

An Introduction to Import Certification

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Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide a brief overview of the standards and certification procedures necessary to export electrical kitchen appliances into MECS priority markets. This report will focus on anglophone East Africa—specifically Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania—though we intend to expand our knowledge to guidance concerning other markets in Sub-Saharan Africa and Southeast Asia.

All of these African countries are part of major international trade organizations including the WTO, African Economic Community, and the East African Community. As such, they all have similar procedures and regulations concerning the import of electronic kitchen appliances, and many of their neighbour states use their existing standards as guidelines for drafting standards of their own.

Each country has their own regulatory body that certifies and implements product standards for all imported manufactured items (See Table 1 for details), which are available for purchase either from these government agencies or third parties. Though the exact verbiage of their respective standards regarding electric cooking appliances may differ slightly from country to country, generally they all conform to internationally accepted regulations put out by bodies such as the International Organization for Standardization, of which all three countries' standards bureaus are members.

Certification of product conformity to the set standards is often provided by some form of review, assessment, or audit by an external third party that has been accredited by the appropriate standards bureau. Product certification, though voluntary in Kenya, is essential for marketing purposes. Whether requirements for product certification are or are not mandatory, foreign companies are encouraged to have their export products certified to increase marketability and consumer confidence regardless.

Certification Procedure

Electric cooking appliances qualify for Pre-Export Verification of Conformity [PVoC] as a method of product certification in all three countries. PVoC is an inspection and verification program carried out on goods by appointed inspection agents in the country of export. These inspection agents are private companies, and company accreditation is not universal across Africa (Table 2), though Intertek International is accredited almost universally.

Verification of compliance to technical regulations and standards are based on Article 5 of Technical Barriers to Trade [TBT] published by the WTO, which requires that technical standards applied to domestically manufactured products must also be applied to foreign products. PVoC often incorporates

elements of risk assessment, product inspection, and quality assurance. After the third-party assessment, the shipment will then be accompanied by a Certificate of Conformity [CoC] issued by authorized PVoC agent prior to shipment that confirms the product complies with relevant technical regulations, which, again, though in some cases not mandatory, is often necessary to ensure easy customs clearance.

To obtain a PVoC certification, the exporter must first submit these documents to the accredited agent:

- 1) a request for certification
- 2) the shipment invoice
- 3) evidentiary documents that prove conformity, such as test reports, quality certificates, analysis reports, etc.

To obtain evidence that all requirements in the applicable standards or technical requirements are met, goods must undergo one or a combination of the following verification process, which include any of the following:

- physical inspection of the products
- laboratory testing
- a factory audit
- documentary verification.

It is then the importer's responsibility to notify the appropriate regulatory body of the intention to import any commodity, and to ensure their suppliers are conversant with import quality requirements specified in the relevant standards and that their consignments are accompanied by the appropriate documentation, which in most cases is a CoC.

Kenya is excepted in this—if a product is not accompanied by a certification document, the consignment must be presented to the Kenyan Bureau of Standards for destination inspection and/or testing prior to release from the Port of Entry.

Other African countries that follow similar third party certification schemes and require conformity assessments include Egypt, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Algeria, Gabon, Cameroon, and Cote d'Ivoire. However, their certification schemes differ slightly from those of East African Community members.

Fees and Timeline

Most PVoC agents say that it takes about five days to receive a certification from the request date. However, depending on the certification route chosen to export to the destination country, applicants are advised that the process can take up to a month. Infrequent exporters may be subject to more rigorous inspection or documentation requests, as all three countries have separate certification routes for consignments dependent on the frequency and volume of product imported (Tables 3-5).

Certification is generally expedited for those who ship more frequently and in volume. The fees associated with certification differ slightly dependent on the certification route chosen and are payable by the party requesting the certification. Certificates for specific shipments are generally valid from six months to a year, but can be valid up to three years in some cases.

Table 1. Bureaus and Compulsory Product Standards

Country	Standards Bureau	Website	Relevant Standards for the Import of ECs
Kenya	Kenya Bureau of Standards [KEBS]	https://www.kebs.org/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KS IEC 60335-1:2016 Kenya Standard — Household and similar electrical appliances — Safety — Part 1: General requirements, (First Edition) • KS IEC 60335-2-36:2017 Kenya Standard — Household and similar electrical appliances— Safety — Part 2-36: Particular requirements for commercial electric cooking ranges, ovens, hobs and hob elements (First Edition) • KS IEC 60335-2-39:2017 Kenya Standard — Household and similar electrical appliances— Safety — Part 2-39: Particular requirements for commercial electric multipurpose cooking pans (First Edition) • KS IEC 60335-2-9:2019 Kenya Standard — Household and similar electrical appliances — Safety — Part 2-9: Particular requirements for grills, toasters and similar portable cooking appliances (First Edition) • KS IEC 60335-2-15:2016 Kenya Standard — Household and similar electrical appliances — Safety — Part 2-15: Particular requirements for appliances for heating liquids (First Edition)
Uganda	Uganda National Bureau of Standards [UNBS]	https://unbs.go.ug/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • US IEC 60335-1:2010 Household and similar electrical appliances — Safety — Part 1: General requirements (2nd Edition) • US IEC 60335-2-6:2008 Household and similar electrical appliances — Safety — Part 2-6: Particular requirements for stationary cooking ranges, hobs, ovens and similar appliances (2nd Edition) • US IEC 60335-2-9:2002 Household and similar electrical appliances – Safety – Part 2-9: Particular requirements for grills, toasters and similar portable cooking appliances • US IEC 60335-2-12:2002 Household and similar electrical appliances – Safety – Part 2-12: Particular requirements for warming plates and similar appliances

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • US IEC 60335-2-13:2004 Household and similar electrical appliances – Safety – Part 2-13: Particular requirements for deep fat fryers, frying pans and similar appliances • US IEC 60335-2-14:2002 Household and similar electrical appliances – Safety – Part 2-14: Particular requirements for kitchen machines • US IEC 60335-2-25:2002 Household and similar electrical appliances – Safety – Part 2-25: Particular requirements for microwave ovens, including combination microwave ovens
Tanzania	Tanzania Bureau of Standards [TBS]	https://www.tbs.go.tz/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TZS 448 (Part 1):2018/ IEC 60335-1:2010 Safety of household and similar electrical appliances – Part 1: General Requirements • TZS 448 (Part 2-1): 1992(E) Safety of household and similar electrical appliances Particular requirements – General • TZS 448 (Part 2-2): 1993(E) Safety of household and similar electrical appliances - Cooking ranges, cooking tables, ovens and similar appliances for household use • TZS 448 (Part 2-3): 1993(E) Safety of household and similar electrical appliances - Appliances for heating liquids • TZS 448 (Part 2-6): 2018/ IEC 60335-26:2014(E) Household and similar electrical appliances – Safety - Part 2-6: Particular requirements for stationary cooking ranges, hobs, ovens, and similar appliances • TZS 448 (Part 2-15):2018/ IEC 60335-2-15:2012(E) Household and similar electrical appliances – Safety - Part 2-15: Particular requirements for appliances for heating liquids

Table 2. PVoC Agents and Countries of Accreditation

PVoC Contractor	Website	Kenya	Uganda	Tanzania
Intertek International Limited	https://www.intertek.com/	✓	✓	✓
Bureau Veritas S.A	https://group.bureauveritas.com/	✓		✓
China Certification & Inspection (Group) Inspection Co. Ltd	https://www.ccicshaanxi.com/	✓		✓
Cotecna Inspection S.A	https://www.cotecna.com/	✓		
SGS S.A	https://www.sgs.com/	✓	✓	✓
TUV Rhineland	https://www.tuv.com/united-kingdom/en/		✓	

Table 3. PVoC Certification Routes - Kenya

Route	Targeted At	Specifications	Certification Period	Fees
A – Consignment Inspection and Testing	Relatively Infrequent/Low Volume Shipments	Products to be shipped have to be both tested and physically inspected to demonstrate conformity to relevant standards and regulatory requirements. This route is open to all products being exported by either traders or manufacturers. Additionally, all containerized cargo under this route must be sealed by the contracted inspection agencies and seal and container numbers indicated in the CoC.	6 Months	- FOB Value 0.60% - Minimum Fee (USD) 265 - Maximum Fee (USD) 2,700
B – Product Registration	Frequent Shipments of Homogenous Products	This route offers a fast-track certification process for goods with reasonable and consistent levels of quality through registration of such products by the PVoC Agent. Shipments of registered products are exempted from mandatory testing and certification may be based on physical inspection only. However, regular testing of registered product is still required to ensure product conformity throughout the registration period.	1 Year	- FOB Value 0.55% - Minimum Fee (USD) 265 - Maximum Fee (USD) 2,700
C – Product Licensing	Established Manufacturers with Demonstrated Quality Control Protocols	Requires auditing of such production processes and licensing of products manufactured thereof by authorized PVoC Agent(s) in line with ISO/IEC TR 17026:2015 . Licensed products shall be subject to random physical inspection by authorized PVoC Agent(s) prior to issuance of Certificate of Conformity and subsequent shipping of the same. However, the PVoC Agent(s) shall carry out surveillance testing during the license validity period.	3 Years	- FOB Value 0.35% - Minimum Fee (USD) 265 - Maximum Fee (USD) 2,700
D – Consolidated Cargo Imports	Registered Importers of Consolidated Cargo	This is cargo containing a wide range of products or merchandise generally in small quantities or parcels belonging to several consignees who have pooled or	N/A	- FOB Value 0.75% - Minimum Fee (USD) 265 - Maximum Fee (USD) 2,700

		<p>assembled together their parcels to form one consignment which may be declared as belonging to various persons assembled to form one consignment at the country of supply which may be declared as belonging to one importer at the port of destination and de-consolidated back into the original individual consignments for delivery to the respective cargo owners. Registered consolidators, who bring together separate items from different individuals or sources into a one consignment for importation, shall apply for certification and submit the packing list and commercial invoice to PVOC agent at least forty-eight (48) hours before inspection. The PVOC partners shall assign the required number of inspectors to the consolidation points to undertake inspection and thereafter issue Certificate of Inspection (CoI). High risk goods imported through this Route shall be subjected to testing at destination by KEBS before release. Importers of such goods are required to meet the cost of testing at destination.</p>		
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Table 4. PVoC Certification Routes - Uganda

Route	Targeted At	Specifications	Fees
A – Unregistered Products	Relatively Infrequent/Low Volume Shipments	Requires physical inspection of goods which includes verification of the product labelling, instruction manuals, packaging, and other necessary markings and physical requirements mandated by the UNBS standards and technical regulations, accompanied by a CoC.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - FOB value 0.50% - Minimum Fee (USD) 235 - Maximum Fee (USD) 3,000
B – Product Registration	Frequent Shipments of Homogenous Products	Shipments of registered products are exempted from mandatory testing and certification may be based on physical inspection only. However, regular testing of registered product is still required to ensure product conformity throughout the registration period.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - FOB value 0.45% - Minimum Fee (USD) 235 - Maximum Fee (USD) 3,000
C – Product Licensing	Established Manufacturers with Demonstrated Quality Control Protocols	Requires auditing of such production processes and licensing of products manufactured thereof by authorized PVoC Agent(s) in line with ISO/IEC TR 17026:2015 . Involves auditing of such production processes and licensing of products manufactured thereof by authorized PVoC Agent(s) in line with ISO/IEC TR 17026:2015 .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - FOB value 0.25% - Minimum Fee (USD) 235 - Maximum Fee (USD) 3,000
D – Consolidated Cargo Imports	Registered Importers of Consolidated Cargo	The shipment will be subject to mandatory physical inspection of goods which includes verification of the product labelling, instruction manuals, packaging, and other necessary markings and physical requirements mandated by the UNBS standards and technical regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - FOB value 0.50% - Minimum Fee (USD) 235 - Maximum Fee (USD) 3,000

Table 5. PVoC Certification Routes - Tanzania

Route	Targeted At	Specifications	Fees
A – Shipment Inspection and Certification	Relatively Infrequent/Low Volume Shipments	Products to be shipped have to be both tested and physically inspected to demonstrate conformity to relevant standards, essential requirements or manufacturer’s specifications. This route is open to all products being exported by either traders or manufacturers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - FOB value 0.50% - Minimum Fee (USD) 250 - Maximum Fee (USD) 5,000
B – Product Registration and Shipment Certification	Frequent Shipments of Homogenous Products	A fast-track certification process for goods with reasonable and consistent levels of quality through the Registration of such products by the PVoC Contractor. Self-declaration of compliance supported by substantiated evidence such as test reports and certificates. Registration is annually renewable, subject to continual compliance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - FOB value 0.45% - Minimum Fee (USD) 250 - Maximum Fee (USD) 5,000
C –Product Licensing and Shipment Certification	Established Manufacturers with Demonstrated Quality Control Protocols	Requires auditing of such production processes and licensing of products manufactured thereof by authorized PVoC Contractor.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - FOB value 0.25% - Minimum Fee (USD) 250 - Maximum Fee (USD) 5,000