The Exporters FAQ Guide to CCC Certification for China

Introduction

If you are planning on exporting products into China, then you may need to secure product certification to National Chinese requirements in order to gain market access.

Manufacturers and exporters doing business in other territories will see some similarities in the process of achieving CCC with the schemes for other countries, but there are important differences in terms of time and required investment that will need to anticipated in the compliance planning process.

In this FAQ document we'll look the process of obtaining CCC and give you some insight into what you can expect (and give you some tips to optimise the process).

The Basics

Q: What does CCC stand for?

CCC is an abbreviation of China Compulsory Product Certification. This is a statutory compulsory safety certification system that was developed to provide a basic safeguard to consumers and their property in China. It was implemented on May 1st 2002. Products not meeting CCC requirements may be held at the border by Chinese Customs and will be subject to other penalties.

Q: What product types require CCC Marking?

Currently, there are 22 groups of products covering total 163 product categories subject to Mandatory CCC Mark. These include:

- Electrical Wires and Cables
- Switches for Circuits, Installation
- Low-voltage Electrical Apparatus
- Small Power Motors
- Electric Tools
- Welding Machines
- Household and Similar Electrical Appliances
- Audio and Video Apparatus
- Information Technology Equipment (IT)
- Lighting apparatus
- Motor vehicles, Motor Cycles and Safety Parts
- Motor vehicle Tires
- Safety glasses
- Agricultural Machinery (Equipment for Crop Protection)
- Latex products

- Telecommunication Terminal Equipment
- Medical Devices
- Fire Fighting Equipment.
- Detectors for Intruder Alarm Systems
- Wireless local area network
- Decorative solvent coatings
- Toy products

Every category has a corresponding set of implementation rules published by CNCA as a guide on how to carry out CCC certification.

Q: What Standards are CCC Marks based on?

The CCC system is based on Chinese "Guo Biao" (GB) Standards. Guo Biao literally means "National Standards". Most are harmonised with International Standards. Products applying for CCC approval must conform to GB standards and/or other additional technical requirements.

Note: Key component parts of finished products, spare parts and replacement parts, may also in some cases require separate CCC certification.

Q: How long is CCC valid for?

A CCC is valid for 5 years - but requires an annual follow-up inspection to maintain it.

Management & Implementation Bodies

Q: Who administers the CCC scheme?

The scheme is made possible by the work of 3 organisations:

AQSIQ issue the Regulations for Compulsory Product Certification

AQSIQ is the 'State General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine of China' which set out the product rules and regulations in the region. They will also review and approve the 'catalogue' of certified products issued jointly with CNCA

CNCA manage Compulsory Product Certification

CNCA is the 'Certification and Accreditation Administration of China' – they implement and supervise the compulsory product certification system

CQC undertake Compulsory Product Certification

CQC is the 'China Quality Certification Centre' - the largest professional certification body approved by AQSIQ and CNCA in China. They will issue CCC certificates for 18 categories of products and voluntary CQC Mark certification.

Obligations of relevant parties

Q: What are the obligations of the Applicant? (This may be the manufacturer or their design authority)

There are 3 primary obligations of the certification applicant:

- Complete and submit application documents

- Arrangement for certification

- Paying certification charges

Q: What are the obligations of manufacturers, wholesalers or retailers or importers?

They must:

- Provide necessary conditions for the implementation of certification, including following appropriate processes and enabling follow up inspections and audits by AQSIQ local branches

- Ensure certified products continuously meets specified requirements

- Only sell or import products which have been appropriately certified

- Only apply the Mark to certified products

They must NOT mislead consumers to believe a product bears CCC Marking when it doesn't and they must NOT transfer, trade certificates and Marks between products.

Certification

Q: What are the basic constituents of achieving CCC Mark?
- Type testing to appropriate Standards

- Assessment of a manufacturers Quality System

- Regular follow up inspections and surveillance

Q: What are the basic steps for CCC product certification?

The first step is to determine if your product falls into CCC scope. Using the Chinese "Tariff Code" or "HS Code" is the most efficient way to determine if a product is CCC-regulated or not. If it is then you will need to consider the following stages:

1. Documentation and Application for certification
2. Sample submittal and type testing
3. Initial factory Inspection (if applicable)
4. Evaluation of certification results and issuance of certificates
5. CCC Mark & labelling
6. Follow-up inspection

Q: Can I use an IEC CB scheme certificate in my application for CCC Mark?

Generally speaking, CB reports not older than 3 years are accepted for safety applications. However for EMC applications, testing must be done at an authorised governmental lab (no overseas laboratory report will be accepted).

In reality, it is still likely that a CB report provided by applicant could be rejected by CQC due to failure to comply with the conditions below:

1. The Standard in the CB report should fall within the CB accreditation scope of CQC;

2. Both the CB certificate and the corresponding CB report should not be older than 3 years;

3. Exact consistency is required between the CB certificate and the CCC application in terms of the product name, model no., specification, manufacturer and the factory or factories involved) - otherwise it will be rejected

4. The CCC applicant should be same as in the CB certificate in principle, otherwise an authorisation letter is required from the CB certificate holder declaring duties and liabilities of both parties

5. The IEC standard in the CB report should not be older than the corresponding IEC standard of the current Chinese GB standard

6. The key component list in the CB report should be shown with approval no. of each component (required by Department II for HA&HVAC products)

7. Only testing location in TMP, WMT format can be accepted, SMT and RMT cannot be accepted

8. Equipment list in TMP format should be included

9. Ratings used in the CB report should be in line with 220V and 50Hz, only 230V, 50Hz will not be accepted.

Q: How is the product Marked?

There are different Marks for different testing requirements. These are:

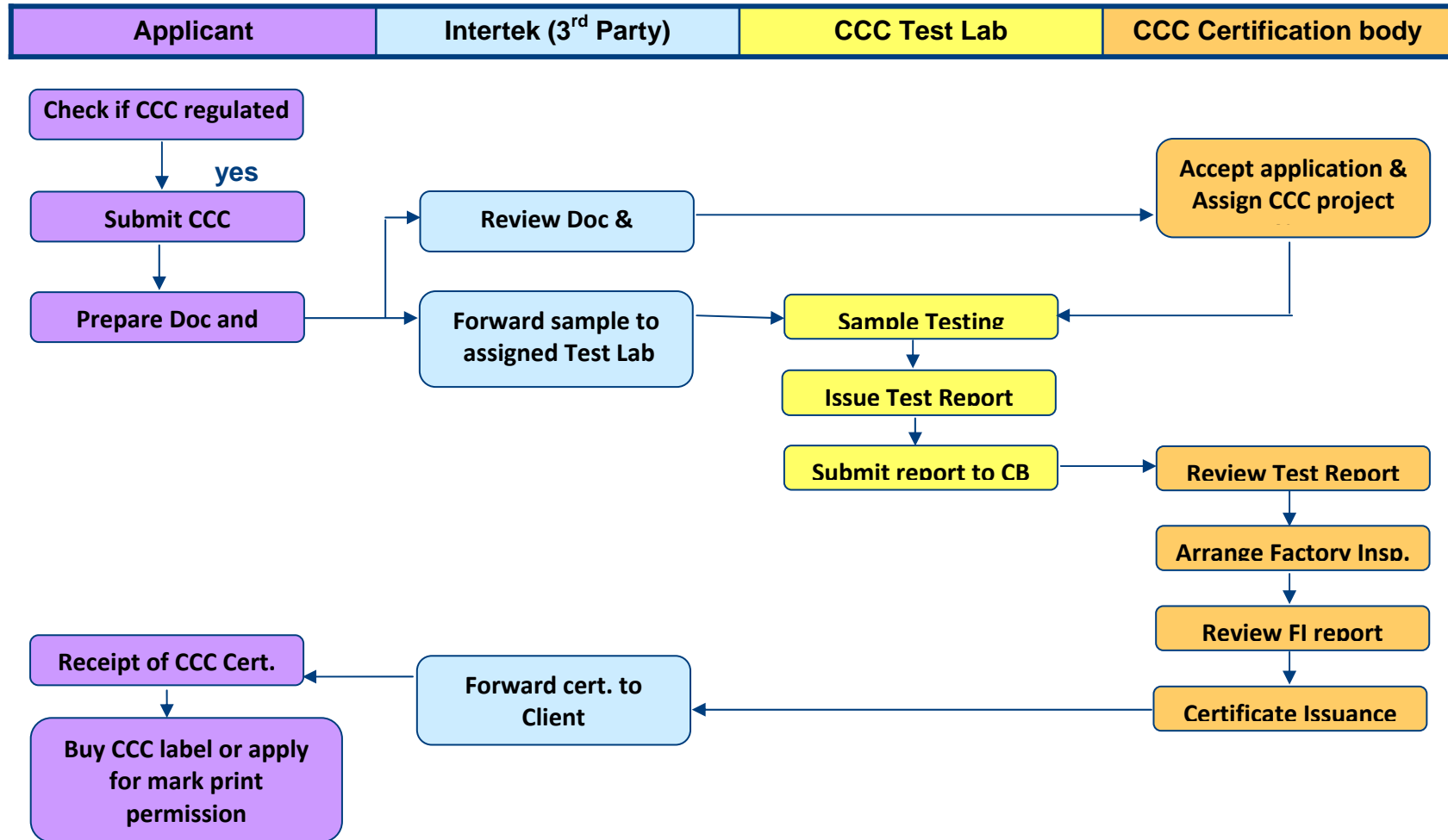| For safety only | For safety & EMC | For EMC only | For fire products |

Q: How is the Mark applied to a product?

Manufacturers have 2 options to meet their needs:

1. To purchase "CCC stickers" for individual units
2. Apply for Mark-print permission through **CCC Mark Issuing and Managing Center** (Approved printing methods for certified products are printed, pressed, molded, screen-printed and painted)

Q: What is the Application & Certification process?

Please see the diagram below.

Flowchart of CCC Application

Applicant	Intertek (3rd Party)	CCC Test Lab	CCC Certification body

Check if CCC regulated

yes

Submit CCC

Prepare Doc and

Review Doc &

Forward sample to assigned Test Lab

Accept application & Assign CCC project

Sample Testing

Issue Test Report

Submit report to CB

Review Test Report

Arrange Factory Insp.

Review FI report

Receipt of CCC Cert.

Forward cert. to Client

Certificate Issuance

Buy CCC label or apply for mark print permission

Initiating a project

Q: What do I need to provide to my test partner to get a quotation and timescales for achieving CCC Mark?

Your test partner will need to check the regulatory status of your product to determine the scope of work needed in order to estimate costs and turnaround time. So during the inquiry stage you will need to provide the following information:

- Product description/specification, ratings, instructions for use and photos

- Names of relevant IEC or GB standards that apply to your product

- The HS or Tariff code relating to the product

- Description of differences among various models in the same family (if any)

- Any CB reports (with Chinese deviations) no more than 3 years old

- Details of where the factory is located and if it's the first time applying for CCC approval

- Details of if the factory has a valid CCC factory inspection report no more than 12 months old

- Data on whether key components like plugs, cord sets, cords, fuses or external power supplies have been separately CCC certified

CCC Documents

Q: What documentation will I need to provide for the CCC Mark process?

- Application form

- Power of attorney

- Declaration of conformity

- Product description or datasheet

- Difference Description among various models in the same family

- Circuit diagram, construction drawing

- Key component list / BOM of all plastic material parts (both safety and EMC)

- Nameplate in simplified Chinese

- User manual in simplified Chinese

- CB certificate and CB report (if any)

- Business license for Applicant /Manufacturer/ Factory (if different)

- OEM or ODM agreement if manufacturer is different to Factory

- Questionnaire for Initial factory inspection (or latest follow-up CCC inspection report)

Samples & Testing

Q: What samples will I need to supply?
Generally 2 samples are required. However, depending on the product type, the number of required test samples may vary.

Q: Where can I test my product and how long will it take?
Currently, there are around 158 governmental testing laboratories designated by CNCA to perform CCC Mark testing. CQC has stricter implementation on CNCA rules currently, which stipulates every test lab can only accept testing orders as per a CNCA assigned territory which varies depending on factory location and applicable standard.

Note: The rule for laboratory territory classification does not apply if applications for CB+CCC are done together.

CB reports are helpful in reducing testing turnaround time because they help the certification authorities recognise existing components, but if no valid CB report is available, additional testing on key components that lack CCC or CQC certificate will be required. This may cause extra delay in achieving certification.

Factory Inspection

Q: What are the factory Inspection requirements for CCC?
An Initial Factory Inspection (IFI) is required for a manufacturer who is applying for CCC for the first time or does not have a valid CCC Factory Inspection report available.

The IFI must be performed by CQC, but follow up inspections (FUI) can be performed by overseas inspection bodies in different regions that have a signed MoU with CQC.

Lead time for scheduling a CCC IFI for overseas factory is more difficult to control. One of the biggest challenges for scheduling a CCC IFI is obtaining US Visas for the inspectors.

Q: How many inspectors can I expect?

Usually CQC auditors will assign 2 auditors for 2 days for an IFI. However, the duration may vary on the number of products to be certified and scale of factory. During the Factory Inspection, the auditors will be primarily focused at assessment of factory quality assurance and check the consistency of the product.

After a successful factory audit, a factory will be assigned an ID number. The ID number can be placed under the CCC logo but is not mandatory. If there are any non-conformities found in the follow-up inspection, corrective actions shall be completed within three months. Otherwise, the certificates will be withdrawn.

Q: What is a typical audit agenda?

Day 1	Inspection Item	Clause
09:00 -10:00 10:00-13:00 13:00-14:00 14:00-17:00	Opening Meeting General Information of the Factory Responsibilities and Resources Control of Documents and Records Internal Audit System Use of Certificate and CCC Mark Lunch Control of Suppliers and Purchased Critical Components and Materials Production Process Control and Inspection Routine Test and Verification Test Packing, Handling and Storage of Certified Products	 1.1-1.2 2.1-2.3 8 3.1-3.2 4.1-4.5 5, 10

Day 2	Inspection Item	Clause
09:00 –13:00	Sample Test Control of Measurement and Monitoring Devices Control of Non-conforming Products Consistency of the Certified Products	6 7
13:00-14:00	Lunch	9
14:00-16:00	Document Review and Report Preparation	
16:00-17:00	Close Meeting	

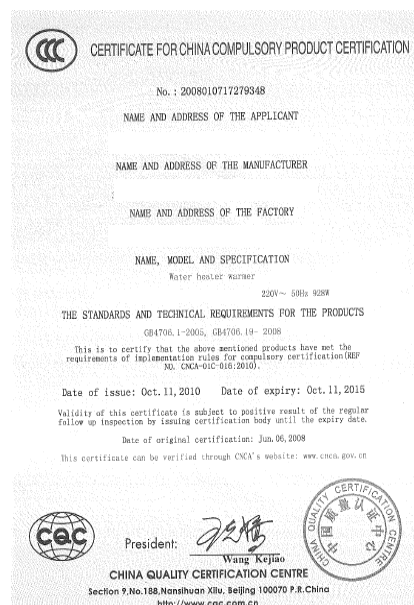* Above clauses are referring to CCC/CQC Product Certification Requirements for Factory's Quality Assurance Ability

Example Fees & Time

For a product: (Sample - Portable luminaire with dimmer)	Cost
Application fee & Approval fee	RMB1300/pc
Testing fee:	Safety: RMB2500 (w CB), or RMB 4000(w/o CB) + component test EMC: RMB4500
Initial Factory inspection Fee	RMB2500/man day, usually 6-7 man-days for overseas factories, plus travel expenses
CCC label or Mark print permission	Sticker: various per different size Mark print: RMB450/ first year and RMB300 from second
Annual license fee for CCC certificate	RMB 100/pc (from second year)
For a Standard: Safety: GB7000.1-2007, GB7000.204-2008/ EMC: GB17743-2007, GB17625.1-2003	Turnaround
Type Testing Remark:	2-4 weeks (with CB) / 6-7 weeks (w/o CB) Component testing if any are excluded in above time
Initial Factory audit	4-10 weeks depending on location of overseas factory
Review of Test & audit report	1 week
Certificate Issuance	1 week
Label purchase or Mark print permission	2 weeks

The CCC Certificate

Q: What does the certificate detail?
1. Certificate No.
2. Applicant Name & Address
3. Manufacturer Name & Address
4. Factory Name and Address
5. Product Name, Model and Specification
6. Testing Standards
7. Implementation Rules issued by CNCA
8. Date of Issue
9. Date of Expiry
10. Certification Body

Common issues & Recommendations on CCC

Q: Are there any commonly found issues in CB report recognition?
- Applicant/manufacturer name or address are not consistent with the information provided to CCC

- The IEC Standard is not equivalent to prevailing GB version

- A CB issued on basis of SMT and RMT (only TMP and WMT are accepted for CCC)

- No TMP equipment list if CB in TMP testing procedure

- The model number on the CB certificate is not exactly same as on the application documentation

- Ratings in CB indicated as 230V 60Hz (220V or 220-240V, 100-240V 50Hz can be accepted)

- Samples are inconsistent (components and construction)

- No certification number listed in key component list for HA/HVAC

- The CB report is older than 3 years

- The family grouping in the CB report sometimes conflicts with CCC rules in classification of application units

- Testing data is insufficient or some testing items are judged as N/A in CB but required in CCC

Recommendation: Take these issues into consideration when preparing CB reports. CQC has very strict requirements for CB and any minor mistakes will mean the application will be rejected and may subject a product to full testing.

Suspension or Withdrawal of CCC Mark

Q: Under what circumstances would my CCC Mark be suspended or withdrawn?

- If the applicant has not updated their testing to the latest GB standard within timeframe regulated by CNCA announcements (usually 1 year after the standard is released).

- Failure to finish modifications of existing certificates in the event of changes in key components or certificate information.

- No sample available for surveillance checks or non-conformities found during follow-up factory inspection.

- No timely application for factory re-audit due to factory relocation.

Recommendation – The applicant bears the responsibility to take actions relating to his certification in a timely manner to avoid suspension or withdrawal of certificates, so be they aware of keeping inspection appointments and keeping testing up to date.

Highlights
- The certificate should be renewed 90 days before the expiry date

- If the certificate holder fails to take adequate corrective action within 3 months during the suspension period, the CCC certificate will be withdrawn by certification body.

- If the certificate is withdrawn by certification body, the model is not allowed to re-apply for CCC for 6 months.

- If the client does not want to keep their certification anymore, it is strongly recommended for the holder to proactively revoke the certificate rather than waiting for it to be withdrawn.

Q: Will CQC confirm for me what is in or out of the CCC regulated scope?

No. CQC is not authorised to issue confirmation letters on what is or isn't included in the scope of CCC.

Recommendation - Applicant should check the HS code and relevant standards for themselves or confer with a test partner knowledgeable in this area.

Final recommendations for applicants to speed up the process and meet the requirements

- Regarding AV/ICT/HA/HVAC products - if the manufacturer and factory are different an OEM or ODM agreement should be provided.

- Ensure the CB paperwork matches exactly the application details for CCC.

- No trademark information is to be shown on the CCC certificate. If the trademark is owned by the manufacturer the nameplate can list the trademark only, otherwise the manufacturer's info should be listed – but there is no requirement for factory information.

- Information on the packaging for sale/distribution should be consistent with CCC certificate.

Other Certifications in China

CCC is not the only Chinese certification scheme that you may need to consider for your product. You should also anticipate requirements under the following schemes – depending on the type of product you want to sell in China.

NAL - Network Access License (NAL) governed by the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology (MIIT)
- Mandatory for Telecom products

- In-country testing is mandatory

- Certificate valid for 3 years

- Only China local representatives can be the applicant

RTA - Radio Type Approval controlled by State Radio Regulation Committee (now called as State Radio Monitoring Centre) under the administration of MIIT
- Compulsory for wireless products

- In-country testing is mandatory

- Certificates are valid for 5 years

- Applicants can be foreign companies

SFDA - Registration certificate for medical devices

- Issued by State Food & Drug Administration (SFDA)

- Medical device definition identical to MDD (class I, II and III devices)

- The 7 items falling in CCC scope are subject to both SFDA and CCC approval

- Valid for 4 years, re-registration within 6 months prior to expiry date is needed

- If the manufacturing of a medical device is stopped continuously for more than 2 years, its registration certificate is automatically invalidated

- SFDA issues the registration certificate to the manufacturers only

- Test reports issued by an SFDA recognized test center and clinical trial reports are needed for Class II and Class III devices.

- If Class III device, an on site audit of the manufacturing facility's quality system is needed.

How Intertek can help

Intertek will assist you with fast CCC Mark Certification for China, from documentation preparation and technical consultancy to complete project management.

Our local accreditations include CNACL of China, Hong Kong Laboratory Accreditation Scheme (HOKLAS) and Spring of Singapore.

Call us today on +44(0)1372 370900 to start your project today.

For more information on specific testing and certification information, please contact Intertek at 1-800-WORLDLAB, email icenter@intertek.com, or visit our website at www.intertek.com.