification is currently available for the following types of products:

- POSIX-based Platforms. This term is taken from the Defense Information Systems Agency Compliance Criteria. It requires such platforms to support a standard operating system interface and environment, including a command interpreter and common utility programs.

Certification in this program applies to families of binary-compatible systems, from which specific platforms may then also be certified to a higher degree of assurance, if required by the Applicant. The two levels of certification are referred to in the program as:

- Product Family certification
- Specific Platform certification

As the scope and membership of a binary-compatible family may change over time, certification may need to be extended accordingly. The term "Derived Certification" is used to describe the process of adding to the scope of an existing Product Family certification.

It is a voluntary program, open to any product meeting the Conformance Requirements. It is built upon the *Open Brand Trademark License Agreement* (TMLA) and, where applicable, this document references it rather than duplicating material.

1.2 This Document

This document defines the policies that govern the operation of The Open Group's COE Platform certification program. These policies define what can be certified, what it means to be certified, and the process for achieving and maintaining certification.

This document is intended primarily for suppliers who would like to certify a product. This policy and the components it references, in conjunction with the appropriate Certification Agreement and the TMLA, constitute the requirements and obligations for achieving certification. Buyers intending to procure Certified Products will also find this document useful for understanding what they can expect from a Certified Product.

Further information on the Open Brand certification program is available in the *Practical Guide to the Open Brand*.[1]

For the avoidance of doubt, this document defers to the TMLA.[2]

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[1] The Practical Guide to the Open Brand dated October 2002 is available at www.opengroup.org/pubs/catalog/x221.htm.

[2] The Open Brand Trademark License Agreement (TMLA) dated January 1998 is available at www.opengroup.org/pubs/catalog/x982.htm.

1.3 Definitions

The following definitions apply to this document. Where a definition has an abbreviation or acronym used within this document, it is given after the definition name in parentheses.

Applicant	The supplier who is in the process of having a product certified.
Binary-compatible Family	A hardware platform that runs identical binary operating system and COE Platform program-related software executables. All family members support all mandatory COE features and all optional COE features specified in the Conformance Statement for the Product Family. Family members may optimize the implementation of specific interfaces – for example, to take advantage of process extensions – as long as the ability to execute a binary Strictly Conforming COE Platform Application is not affected. There are no changes between family members that have a direct or indirect impact on the behavior of a test. There are no changes between family members in the underlying hardware or software components that affect the conformity of the COE Platform program-related software.
Certification Agreement	The agreement between the Applicant and the Certification Authority, which defines the certification service, and which contains the legal commitment by the Applicant to the conditions of the certification service.
Certification Authority (CA)	The Open Group administrative team that manages the day-to-day operations of the certification program.
Certification Register	A record of all Certified Products, which is maintained by the Certification Authority and made publicly available via the Internet.
Certification System Deficiency (CSD)	An agreed error in the certification system, which is inhibiting the certification process. The certification system includes both the certification process and information systems provided to implement certification. A Certification System Deficiency is one possible outcome of a Problem Report.
Certified Product	A product or product family that has successfully completed the certification process and for which the supplier of such product or product family has been notified in writing by the Certification Authority that certification has been achieved.
Common Operating Environment (COE)	The name of the Defense Information Systems Agency (DISA) program from which the Conformance Requirements are drawn.
Conformance Requirements	A definition of the mandatory requirements a product must meet and any options it must implement in order to be considered conformant.

Conformance Statement	The document produced by the Applicant that describes the way in which the product to be certified meets the Conformance Requirements. Conformance Statements of Certified Products are published in the Certification Register. Refer to the TMLA. A Conformance Statement Questionnaire is the blank form to be completed to produce a Conformance Statement.
Interpretation (INT)	A decision made by the Specification Authority that elaborates or refines the meaning of a standard or specification referenced by the COE requirements. An Interpretation is one possible outcome of a Problem Report.
Platform	An operating system environment. It may consist of a complete operating system with kernel, libraries, and utilities. It can also be a hosted environment or emulation that provides the equivalent functionality.
Problem Report	Refer to Schedule 4 of the TMLA. A question of clarification, intent, or correctness of the specification(s), Test Suites, or certification system, which, if accepted by the Specification Authority, will be resolved into an Interpretation, Temporary Interpretation, Temporary Waiver, Test Suite Deficiency, or Certification System Deficiency.
Product Standard	Refer to Schedule 4 of the TMLA. A Product Standard is a document in which Conformance Requirements are specified for a particular type of product, and against which products may be certified in the program. There will be one top-level Product Standard for each type of product to be certified.
Registration Form	A form completed by the Applicant to apply for certification for a particular product. The form contains information on the Applicant and the product to be certified.
Specification Authority (SA)	The organization responsible for interpreting the COE Conformance Requirements and the specifications and standards that they reference. In some cases, the SA may refer issues to the relevant organization, such as DISA, the IEEE, or another standards-setting organization.
Strictly Conforming COE Platform Application	A Strictly Conforming COE Platform Application is an application that requires only the facilities described in the COE Platform Product Standard and the applicable standards and specifications referenced by it ("the referenced specifications"). Such an application shall accept any behavior described as unspecified or implementation-defined in the referenced specifications. For symbolic constants in the referenced specifications, such an application shall accept any value in the permitted ranges. Such an application shall not use optional facilities defined in the referenced specifications that the implementation's COE Platform Certification does not claim to support.

Supplier	A product vendor who is interested in, is applying for certification in, or has certified a product in The Open Group COE Platform certification program. During the period in which a Supplier is going through the product certification process, the Supplier is referred to as an Applicant.
Temporary Interpretation (TIN)	A temporary decision made by the Certification Authority that elaborates or refines the meaning of a standard or specification referenced by the COE requirements, pending a final decision by the Specification Authority. When resolved, a Temporary Interpretation can become either an INT or a Temporary Waiver. A Temporary Interpretation is one possible outcome of a Problem Report.
Temporary Waiver	A decision made by the Specification Authority that permits a limited number of implementation errors which are demonstrated to be of a minor nature having negligible impact on applications portability or interoperability. See Schedule 4 of the TMLA for the Temporary Waiver fee and lifetime requirements.
Test Suite	A tool or procedure for measuring conformance. It shall produce a report for audit purposes by the CA. It may be an automated tool producing a formatted journal, or it may be a manual procedure with instructions to follow for producing a journal manually.
Test Suite Deficiency (TSD)	An agreed error in a Test Suite, which is causing it to produce an incorrect result code that impacts certification. A Test Suite Deficiency is one possible outcome of a Problem Report.
Test Suite Maintenance Authority (TSMA)	The organization(s) sanctioned by The Open Group to maintain the Test Suites.
The Trademark	The Open Group's certification logo or other marks as designated from time to time by The Open Group.
Trademark License Agreement (TMLA)	The agreement between the Applicant and The Open Group, which contains the legal commitment by the Applicant to the conditions of use of the trademark.

2. CERTIFICATION PROCESS

This section provides an overview of the certification process and the responsibilities of the parties involved.

The parties involved in the certification process are:

- Applicant
- Specification Authority (SA)
- Test Suite Maintenance Authority (TSMA)
- Certification Authority (CA)

2.1 Process Overview

The general conceptual certification process sequence, which applies to *all* product types that are defined for COE Platform certification, is as shown in the following diagram and commentary:

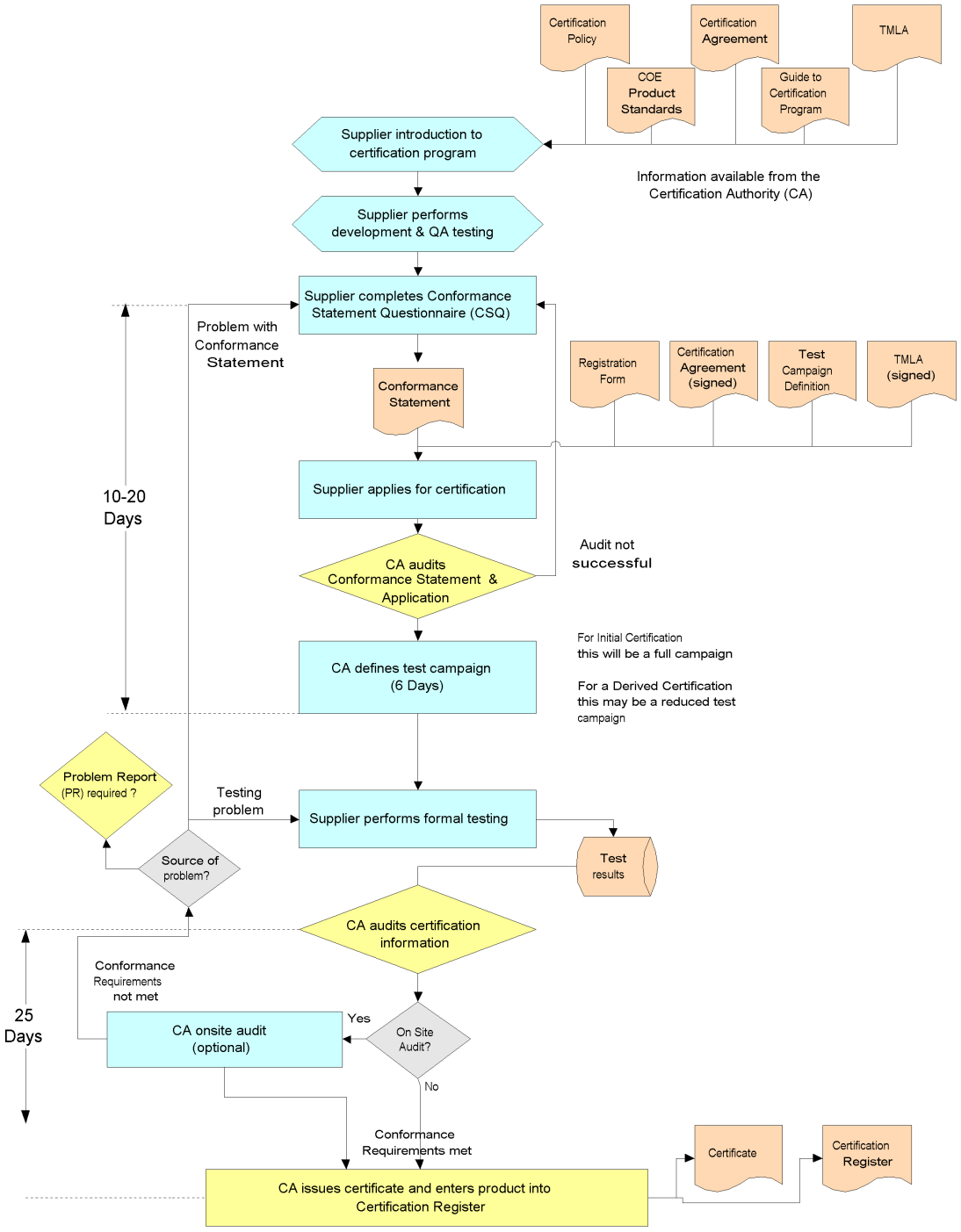

Figure 1. COE Certification Process

A typical certification process sequence is described in the following sections.

The Applicant must first learn about the certification program and requirements for certification by reviewing the certification policy, the Product Standards, any agreements that are part of the program, and other related information such as the *Guide to COE Platform Certification*.

2.1.1 Preparation for Certification – Development and Quality Assurance Testing and Introduction to the Certification Program

The objective of The Open Group COE Platform certification program is to encourage and facilitate the development and market availability of products that meet the COE specifications. The Test Suites and test procedures have a dual role in this context: first, they help developers and quality assurance teams to ensure the product meets the specifications and, second, they are used to ensure that only the eligible products are marketed as compliant.

Prior to applying for certification, the Applicant should perform internal development. Typically, this includes porting the GSKS code, tuning the implementation to meet the security requirements, preparing the COE supplier documentation, and quality assurance testing using the conformance Test Suite(s), test procedures, checklists, and any additional verification methods the Applicant deems appropriate, to ensure the product meets the applicable Conformance Requirements and is ready for entry into the certification program.

In addition, the Applicant must become familiar with the certification program and the requirements for certification by reviewing this policy, the applicable Product Standards, the agreements that are part of the program, and other related information such as the *Guide to COE Platform Certification*. All information and documents related to The Open Group COE Platform certification program are available from the CA web site (www.opengroup.org/openbrand/coe).

2.1.2 Conformance Statement

The Applicant must produce Conformance Statements to describe the product and the way in which it meets the Conformance Requirements. Conformance Statement Questionnaires (CSQs) are provided for this purpose. The Conformance Statements contain information about the product (e.g., O/S version and the hardware environment), which options the Applicant claims the product supports, and other related information. It also contains any Test Suite-related information necessary to set up and configure the Test Suites.

2.1.3 Trademark

If the Applicant has not previously completed a TMLA, it must be completed at this time. The CA web site (www.opengroup.org/openbrand/coe) contains a link to the TMLA. The TMLA requires a physical signature.

2.1.4 Applying for Certification

The Applicant will submit the completed Registration Form, Certification Agreement, and Conformance Statement to the CA. If this is an initial certification, the Applicant will submit a proposed Test Campaign.

2.1.5 Initial Submission Check

The CA will perform an initial check of the completeness and correctness of the submission, including the Conformance Statements.

2.1.6 Test Campaign Definition

The CA will confirm the definition of the Test Campaign for certification. The Test Campaign for the initial certification of a Product Family is based on the set of Indicators of Conformance defined in the applicable Product Standard. In cases other than initial certification, the CA will define a Test Campaign, which may be full, partial, or not required depending on the circumstances and level of certification; for example, product updates and renewals.

The full Test Campaign is as defined on the Test Campaign Definition form. A partial Test Campaign may occur depending on circumstances and is left to the CA to define; for example, if only a change has occurred in a single area which is tested by a single indicator then it may only make sense to require that as a partial Test Campaign.

2.1.7 Formal Testing

Formal testing for certifying a Product Family is performed by the Applicant and audited by the CA. In preparing test results for submission, the Applicant is required to use a currently authorized version of The Open Group COE Platform certification Test Suites. No changes are allowed to the test tools or test procedures unless authorized by the CA by means of the Interpretations process.

The CA maintains a list on its web site (www.opengroup.org/openbrand/coe) of the Test Suites and procedures authorized for use in the program. The *Guide to COE Platform Certification* describes how to obtain these Test Suites and the test procedures.

Optional on-site witness testing may be performed at this time if the Applicant wishes to have a specific platform entered into the Certification Register at the same time as certifying the Product Family. Witness testing may also be requested subsequently if the Applicant wishes a specific platform to be registered (see Section 7.1 for further information).

2.1.8 Test Result Submission

Test suite results must be submitted to the CA. The *Guide to COE Platform Certification* states how results should be submitted.

Where automated conformance Test Suites exist, test results submitted shall always include the full output from an uninterrupted run of the applicable Test Suite. It is the responsibility of the Applicant to resolve all failed test results to a pass by reference to a resolved Problem Report. The *Guide to COE Platform Certification* describes the test result types that equate to a failed result. Where test procedures have to be manually executed, the procedures include a description of the method for producing a report to be submitted to the CA for auditing. The procedures will provide instructions on the means by which a pass/fail verdict is assigned and recorded. The forms provided with the procedures shall be used in their entirety.

2.1.9 Audit

The CA will check to ensure the submitted certification information, including the Registration Form, Conformance Statement, and test results, demonstrate that the product meets the applicable Conformance Requirements. The CA should complete the audit of all certification-related information within 25 calendar days of receiving a complete submission. (Note that if on-site witness testing has been requested, additional time will be required.)

The CA will archive all test results provided for audit in conjunction with an application for a new certification or an update to an existing certification. The archives will be kept for six years to provide an auditable trail.

2.1.10 On-Site Witness Testing (Optional)

On-site witness testing is optional, but required for certifying Specific Platforms within a Product Family. It covers the build and installation of the system following the supplier's documentation, and the execution of the manual validation procedures. If the testing indicates that the Conformance Requirements have been met, the CA will enter the Specific Platform on the Certification Register under the entry for the Product Family of which it is a member.

2.1.11 Notification and Publication of Certification

The CA will notify the Applicant of the audit result. If the result is success, and there is a TMLA in place, the CA will issue a certificate and enter the product into the Certification Register. At this point, the Applicant will be notified that the trademark may now be used in connection with the Certified Product. Applicants have the option to keep certification confidential for a defined period, as described in Section 5.1.

If the audit indicates that the Conformance Requirements have not been met, the CA will reject the application and report all the discrepancies identified with respect to the Conformance Requirements during the audit. The Applicant may undertake corrective action and resubmit. One resubmission is permitted within a single certification application. If on-site witness testing has to be repeated, then additional fees will be due. Any resubmission must be within 60 calendar days unless the CA grants an extension.

3. CONFORMANCE

3.1 Conformance Requirements

From time to time, The Open Group is expected to issue new versions of its COE Platform certification documents and will increment the version number of the Product Standards (see Section 3.2). Such a set is called a "Conformance Release".

It is an explicit condition of COE Platform certification that the supplier of a Certified Product represents, warrants, and will continue to warrant that the Certified Product meets all of the applicable Conformance Requirements and that the information supplied in the Conformance Statement is correct and complete.

3.2 Product Standards

A Product Standard includes:

- A description of the nature and purpose of the Product Standard
- The label to be used in connection with a trademark logo (if any)
- Detailed technical Conformance Requirements
- Specific testing requirements that must be satisfactorily completed
- A summary of any migration issues to the current Product Standard from any previous versions of the Product Standard

A Product Standard can include subsidiary Product Standards and it is possible for products to be certified for individual subsidiary Product Standards, and then later add the higher-level Product Standards.

The version numbers of the COE Platform Product Standards will be incremented for each Conformance Release.

3.3 Conformance Statements

Refer to Schedule 4 of the TMLA.

A Conformance Statement (CS) is produced by completing a Conformance Statement Questionnaire (CSQ). There will be one CSQ per Product Standard.

CSs are submitted to the Certification Authority (CA) as part of the application process for certification. The CSs will be included in the Certification Register entry for the product once it is certified.

4. LICENSING THE TRADEMARK FOR CERTIFIED PRODUCTS

Refer to the TMLA.

5. CERTIFICATION REGISTER

5.1 Inclusion in the Register

The Certification Register is a record of all Certified Products. The Register is maintained by the CA and made publicly available via the Internet. The Register contains the name of the supplier, name of the product, and the Conformance Statement for the product.

Once the CA is satisfied that the Applicant's product meets the applicable Conformance Requirements and all other requirements for certification have been met, the CA will issue written notice to the Applicant that the product is a Certified Product and enter the product in the Certification Register.

The Register is structured to list any certified Specific Platforms subsidiary to the entry for the certified Product Family.

Applicants may request that certification be kept confidential for up to a six-month period; for example, to launch products that have already been certified.

During this period, the product will be included only in the confidential section of the Certification Register and the supplier may not use the trademark with the Certified Product or make any representation that it is certified (refer to Clause 4.9 of TMLA).

5.2 Removal from the Register

Only Certified Products are included in the Certification Register; thus, if a product ceases to be a Certified Product, the CA will remove it from the Register.

A product shall cease to be certified if:

- The supplier requests that the CA withdraw it from the Register.
- The product ceases to meet the Conformance Requirements.
- The supplier fails to meet the renewal requirements or declines to renew.

Upon removal of a registered product from the Certification Register, if the supplier has declined to renew, the CA will move the register entry to the public Register of Expired Certified Products.

Refer to Clause 4.19 of the TMLA.

6. TESTING

6.1 Test Suites

For COE Platform certification, Applicants are required to use an authorized version of the certification Test Suite(s) and test procedures, valid at the time of application. The CA will maintain the list of approved certification Test Suites and procedures, and the authorized version information on its web site.

From time to time, new Test Suites may be introduced to the program, either as replacements for existing suites or as part of a continuing policy of extending Test Suite coverage within the COE Platform certification program. This section documents the process for creating, reviewing, and formally accepting Test Suites for use in the program.

There are three types of Test Suite releases: *certification, maintenance*, and *enhancement*.

6.1.1 Certification Releases

Test suite certification releases are used for formal certification.

6.1.2 Maintenance Releases

Test suite maintenance releases are updates to approved certification Test Suites, and are created to address problems such as Interpretations or Test Suite Deficiencies that have arisen.

Maintenance releases have a three-week beta testing period open to licensees with current support. The new version will be used in the program after any faults found in the beta test have been rectified and a revised version made available and accepted for use in the program. Once accepted, maintenance releases may be used for formal testing and will replace existing releases after a three-month overlap period. The CA will establish a mailing list for announcements of new maintenance releases and shall post an announcement when a new Test Suite release is valid.

6.1.3 Enhancement Releases

Test suite enhancement releases consist of enhancements to existing certification Test Suites (e.g., to include new coverage or to replace manual procedures with automated tests) or entirely new Test Suites. Enhancement releases will have a three-month beta testing period open to licensees with current support and maintenance contracts. The new version will be used in the program after faults found in the beta test have been rectified and a revised version is made available and accepted by The Open Group for use in the program. Once accepted, enhancement releases may be used for conformance testing and will replace existing releases after a six-month overlap period.

7. SCOPE OF CERTIFICATION FOR PRODUCT TEST, RE-TEST, AND RE-CERTIFICATION

This section defines the scope of certification, along with the types of changes that may be made to a COE certified platform and the corresponding requirements for re-testing and/or re-certification.

In each case where re-certification is required, the supplier must submit a new application for certification along with a new Conformance Statement and applicable test results. Upon successful completion of the certification process, the CA will create a new entry in the Certification Register for the new version of the product, and issue a new certificate. The Certification Register entry for the original Certified Product will remain in the Register unchanged, unless the supplier explicitly requests to have it deleted or it was a name change to the product.

Certification in this program applies to families of binary-compatible systems, from which specific platforms may then also be certified to a higher degree of assurance, if required by the Applicant. The two levels of certification are referred to in the program as:

- Product Family certification
- Specific Platform certification

As the scope and membership of a binary-compatible family may change over time, certification may need to be extended accordingly.

At any time, the CA may require additional information reasonably related to the conformance of a Certified Product or a product that is to be certified.

7.1 Product Families

COE Platform certification applies to binary-compatible families of computing platforms that meet the Conformance Requirements.

7.2 Initial Certification

Initial certification is always of a binary-compatible Product Family. If witness testing is performed as the initial test, the results submitted to the CA for certification may be used also to certify the Specific Platform that was tested as well as the Product Family of which it is a representative.

	Test Requirement	Certification Requirement
Product Family	Full Test Campaign	Full Certification
Specific Platform	Full Witness Test Campaign	Full Certification

7.3 Maintenance Releases

7.3.1 Platform Software/Hardware

Maintenance releases to the hardware and operating system software of a Certified Product may take place throughout the life of a Certified Product.

For the purposes of this certification program, such a maintenance release is defined as being:

- A limited update that can be installed without a complete re-installation of the system
- A change that will not cause a Strictly Conforming COE Platform Application to fail
- A release which does not subtract from the Certified Product's support for optional features related to the COE Platform functionality

	Test Requirement	Certification Requirement
Product Family	None	Certification information update
Specific Platform	Full Witness Test Campaign	Re-certification

7.3.2 GSKS Code

Maintenance releases to the GSKS software may take place throughout the life of a Certified Product.

For the purposes of this certification program, such a maintenance release is defined as being:

- A limited update that can be installed without a complete re-installation of the system
- A change that will not cause a Strictly Conforming COE Platform Application to fail
- A release which does not subtract from the Certified Product's support for optional features related to the COE Platform functionality

	Test Requirement	Certification Requirement
Product Family	Partial Test Campaign as defined by the CA Refer to Section 2.1.6	Certification information update
Specific Platform	Full Witness Test Campaign	Re-certification

7.4 New Software Versions

A new version of a Certified Product that contains a material change in the COE Platform program-related software constitutes a new product with respect to testing and certification. A material change in the software is one that may affect its conformance to the applicable COE Platform specification(s), or which may affect the results of testing with any approved Test Suite or the operation of any binary application.

It is the responsibility of the supplier to ensure that the Certified Product remains compliant and thus to determine whether a modification constitutes a material change. For clarification, a material change includes, but is not limited to:

- Changes that may impact the behavior of currently supported mandatory and optional features of the COE Platform specification(s)
- Additions to or removal of support for optional features of the COE Platform specification(s)
- Changes that may cause a Strictly Conforming COE Platform Application to fail
- Changes in the underlying hardware or software components that may affect the conformity of the COE Platform program-related software

Changes to software representing functionality entirely outside the scope of the current COE Platform specification(s), *and* which are entirely de coupled from COE Platform program-related software, do not constitute a material change under this definition.

	Test Requirement	Certification Requirement
Product Family	Full Test Campaign	Full Certification
Specific Platform	Full Witness Test Campaign	Full Certification

As a material change constitutes a new product, the supplier must submit a new application for certification for the new software version.

7.5 Re-Named Products

If a Certified Product is to be re-named, with no change to either the Certified Product or its software or hardware operating environment, the certification may be amended upon request to the CA. This is independent of the level of assurance. The CA will change the product name on the Conformance Statement and in the Certification Register and issue a new certificate.

The supplier will be required to provide a written statement to the CA indicating that there have been no material changes to the Certified Product other than the name change.

	Test Requirement	Certification Requirement
Product Family	None	None
Specific Platform	None	None

7.6 Re-Badged or OEM'ed Products

If technically identical products are to be shipped by more than one supplier, each supplier will have to apply for certification in order to have their product listed in the Certification Register. A re-badged or OEM'ed product constitutes a new product with respect to testing and certification, and requires full testing and certification.

If both suppliers agree, test results from the first supplier's certification(s) may be used in the certification of the OEM'ed product.

	Test Requirement	Certification Requirement
Product Family	Full Test Campaign	Full Certification
Specific Platform	Full Witness Test Campaign	Full Certification

7.7 Other Variants

Except where specifically stated in this document, any other variant of a Certified Product which may have a material affect on the conformance of the product to the COE Platform specification(s) constitutes a new product, which will be subject to full testing and certification.

8. APPLICATION AND RENEWAL PROCESS

8.1 Applying for Certification

Information describing how suppliers apply for and achieve certification is in the *Guide to COE Platform Certification*, available on the CA web site (www.opengroup.org/openbrand/coe).

Applications for certification by any Applicant will require the Applicant to demonstrate that the product in question meets the applicable COE Platform specification(s) as interpreted at the time the application is made. The application package includes the TMLA, application form, the Certification Agreement, and supporting materials, including the Conformance Statement and test results. The Certification Agreement is the legal contract between the Applicant and the CA for the certification service and defines the terms under which the service will be provided.

If the application includes a request to certify one or more Specific Platforms, then on-site witness testing will need to be scheduled to take place at this stage and the results submitted with the application package.

The CA will review and audit the application package, including all submitted supporting materials. Within 25 business days of receiving all supporting materials, including if applicable the results from the witness testing, the CA will either accept or reject the application. If accepted, the CA will issue a certificate and enter the product into the Certification Register. If rejected, the CA will provide reasons for the rejection to enable the Applicant to undertake corrective action and re-apply.

If an application to certify a Specific Platform is rejected, this will mean that another round of on-site witness testing will need to be scheduled which will incur associated costs.

8.2 Duration of Certification

Initial Certification is valid for 36 months from the date at which the CA provides written notice to the supplier that certification has been achieved.

8.3 Renewal

The supplier of a Certified Product is required to renew certification annually. At least 60 days prior to the anniversary of the certification, the CA will notify the supplier that renewal is due.

The supplier is required to ensure that the Certified Product meets the applicable Conformance Requirements, including all Interpretations that have been granted by the SA, and when requested by the CA passes the current version of the approved Test Suite. At the time of renewal, the CA will define the requirements for re-testing and other associated information. The need for re-test will be determined by any changes in test coverage, and the Interpretations that have been granted since the previous certification. Once all requirements are met, the CA will renew certification for another 12 months and inform the supplier.

9. PROBLEM REPORTING AND INTERPRETATIONS PROCESS

9.1 Overview

During the certification process, an Applicant may encounter a problem that inhibits the certification effort.

The Applicant may file a Problem Report via the CA web site (www.opengroup.org/openbrand/coe) to obtain resolution to the issue.

The types of problems that may be found include:

- Errors or ambiguities in the specifications against which conformance is based, either in the COE Platform specifications, or the underlying standards referenced by them
- Errors in the Test Suites used to assess conformance with the specifications; specifically, in the COE Platform program Test Suites, or other Test Suites referenced by the COE Platform program
- Errors in the certification system, specifically related to the application process, agreements, and completion of Conformance Statements
- Minor errors in the implementation to be certified

The Problem Report is used for the types of errors listed above which are inhibiting the certification effort.

For general questions on the certification process, running the Test Suites, or other problems not covered above, contact the Help Desk at conformance@opengroup.org.

9.2 Problem Report Resolution Process

The SA will review and provide a resolution to all Problem Reports, based on a recommendation from the CA who in turn may seek a recommendation from the TSMA. The key element of the review process is a deterministic timeline for a formal resolution to the Problem Report.

A preliminary review will be performed and an initial response provided to the Applicant within ten business days of Problem Report submission. This stage allows simple problems to be dealt with expeditiously. A detailed review will be undertaken for issues that are more complicated or when the preliminary review does not resolve the issue. Final resolution will be provided within an additional 20 business days.

In most cases, 30 business days is sufficient to provide final resolution. However, in exceptional circumstances, final resolution may take longer and potentially require a face-to-face meeting of The Open Group's review group to achieve resolution. If possible, the Problem Report will be addressed sufficiently within 15 business days to allow the certification process to proceed pending final resolution.

If the Applicant is not satisfied with the final resolution, the Applicant may invoke the appeals process defined by Clauses 4.12 through 4.14 of the TMLA.

The Problem Report resolution process will allow the Applicant to remain anonymous, so pre-certification activity is kept entirely confidential. The anonymous review process requires that requests be filtered automatically prior to distribution to the review group. The filter will remove the product and Applicant sections of the Problem Report, so these are the only sections that should contain company names, product names, or other confidential information. Please note that if Applicant-specific information is included in the sections reserved for the technical descriptions, filtering will not result in an anonymous request.

The SA is responsible for Problem Report resolution, though it will require an opinion from the TSMA for issues related to the Test Suites, and from the CA for issues related to the certification system. These opinions must be provided within five business days, in order for the Specification Authority to provide its preliminary response on time. The process is outlined in the following diagram.

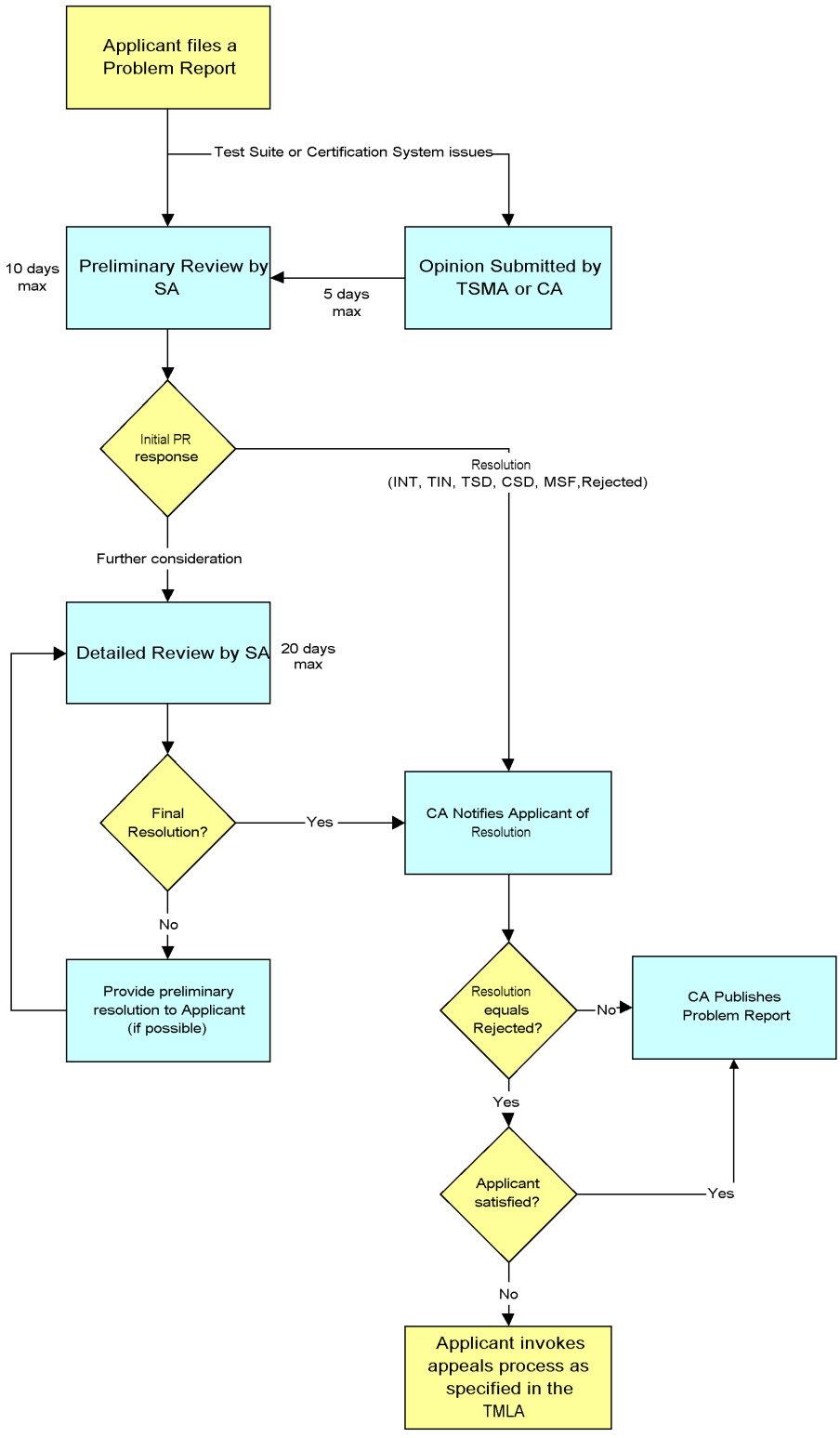

Figure 2. Problem Reporting Process

9.3 Resolution of Problem Reports

The possible outcomes for Problem Report resolution are as set out in Section 7 of Schedule 4 of the TMLA, with the addition of the category below:

- Certification System Deficiency (CSD) (see Section 1.3)

9.4 Problem Report Repository

The CA will maintain a web-based repository of all submitted Problem Reports. The information will contain the technical details such as the nature of the problem and its status of resolution, but will not contain sections reserved for Applicant and product details, thus maintaining the confidentiality of the Applicant.

10. APPEALS PROCESS

Refer to Clauses 4.12 through 4.14 of the TMLA.

11. CONFIDENTIALITY

Refer to Clause 12 of the TMLA.