DrJ Certification Process

Learn more about the process for those interested in a new Technical Evaluation Report (TER), the annual review of TERs, revisions of TERs, creating private label TERs, or termination of TERs.

NEW TER

Technical Evaluation Reports by DrJ evaluate a product or process based on the model building codes, state building codes, referenced standards, or other industry standards as appropriate to each individual evaluation. In addition to codes and standards, accepted engineering procedures, experience, and good technical judgment are used. The intent of a TER is to prove code compliance to the relevant building codes. Therefore, DrJ provides demonstrated equivalency to materials, products, or methods of construction approved by the code per *IBC* Section 104.11. If you are interested in a TER for a new product or process, contact the team at DrJ Certification for a proposal.

For a new TER, DrJ will need the following from the applicant:

- Signed proposal
- Signed Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA)
- Completed application
- Relevant testing data
- Installation instructions
- Quality control (QC) documentation

DrJ will review the information submitted and perform the following services:

- Establish a scope of work
- Request any additional necessary information needed to properly evaluate the product
- Prepare a draft TER
- Secure applicant review
- Prepare a final TER for approval by the applicant and DrJ
- Post the final TER to the DrJ website

Proposal

If you are interested in obtaining a TER for a product or process, contact DrJ Certification. After discussion with our sales team about the scope and pricing, a proposal will be sent for you to review, sign, and return. Afterwards, you will receive an application package identifying the necessary items. For information on pricing, see the Terms and Conditions of Fees and contact DrJ Certification.

Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA)

While DrJ requires disclosure of proprietary and confidential information for the specific purpose of evaluation, we will only use the information for that limited purpose. Your company remains the exclusive owner of all propriety and confidential information; DrJ does not have any right to your company's intellectual property and will not disclose any confidential information to anyone other than your representatives. DrJ does have the right to independently develop internal testing and data analysis. DrJ requires a signed NDA so both parties are aware of the obligations and understand the steps DrJ takes to protect each client's assets.

Application

Along with the proposal and signed NDA, an application is required so DrJ may determine whether the submitted product can be evaluated for code compliance. If you would like more information about how specific standards apply to your evaluation, please contact DrJ for clarification. We are happy to help our clients better understand the process.

The application may be filed only by the entity having legal rights to all materials, products, methods of construction, evidence, and data for which a TER is sought, and an application for a new TER is considered valid for the life of the report. When DrJ receives the completed new project package, we will review the application to identify whether it includes sufficient information and to determine whether DrJ has the means, ability, and competence to perform the evaluation. If there are questions regarding the scope of the evaluation, missing information, or differences in understanding between DrJ and the client, DrJ will reach out for clarification and may request further information if necessary.

Please note that any application held for more than 30 days without the receipt of any supporting documentation may be closed. If you need an extension, contact DrJ Certification.

Testing Data

The applicant is responsible for completing and submitting supporting data such as plans, details, calculations, and other data which fully describe the subject of the application and substantiate its performance. This information is usually in the following forms:

- Laboratory test reports from ISO/IEC 17025 accredited testing agencies
- Sealed documents from professional engineers or other design professionals
- Evaluation reports from ISO/IEC 17065 accredited certification bodies

All of these tests and reports shall be performed and obtained at the expense of the applicant. Note that the scope of the laboratory's accreditation shall include the type of testing that is to be reported to DrJ. When the TER provisions are based on these reports, the TER shall remain valid only while the underlying report is valid, unless additional information is provided to substantiate the development of the provisions. While DrJ routinely reviews the ongoing validity of the reports during annual reviews, it is ultimately the client's responsibility to inform DrJ of any change in the status of such a report.

Installation Instructions

DrJ includes or references installation instructions in the TER, as the installation is key to the performance of the code compliant design specified in the TER. Product or process installation instructions must be submitted for DrJ's review and approval.

Quality Control (QC)

DrJ Certification is committed to ensuring the products certified in its TERs continue to meet or exceed the specified building code requirements. To do so—and to remain compliant with ISO/IEC 17065 accreditation—DrJ reviews quality documentation on an ongoing basis. This demonstrates that current product performs the same as the product originally tested.

The following documentation is required before the TER is published.

- QC Manual specified in QF 24 DrJ Quality Control Criteria
- Signed contract between the manufacturer and an approved third party inspection agency
    - Factory inspections will be performed by an ISO/IEC 17020 accredited third-party inspection agency or a professional engineer. Costs associated with inspections shall be borne by the applicant.
    - Our Approved 17020 Third-Party Inspection Agencies:
        - Benchmark Holdings, LLC
        - Columbia Research & Testing Corporation
        - Eurofins Expert Services
        - Intertek
        - PFS Corporation
        - QAI Laboratories
        - Quality Control Consultants
        - RADCO Inc
        - R&D Services
        - Contact DrJ for additional information on Approved Agencies
- Signed contract between the manufacturer and DrJ (QF 30) defining the scope of work for each party
- Most recent inspection (quality audit) reports showing compliance with requirements of your quality management system

When required, in accordance with the scope of the TER, reports will be issued only after a qualifying inspection at the facilities designated to manufacture products under the report has been conducted. The purpose of the inspection is to determine whether the manufacturer's quality system has been successfully implemented and provide assurance that, after the TER is issued, the manufactured product will not change from the product described and recognized in the TER.

Maintaining Certification

Congratulations! Your product is now certified by an accredited product certification body. At this point, the TER may be accessed on the DrJ website and used as a reference. Revisions can be made to the TER at any time by contacting DrJ. In order to keep the certification up to date with all building codes and certification schemes, DrJ requires annual reviews, notification of required changes, correct use of the DrJ mark, and QC review.

Notification to DrJ and Required Changes to TERs:

You must notify DrJ prior to making modifications to products covered by TERs. Some examples of relevant modifications are significant changes in the formulation, manufacturing process, or QC program or changes in the report holder company name, address, ownership, legal status, or additional listees. If changes are made to the TER that affect the validity of certification, such as a component or material change, the report holder must stop using the TER until a TER revision has been applied for and secured.

When there is a change in the conditions under which a TER was originally issued (e.g., a change in code requirements, acceptance criteria and/or DrJ rules or policy) that affects the TER, the report holder will be notified.

Product Identification and Correct Use of the DrJ Mark:

Products shall be identified as specified in the applicable TER. At a minimum, the method of identification shall include the report holder's name and the product name. In addition, the product certification mark and/or the TER number (TER XXXX-XX) shall be included when applicable. The graphical portion of the DrJ certification mark may also be included but is not required. For more details, please see our Rules Regarding Use of the DrJ Certification Mark.

ANNUAL REVIEW OF TERS

DrJ reviews all TERs annually to confirm continued code compliance. In order to do this, the following are or may be required from the client.

Inspections

As discussed in Quality Control (QC) above, QC is important as it allows DrJ to certify that current product performs as specified in the TER. Therefore, a signed contract between the manufacturer and an approved third party inspection agency is required, and the third party in-plant quality assurance inspections listed in the contract must be carried out. While the frequency of inspections may be more or less depending on the product type, inspections are generally performed on a quarterly basis.

As a condition of a TER, the report holder grants DrJ staff, authorized representatives of DrJ, or accredited third-party inspection agencies the right to conduct inspections of the manufacturing facility to verify compliance with the evaluation report. The inspection form filled out by the inspector must be sent to DrJ to confirm inspections are being performed as stated.

Verification Test

Verification testing is annual or quarterly product testing which compares the current product to the original tested values. Verification testing is not required for all certified products. However, clients do find it helpful in understanding their product and improving both their QC system and the quality of their product.

Quality Control (QC) Manual Edits

Along with any changes to the TER, the QC Manual will need to be reviewed and updated every year and the updated version sent to DrJ for review and approval. DrJ will keep a signed copy of the QC Manual and reference it when reviewing.

REVISION OF TERS

Revisions to TERs may be made at any time for anything from a product name change to a new product attribute.

Proposal

If there is a desired or required revision to a TER, contact DrJ for a proposal for the changes. In the instance that DrJ finds the need for a larger scope of revision work than originally proposed by the client, DrJ will reach out and discuss the details of the required changes.

Testing Data

Any data required for the requested revisions must be submitted before the revision can begin. Where data consists of calculations, plans, and specifications developed through the practice of architecture or engineering, the documents containing such data shall be sealed by a registered design professional. All testing must be performed by an accredited testing agency per ANSI 17025.

In the event there is a code change that effects the product certified under a TER prohibiting a particular material, product, or method of construction and equivalency cannot be proven, you will be informed that a TER cannot be reissued.

Quality Control (QC)

Changes to a TER may require changes to the QC Manual. For example, if there is a product name change, the QC Manual also must be updated to reflect these changes. When changes to QC Manual are requested by DrJ, they must be made before the new revision of the TER is posted.

ADDITIONAL LISTEES OR PRIVATE LABELS

Is your product distributed or manufactured by another company? If authorized, DrJ will add them to the TER so the product distributed or produced by another company is certified as well. Additional listees will be required to complete and submit an additional listee form as an appendix to the original TER application supplied by DrJ. Some of the required information is name, address, and verification by the original TER holder of their acceptability as an additional listee.

If a private label TER is required, the original report holder may authorize a duplicate TER under the name of a distributor, also known as a private label applicant. The private label applicant will need to complete and submit a private label application with the approval of the master report holder. In this case, the content of the TER created will be linked to the original report holder's TER. For example, the two TERs will share the same renewal date, all relevant information, and revisions. Any revisions requested for either the private label or the master TER will need to be made to both documents.

RETIRING, WITHDRAWING, OR SUSPENDING

If, for any reason, a TER must be retired, withdrawn, or suspended, the client will be given sufficient notice to make any required changes. Upon suspension, withdrawal, or termination of certification, the client must discontinue their use of all advertising matter that contains any reference to DrJ certification and take actions as required by DrJ.

APPENDIX: LEGAL DETAILS

DrJ TERs assist those who enforce model codes in determining whether a given subject complies with those codes. A TER is not to be construed as representing a judgment about aesthetics or any other attributes not specifically addressed in the report, nor as an endorsement or recommendation for use of the subject of the TER. Approval for use is the prerogative and responsibility of the Owner or Building Designer.

Client Responsibilities Regarding the DrJ Certification Mark

Once certification is granted, the DrJ mark may be used is specific ways. It is the responsibility of the report holder to understand these rules and to secure DrJ approval when there is a question about the use of the DrJ name and mark, DrJ TER number, the TER itself, or any communications associated with the TER.

Per ISO/IEC 17065, DrJ shall exercise control as specified by the certification scheme over ownership, use, and display of licenses, certificates, marks of conformity, and any other mechanisms for indicating a product is certified. Per the terms and conditions included in the TER Application, each client agrees to abide by DrJ's guidelines for use of its certification mark.

Allowed:

- Securing DrJ approval in advance whenever there is a question about the use of the DrJ name and/or TER
- Using the DrJ mark only on or in connection with products, components, methods, and materials that are covered in currently valid TERs
- Reproducing the current TER in its entirety by the report holder in the report holder's literature, advertising, or promotional materials
- Referencing the TER using statements such as, "See TER XXXX-XX (insert current number) at drjcertification.org."
- Using the mark/files provided by DrJ may be used on a product label
- Enlarging or reducing the mark while maintaining legibility and proportionality to the original design
- Using colors for the mark other than the basic black and green when authorized in writing by DrJ

Not Allowed:

- Using the TER number before it has been authorized by DrJ
- Referencing DrJ, the TER, or the DrJ mark in a manner that could be misleading
- Using the mark to imply DrJ approval of aesthetics or other attributes not specifically addressed in the TER
- Using marks/files not provided by DrJ on a product label
- Altering the mark in any way (although it may be enlarged or reduced while maintaining legibility and proportionality to the original design)
- Using the TER number as the only method of identification (as the mark is not a replacement or substitute for product identification provisions in the relevant TER)
- Using the mark in any manner and in any media without authorization from DrJ
- Using the mark or referencing a TER after cancellation of the TER
- Misrepresenting the TER in any way or using the TER in such a manner as to mislead the public or bring DrJ into disrepute (DrJ reserves to itself the right to interpret what would constitute misleading language)

If these rules are not being followed, DrJ will immediately disseminate a notice of violation and take any and all actions necessary to secure compliance. Failure to respond to the notification may lead to suspension or revocation of the TER under these rules. DrJ also reserves the right to note violations in the public notices and publications of DrJ and on the DrJ website.

Complaints, Appeals, and Disputes Procedure

All complaints related to a TER should be submitted in writing to the attention of the Customer Support Manager. Parties interested in submitting a complaint will be provided form QF 11 – Complaint Resolution and Quality Improvement. Submissions should provide as much information and background data as possible in order to help DrJ address and evaluate the issue.

Upon receiving a submission, DrJ staff investigates and makes a decision on the complaint, appeal, or dispute. The person making the final decision for the appeal or complaint shall not be a person involved in the initial certification of the product. Additionally, the person making the decision shall not have provided consultancy for or been employed by the client for which the complaint or appeal is subject for a period of at least two years. The report holder will be notified of the complaint and will be informed by DrJ if a response is needed to address the complaint. After notice, the report holder will have 30 calendar days in which to respond, or the TER in question will be subject to cancellation.

Revocation or Modification with Right to a Hearing:

Any TER, and the authorization to use the TER number and DrJ mark, may be revoked or modified for cause. “Cause” shall include:

- Repeated failure of the material, method of construction or equipment to conform with the specifications upon which the TER was based
- Repeated failure of the material, method of construction or equipment to perform properly although meeting the specifications upon which the TER was originally based
- Failure to comply with any condition to the issuance of the TER
- Any misstatement, whether intentionally or unintentionally made, in the application or in any data submitted in support thereof
- Failure to comply with any provision of the application form; failure to pass any test required by DrJ
- Any other grounds considered as adequate cause in the judgment of DrJ
- Nonpayment of incurred costs

Before DrJ revokes or modifies any TER, the report holder shall be given reasonable notice and an opportunity to file an appeal.

Revocation, Cancellation, or Suspension without Right to a Hearing:

A TER may be canceled upon DrJ’s receiving a request to do so from the report holder. A file for a new TER may be closed upon receipt of a request from the applicant. The request may be communicated to DrJ via any medium verbally or written. Notwithstanding anything in these rules to the contrary, any TER or additional listing may be suspended for a period not to exceed 90 days, revoked, or canceled by the DrJ President or his designated representative, without notice or a hearing, for any of the following reasons:

- Required fees having not been received by DrJ within 30 days from the date of mailing by DrJ of a written demand for payment
- Failure of the report holder or listee to maintain a required, current QC program
- Failure of the report holder to perform any test, or furnish any material or data, required by DrJ within the specified time limit, unless extended by the DrJ President or his designated representative
- Receipt of information that the product has been modified in violation of these rules
- Denial of DrJ or third-party inspection agency representatives access to manufacturing facilities for purposes of inspecting and evaluating QC procedures
- Failure to provide quality inspection data or reports as required by the certification
- Failure to comply with any rule for maintaining TERs as adopted or amended from time to time by DrJ
- Failure of the product, material, and method of construction or equipment to perform properly or conform to the specifications upon which the TER was based when either condition presents a threat to public safety or property

Proprietary Data

Data in any TER or TER application is considered proprietary. The data is only disclosed by DrJ upon written consent of the applicant or, with notice to the applicant, pursuant to a subpoena issued by a court or other governmental agency of competent jurisdiction. Proprietary data may be disclosed to an internal staff member of DrJ, an authorized representative of DrJ having a legitimate interest, any duly identified representative of a testing agency or like organization that initially prepared the data, or a duly authorized representative thereof stated to be an employee or principal thereof having a legitimate interest therein.

On a random basis, DrJ's records and files are audited by national and international bodies to establish conformance with international accreditation and conformity assessment standards. It is understood that, by executing a TER application, applicants grant DrJ the authority to allow such access.

Where products to be covered in a TER include a proprietary component that is not owned or manufactured by the applicant, rights to use the applicable data are required. In some cases, the manufacturer of the proprietary component may be required to submit an evaluation report to DrJ or obtain one before DrJ will issue a TER naming the proprietary component.

Terms and Conditions of Fees

DrJ TER fees are nonrefundable, unless a refund is authorized by the Vice President Product Certification or their designated representative. The cost of the TER is determined by DrJ based on products, attributes, and applicable codes. All fees shall be paid in U.S. funds drawn from a U.S. bank.

For TERs with additional listees, a fee will be charged for each listee as determined by DrJ. The fees for private label TERs shall be as set forth in the DrJ general pricing scheme.

If an applicant submits test reports from a non-accredited laboratory, additional fees for reviewing the qualifications and independence of the laboratory shall be applicable. Fees will be set based on the actual costs of performing the assessment.

When a DrJ representative or a third-party inspection agency is required to witness tests, conduct field investigations, or investigate complaints related to a TER, all relevant travel expenses and time shall be reimbursed by the applicant.

New TER Application:

Each new TER application shall be assessed, and the fee set forth in the most recent DrJ general pricing scheme as provided for in the accepted TER proposal. DrJ invoices monthly for progress of the TER. Upon completion of the TER, the applicant will be invoiced for any remaining costs incurred in accordance with the agreement. The new TER shall be valid for one year from the date of issue.

Renewing TERs:

Each year, a fee will be required to for an annual review of the TER, which extends the recognition of the TER for one year. Notice will be sent to the report holder a minimum of 90 days in advance of the renewal date. Payment for the annual review and renewal shall be made prior to DrJ's evaluation for re-issuing the TER.

During the annual review of the TER, necessary revisions may be found based on new editions of the referenced codes. These revisions will need to be performed before the renewed TER can be published.

Revising TERs:

When DrJ has been contacted about desired changes, a proposal for the scope of the revision will be sent. The fee specified in the proposal is based on the extent of the revision and the estimated engineering hours required.