



**SSPC QP1
APPLICATION, INSTRUCTIONS,
AND PROGRAM RULES**

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Application Form, Instructions, and Program Rules / SSPC QP1

I. Introduction

SSPC developed the **Painting Contractor Certification Program (PCCP)** to verify capabilities of contractors performing industrial surface preparation and coating application in the field. The program's objective is to determine if an industrial/marine coatings contractor has the personnel, organization, qualifications, procedures, knowledge and capability to produce quality surface preparation and coating application on complex industrial and marine steel and metal structures and components.

NOTE: *Complex industrial and marine structures are defined as those constructed of steel such as metal producing and rolling mills, bridges and processing facilities, including chemical and petrochemical processing plants, pulp and paper mills, power plants and substations, food and beverage plants, terminals, storage tanks, Navy and commercial vessels. Complex structures also include any steel or metal components or sections affixed to a steel structure.*

NOTE: *The SSPC QP1 Certification process does not involve inspection of the contractor's coating work or training of its personnel. It does not evaluate coating application capability conducted exclusively at a contractor's fixed blast and paint shop facility nor does it evaluate installation of protective coatings on concrete or other non-metallic substrates. **Shop painting is covered by the QP3 Certification Program (<http://www.sspc.org/qp-qp3>).** **The QP8 Certification covers coating concrete: Installation of Polymer Coatings and Surfacing on Concrete and Other Cementitious Surfaces (<http://www.sspc.org/qp-qp8>).***

NOTE: *The program is not intended to guarantee the quality or safety performance of a specific contractor on any of its projects. Rather, it is intended to assist facility owners in their evaluation of the primary technical capabilities of professional industrial/marine coating contractors. While SSPC certification confirms a company's capability to meet the requirements of SSPC QP1, owners, specifiers and general contractors can also assess the painting contractor's financial ability to perform a specific job as well as the contractor's previous work history, capability to meet project-specific requirements, and other areas not covered under this program. To better ensure the success of a project, owners should write quality specifications, implement a plan to enforce the requirements of the specification through appropriate quality assurance and establish a plan to maintain good communication with the contractor before work begins and during the project. This is in addition to ensuring that the contractor is capable of performing the work.*

The package contains information and materials needed to apply for SSPC QP1 Certification. You will find copies of this application and all other documents detailing program requirements, related procedures, clarifications, etc. on SSPC's website at <http://www.sspc.org>.

While every precaution is taken to ensure that all information furnished in this document is accurate and complete, SSPC cannot assume responsibility nor incur any obligation resulting from the misuse of the methods contained herein or of the program itself.

IMPORTANT NOTE: **REGARDING ELIGIBILITY FOR INITIAL CERTIFICATION:** *Contractors applying for SSPC QP1 Certification must demonstrate a history of compliance with QP1 quality and safety requirements.*

To be eligible for an initial QP1 audit, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- 1) Shall be a legal entity (e.g., incorporated, assigned a federal tax ID) under the name on its application for a minimum of 18 consecutive months prior to submitting its application; and
- 2) Shall be owned – during the 18-month period prior to submitting its application – by the same owner or owners that own the company at the time it submits its application; and
- 3) Shall have successfully completed at least two projects or one extended project or phase of an extended project with a cumulative 12 months of production on projects falling within the scope of the QP certification being applied for prior to submitting its application.
 - a. For example, QP1 applicants shall have completed industrial painting work in the field on industrial steel structures; relevant projects completed by the contractor shall add up to a minimum of 12 months of production work, which includes time spent mobilizing, rigging, performing surface preparation, performing coating application, and demobilization; and
- 4) Shall have implemented applicable QP critical item procedures for at least 12 cumulative production months prior to submitting its application. In other words, the contractor shall demonstrate that the company implemented QP1 critical item procedures on projects for at least 12 production months prior to submittal of its initial application. See **No. 3)** above for a summary of production activities.

Meeting the above prerequisites shall be confirmed by the Certification Program Manager prior to accepting an application for QP certification and affirmed during the initial audit by the SSPC technical auditor.

II. Initial Application Instructions

A. Filling out the application:

Fill out the information requested in the beginning of the application with proper signatures and include this form with the required submittals.

B. Compiling the required items as listed in the application:

The required submittals are listed in detail and have been numbered for clarity in **Section VI: Evaluation Checklist** below. Compiling the information in a three-ring binder (hardcopy) or in an organized digital format is required to keep all

material in order. Provide each item (documents) as listed in the application and “tab” and “label” each item as it is referenced in the application. This practice will save time during the initial review process. After the initial review, if any of the items (documents) are missing, SSPC will notify you and will not continue the review until the missing items are provided. This is why it is important to reference the submittal items, so that both the contractor and SSPC can confirm that all the necessary information has been submitted.

C. Submitting the application:

You must provide SSPC with either an original hardcopy or one digital copy for review. SSPC recommends that you keep a copy in case the application submittals are lost or damaged.

Fees: *Must be provided to SSPC when submitting the application for review. SSPC accepts checks and credit cards. Credit card payments can be taken over the phone at 1-877-281-7772, ext. 2209 or 412-288-6028.*

After the Application is Reviewed by SSPC

Once the initial application review process is complete and your application and submittal package is accepted by SSPC, SSPC assigns it to an auditor. The auditor will contact you to schedule your initial audit, which consists of a visit to your headquarters’ office and one or two active job sites under contract to your company where the auditor can evaluate your company’s capability. Selection of the auditor to conduct your audit is determined by SSPC. SSPC will consider assigning a different auditor to conduct your audit when there is a documented or potential conflict of interest.

If you have questions regarding the submittal process, please contact the Certification Office at 1-877-281-7772, ext. 2209 or 412-288-6028, or by e-mail at certification@sspc.org.

III. General Program Procedure

The SSPC QP1 Certification process contains this sequence of procedures that you must follow:

- A. Complete the application form found in **Section IV: QP1 Application Form for the SSPC Painting. Contractor Certification Program, Field Coating of Complex Industrial/Marine Steel/Metal Structures.**
- B. Gather and prepare the required information outlined in **Section VI** following the application.

- C. Send SSPC the application, required submittals, and appropriate non-refundable administrative fee and the required audit deposit.
- D. SSPC staff will review your application and submittals within 10 working days following receipt. If everything is in order and SSPC accepts your application and submittals, SSPC will schedule an on-site audit. If not, SSPC will indicate what must be done or what additional information is required to complete the submittal.
- NOTE:** *The initial job site visit will most likely be unannounced and may be performed at one or two job sites selected by SSPC.*
- E. An SSPC program auditor will conduct the evaluation at one or two active (complex structure) job sites, to verify conformance with QP1 requirements. The audit usually takes two to three days to complete, and always includes a visit to your headquarters' office and one or two active (complex structure) job sites that are representative of work that your company performs.
- NOTE:** *The auditor may also review randomly selected project files for projects listed in your submittal. These files, as well as management and production personnel familiar with those projects, must be available during the audit for an initial audit to be completed.*
- F. It is important to know what information must be available at the job site to show the auditor during the audit. This information can be found on the SSPC website at <http://www.sspc.org/qp-audit-info>. At the end of the audit, the auditor will schedule an exit interview for the purpose of advising you of any findings, corrective actions, or concerns cited or noted during the audit.
- G. If your company has a qualifying score, SSPC will certify your company for a three-year period subject to its ability to maintain program standards. Your company's ability to maintain certification standards during the three-year certification term is confirmed through:
- i. Annual announced and unannounced audits which your company must undergo at least once in each of the three years of the certification term;
 - ii. Your company's ability to adhere to the program's administrative rules; and
 - iii. Avoidance of disciplinary actions as described in the **Disciplinary Action Criteria (DAC)**.

The certification term lapses after three years. If your company does not qualify, you have up to 45 days after SSPC notifies you of your audit results to submit an acceptable written Corrective Action Plan to correct deficiencies, change system procedures, and request a follow-up audit. If you do not submit acceptable corrective actions within 45 days, SSPC has the option to revoke your certification. Corrective Action Plans must be filed online at <http://www.sspc.org/qp-cap>.

H. The program provides for an appeal procedure, should you choose to contest audit findings.

IV. QP1 Application Form for the SSPC Painting Contractor Certification Program, Field Coating of Complex Industrial/Marine Steel/Metal Structures

INSTRUCTIONS: The application form is used to provide information that will aid in evaluating and rating your company. To avoid delays in carrying out the evaluation process, you must answer all questions accurately and truthfully. Information must be either typed or clearly printed. **Please send SSPC a printed copy or one digital copy of your completed application and all submittals with the correct non-refundable fees.** Thank you!

1. Company Name: _____
Principal Officer/Title: _____
Company Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
E-Mail Address: _____
Website Address (if applicable): _____
Telephone (include Area Code): _____
Fax Number: _____ Federal I.D. / EIN: _____
(enclose copy of fed ID/EIN notification from the IRS or equivalent form for non-USA-based contractors)

2. Branch / Division Office Address (if more than one, please submit a list of branch / division offices with the information requested in Question 1:
Company Name: _____
Principal Officer / Title: _____
Company Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
E-mail Address: _____

Website Address (if applicable): _____

Telephone (include Area Code): _____

Fax Number: _____ Federal I.D. / EIN: _____

(enclose copy of fed ID./EIN notification from the IRS or equivalent form for non-USA-based contractors)

3. Ownership: Private Ownership Sole Proprietorship
 Partnership Corporation Other

4. Years your company has operated under name listed in **Question #1**: _____

If less than 5 (five) years, list previous names/owners below:

Previous Name/Owner: _____ From: _____ To: _____

Previous Name/Owner: _____ From: _____ To: _____

Is the location listed in **Question #1** the main place of business?

Yes No

5. Has your company undergone (within the past 18 months) or is it planning to undergo any significant changes (e.g., name change; change in ownership; Chapter 7, 11, or 13; purchase or takeover of another contracting company; joint venture/partnership with another contractor; executive management personnel changes, etc.)?

Yes No

If yes, please attach an explanation that meets the notification requirements described in **Section XIII, Part A: Major Changes in a Company's Organization**.

6. Field Audit of an Active Job Site. The certification program requires the auditor to conduct a field visit to one or two active complex structure job sites. List location of jobs in progress where job site audits can be conducted. Please include any restrictions below such as special safety requirements, facial hair, security clearances, access requirements, etc.

6a. Job Site: _____

Restrictions: _____

Name, title, phone # (including cell phone) of contact person on this site:

Day and Time Work Crews on job site: _____

6b. Job Site: _____

Restrictions: _____

Name, title, phone # (including cell phone) of contact person on this site:

Day and Time Work Crews on job site: _____

6c. Job Site: _____

Restrictions: _____

Name, title, phone # (including cell phone) of contact person on this site:

Day and Time Work Crews on job site: _____

7. Current Interstate and Intrastate **Experience Modification Rates (EMR)** for State/Province of Domicile and Principal States/Provinces of Operation. Provide documentation of experience modification rates on your Insurance Company or State/Provincial Workmen’s Compensation Bureau (Board) letterhead.

7a. **IMPORTANT NOTE:** *Submit a detailed explanation for any EMR above 1.00.*

8. Attach copies of any federal, or state/provincial or local regulatory agency worker safety and health or environmental non-compliance, or other regulatory violations (e.g., wage and hourly violation) and citations issued to any of your company’s industrial painting operations during the previous 36 months. Provide resolution/settlement/notice of consent documentation if applicable, as well as a brief summary of policy changes and actions your company has taken as a result of the citations. Submit required copy of appropriate OSHA or equivalent form regarding fatalities that have occurred on your job sites in the last 36 months.

9. Has your company or any of its personnel been accused/charged/alleged by a Court (Local, State or Federal) of involvement in any illegal business practices in the past 36 months? If yes, please explain below in a separate attachment.

Yes No

10. List the names and headquarters locations of any industrial/marine coating contractors your company is affiliated with.

NOTE: *An affiliated company is, "A company, corporation, partnership, joint venture, or other business entity operating under a different name than the certified company, which performs surface preparation or coating application or administrative and other support functions for the certified company; and which an officer, director, owner, partner or stockholder of the certified company, a previously certified company disciplined by SSPC, or the certified company itself, exercises directly or indirectly (such as through family members) any significant degree of ownership, management or control."*

10a. Affiliated Company Name: _____

Location: _____

Principal Contact: _____

Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____

10b. Affiliated Company Name: _____

Location: _____

Principal Contact: _____

Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____

10c. Affiliated Company Name: _____

Location: _____

Principal Contact: _____

Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____

11. Is your company now, or has it been in the past, associated in any way with a contracting company operating under another name, which has been disciplined

by the SSPC under the Discipline Action Criteria (DAC)? A copy of the DAC can be found on SSPC's website at: <http://www.sspc.org/gp-dac-violations>.

Yes No

If yes, please explain: _____

12. Are any of your company's officers, directors, owners, managing agents, or managers now exercising (or have previously exercised) direct or indirect control, management, or ownership of another contracting company, which has been disciplined by the SSPC under the DAC?

Yes No

If yes, please explain: _____

If your company *has not* had such association with a company previously disciplined under the DAC, please check this box:

IMPORTANT NOTE:

Failure to answer truthfully or any instance of providing inaccurate information can result in immediate revocation or denial of certification status or rejection of your application.

13. Has your company been disqualified or disbarred from any bidder's list in the past 24 months or have you defaulted on any coating contracts in the same period?

Yes No

If yes, please provide the reason for disqualification, disbarment, or default and the name of the entity:

14. Attach copy of most recent (12 months) OSHA Accident and Illness forms. (OSHA Forms 300 and 300A if US-based).

15. Please submit a copy of your corporate Health and Safety Plan.

16. Average number of workers you've employed over preceding 3 years: _____

17. Is your company an organizational member of SSPC? Yes No
If yes, indicate category of membership: Patron Sustaining

Membership Number: _____

Date Membership Expires: _____

18. If your company is ISO 9001 (2015) certified or maintains another third-party Quality Management System accreditation, please describe in a separate attachment.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

Failure to answer truthfully or any instance of providing inaccurate information can result in immediate revocation or denial of certification status or rejection of your application.

NOTE: *By my initials and signature below, I acknowledge that I have read and understand:*

Initial: _____ The QP1 Certification Program Application Form, Instructions, and Program Rules.

Initial: _____ The QP1 procedure set forth therein.

Initial: _____ The SSPC Disciplinary Action Criteria.

As a principal officer of the contractor, I attest that the company agrees to abide by and be bound by the rules, regulations and procedures set forth herein. (Must be initialed above and signed by the President, Chief of Operations Officer or Chief Executive Officer).

Signed: _____

Printed Name and Title: _____

Date Submitted: _____

Certification Fee and Audit Deposit Submitted with this Application: \$ _____

NOTE: *Failure to report accurate, complete information will delay your certification evaluation. Omission or falsification of information or failure to answer all questions truthfully will result in withholding or denial of certification status. Your company will be checked against the provisions of the **Disciplinary Action Criteria (DAC)**. If your company has critical faults under the DAC, SSPC will reject your application for a time period equivalent to any specified penalty.*

V. Required Information

In order to rate and evaluate your company, the program uses specific criteria organized into four business areas outlined below. The Evaluation Checklist in the following section contains additional information.

(1) Management Procedures: Measures utilized by your company to organize, coordinate, and otherwise manage the various activities required to prepare surfaces and apply coatings properly.

(2) Technical Capabilities: Resources maintained by your company to properly interpret and execute job specifications and requirements.

(3) Quality Control: Procedures implemented and maintained by your company to verify that all stages of work are performed in accordance with contract documents and specifications.

(4) Safety Procedures and Recordkeeping: Practices and procedures used by your company to see that safe operations are maintained.

Each of these four areas contains several subcategories focusing on your company's policies, personnel, procedures, and resources. **All items must be submitted in writing with the application.** They must be typed on separate sheets of paper and clearly identified. Documents such as charts or file documents, which already exist, must be submitted and identified in the same manner. They should be bound or digitized in the order of the evaluation items listed in **Section VI: Evaluation Checklist** in order to avoid delays processing your application. **All non-public information submitted is treated as confidential.**

The auditor will verify and evaluate items from the audit checklist during the on-site audit. The necessary records or files that you must present at that time include but are not limited to job files for reported projects, inspection reports, and equipment and maintenance records. Some information will be presented verbally. The auditor may also evaluate DAC-related items as directed by the Program Manager or Director.

Section VI: Evaluation Checklist lists and describes the required items of information. A score of “2” is required for each critical item to pass the initial audit.

VI. Evaluation Checklist

This is a list of all items of required information to be submitted for QP1 application review. Following each item is a statement telling you whether it is a critical item. **Documentation explaining each item, including “critical items,” must be submitted with your initial application.** To find out what your company must do to meet the requirements for each evaluation item, carefully review the QP1 audit checklist before you prepare your submittal package. You can find the QP1 Audit Checklist on the SSPC website at <http://www.sspc.org/qp-audit-checklists>. **All non-public information submitted which describes how your company meets each evaluation item is treated as confidential.**

A) Management Reviews

- 1) Mission Statement
- 2) Procedures for Disseminating Company Policies within the Organization
- 3) Current Organization Chart – with names and positions, signed and dated by executive management
- 4) Job Descriptions of Key Personnel
- 5) Current EMR on Carrier Letterhead
- 6) Insurance Certificates (general liability, etc.)

B) Administrative and Management Procedures

- 7) Written Description of Financial Record Keeping
- 8) Contract Review Procedures
- 9) Procedures for Distributing Project Specifications within the Organization
- 10) Procedures for Learning About and Complying with Applicable Regulations
- 11) Legal Viability Documentation
 - (i) Copy signature page from most recent filed tax return matching applicant name (financial information can be blacked out)
 - (ii) IRS federal tax ID notice matching applicant name
- 12) Procedures for Qualifying and Monitoring Performance of Subcontractors
- 13) Regulatory Citations Issued to the Company and Company’s Response
(Critical Item #1)

C) Technical Capabilities

- 14) Craft Worker Assessment Program including CAS Implementation **(Critical Item #2)**

- 15) Listing of Technical Resources and Standards Library **(Critical Item #3)**
- 16) Document Control Procedures
- 17) Procedures for Clarifying Ambiguous, Conflicting, Incorrect Specifications **(Critical Item #4)**
- 18) Communication of Contract and Technical Requirements to Field Personnel **(Critical Item #5)**
- 19) Quality Control Program **(Critical Item #6)**
- 20) Production Work Plans/Process Control Procedures **(Critical Item #7)**
- 21) Industrial/Marine Coating Projects Completed within Previous 24 Months **(Critical Item #8)**
- 22) Evidence of Successful Completion of Recent Projects Going Back 18 months (final pay notice, e-mail from principle indicating completion, etc.)
- 23) List of any Defaults, Contract Terminations, and Litigations related to Project Work, Disbarments, etc.
- 24) Equipment Maintenance and Repair Program

D) Quality Control (QC)

- 25) Name, Qualifications/Experience of Quality Control Supervisor, including Credentials/Proof of Qualifications **(Critical Item #9)**
- 26) Qualifications of Quality Control (QC) Coating Inspectors **(Critical Item #10)**
- 27) Sampling of Completed Daily Inspection Reports used by QC Coating Inspectors, Signed and Dated by QC Personnel **(Critical Item #11)**
- 28) Detailed Written Procedures for Calibration and Verification of Inspection Equipment Accuracy **(Critical Item #12)**
- 29) Procedures for Handling Non-Conforming Work and Requests for Deviation from Specification (DFS) **(Critical Item #13)**
- 30) Corrective Action Procedures **(Critical Item #14)**
- 31) Hold Point Inspection Process Detailed
- 32) Documentation of Tool Box Meetings

E) Environmental Health and Safety (EH & S)

- 33) Name, Qualifications/Experience of Environmental, Health and Safety Officer including Credentials/Proof of Qualifications **(Critical Item #15)**
- 34) Safety and Health Program **(Critical Item #16)**
- 35) Pre-Job Hazard Identification Process
- 36) Accident Reporting Procedure
- 37) Procedures for Monitoring of Safety and Loss Control
- 38) Operating Procedures for Major Equipment **(Critical Item #17)**
- 39) Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Program **(Critical Item #18)**
- 40) First Aid Program & First Aid Trained Personnel
- 41) Procedures and Policies for Enforcing Safety Program **(Critical Item #19)**
- 42) Availability of Safety Information to Job Site Personnel
- 43) "General" Environmental Compliance Program **(Critical Item #20)**

VII. QP1 Fee Schedule (In U.S. Funds)

Effective June 2018

Companies applying for certification must submit the applicable **Administrative Fee** plus **Audit Deposit** to cover anticipated audit expenses with their application. SSPC will withhold your certification until receiving total payment.

NOTE: *The fees cover the cost of staff time to review and process your application package, the cost of the on-site evaluation and audit, and the overhead expenses required to operate the Contractor Certification Program.*

Annual administrative fees are not refundable if a contractor's certification(s) are suspended or revoked.

Determine your audit expense from the following:

QP1 Fee Schedule			
	Sustaining Member	Patron Member	Non Member
<i>Administrative Fee</i>	\$2,100	\$2,400	\$2,700
<i>Audit Deposit</i>	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000
<i>Certification Application Total with no Corrective Action</i>	\$5,100	\$5,400	\$5,700

** Applicants outside of US/Canada/Mexico are subject to additional audit deposit cost. Please contact SSPC for specific quote at certification@sspc.org

QP1 Additional Fees, As Applicable			
	Sustaining Member	Patron Member	Non Member
<i>With Corrective Action Verification:</i>	+\$300	+\$550	+\$800

EXAMPLE: *If your company is an SSPC Patron Member applying for initial QP1 Certification, submit \$5,400 (\$2,400 Administrative Fee + \$3,000 Audit Deposit).*

SSPC will return non-responsive and inactive applications submittals and fees to the applicant after six months of inactivity when no audit was conducted. SSPC will assess a \$750 USD administrative processing fee that will be deducted from the administrative fee and audit deposit initially submitted with the application.

For program members who withdraw from the QP program during a certification term, SSPC will retain the entire administrative fee submitted at the beginning of the certification period and return any unused audit deposit.

You must pay post-audit fees for QP1 deficiency audits or additional audit expenses when they are due. Failure to pay in a timely manner will result in a six-month suspension from the program and public notification of your suspension. If you do not pay the fees after the suspension period, you will be decertified and have to reapply for QP1 Certification. When reapplying, you will have to pay all applicable fees and all past due fees.

NOTE: *Maintenance applications are due December 15. SSPC will assess a \$500 late fee for maintenance applications received by SSPC between December 16 and March 31.*

VIII. Submittal Procedure

To avoid delay, gather and submit application package materials as follows:

1. Type or clearly print all entries on the application form.
2. Be certain all items on the form are answered completely and accurately.
3. Send the original of the application package to SSPC.
 - a. Keep a copy on hand for your use at the on-site audit.
4. Clearly identify the submittal items included with the application. Secure all pages in a binder to minimize chance of loss or separation. Organize submittal items in the order listed in **Section V: QP1 Application Form for the SSPC Painting Contractor Certification Program, Field Coating of Complex Industrial/Marine Steel/Metal Structures.**
5. Determine and send the non-refundable administrative processing fee/audit deposit using the fee schedule described in **Section VII: QP1 Fee Schedule (In US Funds) Effective June 2018** above. Make check payable to: SSPC Painting Contractor Certification Program.
6. Mail the entire application package to:
SSPC: The Society for Protective Coatings
ATTN: QP Certification Program Manager
800 Trumbull Drive
Pittsburgh, PA 15205-4365

IX. Evaluation Process

SSPC performs the evaluation of your company based on the current version of SSPC QP1: Standard. Procedure for Evaluating Qualifications of Painting Contractors: Field

Application to Complex Structures and the QP1 audit evaluation checklist already mentioned at the beginning of **Section VI: Evaluation Checklist** above.

Upon acceptance of the application and submittals by SSPC, the application and submittal package are forwarded to the SSPC auditor assigned by SSPC to your company to schedule and conduct the initial audit.

When a date and time has been selected for the initial audit, mutually agreed upon, and confirmed in writing or verbally by you and the SSPC auditor, the auditor will visit your office and job site(s) to perform the evaluation. The job site visits may take place before or after the office visit and may be unannounced or done on short notice.

NOTE: *In order for SSPC to deem the audit complete, the SSPC auditor must visit at least one active job site to observe operations being performed as well as equipment and material, personnel and documentation on site. During the audit, the auditor will:*

- *Confirm data submitted in the application package.*
- *Interview key supervisory personnel.*
- *Observe and rate company organization and operation – including field operations – using the standard program guidelines and rating procedures.*
- *Examine and rate equipment and facilities.*
- *Schedule an exit interview.*

At the conclusion of the audit, the auditor will schedule an exit interview with your supervisory or management personnel to review audit findings rated “2,” “Less than 2,” and any “Concerns.” If there are any findings, the auditor will fill out a deficiency schedule for the employee, designated as your representative, to sign at the conclusion of the audit. Your representative’s signature does not connote agreement with the results. It only confirms that you have been made aware of the results. Refusal to sign the deficiency schedule results in denial of certification.

If you choose to contest audit findings, you must notify the SSPC Certification Program Manager in writing within 10 working days after the exit interview. It is your responsibility to confirm with the Certification Program Manager that SSPC has received your notice contesting any audit findings.

X. Cancellation of Audit Policy

If after the audit date has been agreed upon by both your representative and SSPC, and confirmed in writing or verbally, you cancel the audit or request a change in the date, you will be responsible for any additional expenses incurred by SSPC as a result of the cancellation and rescheduling.

XI. Critical Item Provision

The QP1 Critical Item Provision identifies the evaluation items program auditors use to evaluate contractors for certification. SSPC has deemed compliance with these essential items critical to maintaining QP1 Certification. The provision requires the contractor to score a minimum of “2” on a scale of 1 to 3, on a minimum of 18 out of 20 critical evaluation items in order to achieve and maintain certification.

SSPC allows applicants who have not attained an adequate score within 45 days to make corrections in the deficient areas, submit a Corrective Action Plan to change system procedures, and ask for a follow-up audit. That same 45-day period is available to program members unable to achieve the required minimum score on a minimum of 18 critical evaluation items during annual on-site maintenance or follow-up audits.

For initial applicants, SSPC will withhold certification until corrections are made, required procedures are put in place and SSPC can verify implementation at a follow-up audit, if necessary, and a passing score is achieved during any follow-up audit.

For program members unable to achieve the required score during an annual audit (which at a minimum consists of an evaluation of all 20 critical items), SSPC provides 45 days to submit an acceptable Corrective Action Plan and request a follow-up audit.

If a program member is deficient in no more than two critical items upon completion of the annual maintenance audit or any follow-up audit, SSPC will extend certification status until any follow-up evaluation is successfully completed. If the program member receives a rating of less than “2” for more than two critical items, this shall be cause for SSPC to suspend certification status for up to six months, pending receipt and acceptance of written corrective actions and any required verification through a follow-up audit. If submission of a required **CAP (Corrective Action Plan)** is not received or post-marked by the established deadline and there are no mitigating circumstances, SSPC will revoke certification. If the required Corrective Action Plan(s) is submitted on time but rejected and SSPC requests a revised CAP and the revised CAP is not submitted by the second deadline established by the SSPC Program Manager, this will also be cause to revoke certification.

NOTE: *Refer to the Special Provisions section for information regarding Joint Ventures and Auditing.*

A. Critical Evaluation Items (20 total)

1. Regulatory Citations Issued to the Company and Company’s Response
2. Craft Worker Assessment Program including CAS Implementation
3. Listing of Technical Resources and Standards Library
4. Procedures for Clarifying Ambiguous, Conflicting, Incorrect Specifications

5. Communication of Contract and Technical Requirements to Field Personnel
6. Quality Control Program
7. Production Work Plans/Process Control Procedures
8. Industrial/Marine Coating Projects Completed within Previous 24 Months
9. Name, Qualifications/Experience of Quality Control Supervisor, including Credentials/Proof of Qualifications
10. Qualifications of Quality Control (QC) Coating Inspectors
11. Sampling of Completed Daily Inspection Reports used by QC Coating Inspectors, Signed and Dated by QC Personnel
12. Detailed Written Procedures for Calibration and Verification of Inspection Equipment Accuracy
13. Procedures for Handling Non-Conforming Work and Requests for Deviation from Specification (DFS)
14. Corrective Action Procedures
15. including Credentials/Proof of Qualifications
16. Safety and Health Program
17. Operating Procedures for Major Equipment
18. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Program
19. Procedures and Policies for Enforcing Safety Program
20. "General" Environmental Compliance Program

B. Determination of Status

At the conclusion of the evaluation process described in **Parts III, VI, and IX**, the SSPC Technical Auditor will report audit findings to the SSPC Certification Program Manager. The SSPC QP Program Administrator (Department Director) will make the final decision regarding your status. Those decisions are either:

1. **Confer Certification:** Your company achieved required scores and has no unresolved disciplinary actions.
2. **Deny Qualification:** Your company has not attained a score adequate to achieve QP1 Certification or has unresolved disciplinary actions. You then have 45 days after written notification of audit results to submit an acceptable Corrective Action Plan to address deficiencies, and any unresolved disciplinary actions and request that SSPC re-evaluate and conduct a follow-up audit(s) as necessary to verify implementation of your Correction Action Plan(s).

C. Appeal Procedure

During the audit exit interview, the auditor will document and explain all deficiencies cited during the audit. If you dispute any of the audit findings, you may appeal using the steps listed below.

1. You must notify the SSPC Corporate Certification Program Manager in writing within 10 working days of the exit interview, specifically identifying the deficiencies you are appealing, and substantively explaining why you dispute them, including providing supporting documentation for each deficiency being contested. As stated earlier, it is your responsibility to confirm with the Program Manager that your appeal has been received in a timely manner.
2. SSPC will evaluate your written appeal and notify you in writing within 30 calendar days of the appeal submission receipt by SSPC whether SSPC accepts your initial appeal. SSPC appeal evaluations will result in either acceptance of your written appeal (e.g., vacating or reducing an audit deficiency from “major to minor” or other justification) or denial of the appeal (sustaining the findings). Following denial of any appeal, the contractor has the option to accept the SSPC appeal resolution and submit a **Corrective Action Plan (CAP)** which may require a follow-up audit to verify CAP implementation. Finally, an appeal denial by SSPC could also result in a suspension of QP1 Certification for up to one year.
3. The contractor can continue the appeal process by requesting an informal conference in writing and within 10 business days of the appeal denial. The informal conference will be held at SSPC headquarters in Pittsburgh, PA in order to allow the Contractor to further explain its position and request a different outcome.
4. The final option for the Contractor wishing to continue with the appeal is to utilize the existing **Disciplinary Action Criteria (DAC)** Arbitration Panel Procedure to resolve the matter. Refer to the DAC for details.

D. Internal Audit

Conducting a minimum of one annual internal audit is required in each year of certification after initial certification. SSPC recommends using the published QP1 audit checklist to perform your internal audit and recommends conducting an internal audit at each job site.

Your customers are given an opportunity to comment directly to SSPC at any time on your company’s performance. All comments will be treated as confidential and will be used to determine if your company satisfactorily completed a project or phase of a project. Documented complaints alleging that your company is not complying with QP1 requirements may result in SSPC conducting a special audit for probable cause. Failure to pass the aforementioned annual or any follow-up audits can result in SSPC suspending your company’s certification. See **Part XII: Maintenance Applications** for specific rules governing maintenance of QP1 certification status after initial certification.

IMPORTANT NOTE: *Failure to cooperate with the program auditor or SSPC Corporate Certification Program Manager or Program Administrator, or failure to provide access to data, personnel, or on-site premises, or failure to be truthful to SSPC shall be sufficient cause for denial, suspension or revocation of your company's certification status at the Program Administrator's discretion.*

XII. Maintenance Applications

The SSPC QP1 Certification term is three years. To verify that your operations remain in compliance with certification standards during that period, the program requires that SSPC evaluate your company at least once in each of the second and third years of the term. The evaluation may be announced or unannounced. Additional audits may be performed at SSPC's discretion.

To maintain uninterrupted certification status, you must reapply for certification annually by December 15. You must submit a maintenance application, a signed internal audit report completion statement, list of applicable (e.g., complex industrial/marine structure) work in progress and completed since the last evaluation and evidence of successful completion of your projects, current safety information and maintenance fee by the December 15 due date. The necessary forms and applications can be found on SSPC's website at <http://www.sspc.org/qp-for-contractors>. Follow the appropriate links to the QP1 maintenance application. SSPC will assess a \$500 late application fee for any maintenance applications submitted after December 15. SSPC also reserves the right to reject any maintenance applications submitted after March 31 and require the contractor submitting the late application to reapply as an initial applicant.

SSPC will make every effort to send you a reminder letter approximately 45 days before the December 15 submittal due date as a reminder to reapply. If you fail to reapply when your submittal is due, your company's certification will expire and your company will be decertified. SSPC will send a letter to any contractor who has failed to reapply as a reminder that certification has expired.

NOTE: *You are responsible for ensuring that SSPC has your current mailing address, phone and fax numbers, etc. Failure to receive a reminder letter from SSPC does not relieve you of the responsibility to submit your renewal application when due.*

Once you have reapplied, the annual evaluation (complex industrial/marine structure job site(s) and possibly office visit) must take place within the calendar year barring any mitigating circumstances or else your certification will expire.

NOTE: *Job records for projects reported in the annual submittal and those for which a job notification is on file are subject to review during a maintenance audit and should be available if the auditor asks for them. It is mandatory to show the auditor an active job site during the annual audit.*

SSPC reserves the right to audit any project being performed by an SSPC QP Certified contractor that involves surface preparation or coating application and cure on an industrial/marine structure. Such projects are eligible for an SSPC audit regardless of whether:

1. The job is “reportable”; or
2. Whether the project requires QP certification; or
3. Whether there’s a formal coating specification for the work.

If you are unsure whether a project you are performing is eligible for an audit, please contact the Program Manager for clarification. If you have active work and have not been audited prior to September 1, you are obligated to inform the Program Manager so the audit can be conducted to avoid a situation where you have no work to show for the annual audit. Contractors who have no active work face loss of certification, in the absence of mitigating circumstances. Note, too, that a visit to a second job site within a 100-mile radius of the first site visited on the same audit trip is considered one audit for sampling purposes.

IMPORTANT NOTE: *SSPC reserves the right to suspend contractors who fail two consecutive certification maintenance/annual audits for up to 12 months following failure of the second audit.*

NOTE: *Corrective action verification audits following a failed audit are not considered maintenance/annual audits. Probable cause audits are considered the equivalent of an annual maintenance audit if the contractor has not yet had its annual audit.*

Contractors who fail the annual maintenance evaluation will be given up to 45 days after notification of audit results to submit a **Corrective Action Plan (CAP)** and request that SSPC re-evaluate and also conduct a follow-up audit. SSPC reserves the right to withhold certification from companies who fail a maintenance or follow-up evaluation until a CAP is submitted and accepted by SSPC.

NOTE: *SSPC may opt, in certain cases, to extend the company’s certification status following acceptance of a CAP for a limited period subject to specified conditions.*

Contractors placed on suspension for failing a maintenance audit during their certification term will be formally notified in writing (e.g., certified letter, e-mail) of the suspension.

1. The contractor is given up to 45 days from notification to make corrections and submit an acceptable CAP and be re-audited, if determined by the Program Administrator;
2. The contractor is asked to immediately return original certificates; and

3. The contractor is not to represent itself as a QP1 Certified contractor during the suspension period.

During a suspension period the contractor's name will be removed from SSPC's online searchable database of QP Certified contractors. Contractors will be formally notified in writing when a suspension is lifted. When SSPC reinstates certification status, it will reissue valid certificates and add the contractor's name back to the online searchable database of QP1 Certified contractors.

NOTE: *Contractors in the **Random Audit Program (RAP)** are normally exempt from undergoing the mandatory annual audit. However, a contractor in the RAP is subject to selection for an audit at random by SSPC at the Program Manager's or Administrator's discretion.*

XIII. Special Provisions

A. Major Changes in a Company's Organization

SSPC certified contracting companies are required to notify the Program Manager or Program Administrator in writing within 30 days of any major organizational or name change. Examples of a major change include, but are not limited to:

- Change in ownership.
- Partnership/joint venture arrangement or change in existing partnership status.
- Change in executive management (e.g., president, CEO, general manager).
- Declaration of bankruptcy.
- Incorporation or change in corporate status.
- Name change.
- Becoming a subsidiary.
- Change to sole proprietorship.
- Relocation of main or branch business offices or opening of new branch offices.

The notification shall include the following information:

- Specific details about changes.
- Revised organizational and responsibility chart.
- Effective dates of change.
- Names of officers of reorganized company.
- Any change in tax identification/EIN, federal or state
 - Submit statement from IRS or Secretary of your state assigning new tax ID/EIN

SSPC cannot begin the process of considering transferring certification status to a newly organized company until this information is provided.

NOTE: *If a company changes federal or state tax ID numbers or is incorporated in a new state, it will automatically have to reapply as a new company. If it is a simple change of name (e.g., "John R. Doe Co., Inc." to "J.R. Doe, Inc." or a change in location) and incorporated in the same state with the same tax ID numbers, a simple transfer of certification can be authorized after review by the Program Administrator. Contact the Program Manager if you are unsure whether an event at your company is considered by SSPC a "major" change in a company's organization.*

SSPC will subsequently schedule a special audit, at the contracting company's expense, within 60 days of notification. SSPC will also schedule another audit, at the contracting company's expense, within six months after the special (first) audit to verify that the reorganized company is in fact maintaining the standards of the program. If the company does not pass the six-month audit, certification will be rescinded.

No transfer or certification status to a new company will be approved until the company provides SSPC with any required or requested information, passes the special (first) audit and obtains approval from the Program Administrator.

Failure to notify the Program Manager or Program Administrator of any major changes within the required time period can result in an automatic six-month suspension.

A company, which has changed its name or has otherwise reorganized, must certify in writing that it will assume responsibility for any disciplinary actions or violations of federal, state and local regulations issued under a former name. In addition, any violations of the SSPC PCCP program (e.g., written complaints from owners or **Disciplinary Action Criteria (DAC)** critical faults) by the company under its original name will be considered as part of the record of the company under its new name.

A company submitting a change of organizational status can request that SSPC waive the requirement for a special (first) audit before approving any transfer. SSPC will evaluate each request and reserves the right to waive the requirement at its own discretion. Requests to have the audit waived must be submitted at the time of notification of the organizational change.

B. Suspension for Non-Payment of Fees

Failure to pay all fees in a timely manner will result in a six-month suspension from the program and public notification of the suspension. SSPC will notify a company of its suspension if it fails to respond within three business days to the final (second) notice of non-payment. SSPC will also withhold issuing

certification for initial and annual renewal applicants who pass the evaluation but still have fees due.

C. **Formal Complaint Procedure**

Any authorized representative of an owner who hires a QP1 Certified painting contractor could file a formal complaint against the contractor if the representative has information that the contracting company does not practice QP1 Certification procedures. The contractor may respond to the complaint by submitting information supporting its position to SSPC. Documented complaints by an owner or its designated representative can result in a probable cause audit, authorized at the discretion of the Program Administrator.

D. **Subcontracting Work**

SSPC certified contractors are responsible for monitoring the actions of subcontractors to ensure they perform in accordance with PCCP requirements. Contracted tasks include, but are not limited to, environmental monitoring and testing; personnel monitoring; medical surveillance; structural repairs, cleaning, surface preparation and painting; erecting and moving containment and scaffolding; and equipment maintenance.

The QP1 contractor is responsible for controlling its subcontracting process to ensure that its subcontractors conform to PCCP quality management requirements subcontracted to them. The contractor shall evaluate and select subcontractors based on their ability to provide products/services in accordance with the contract and applicable QP1 quality management requirements.

Purchasing documents sent to the subcontractor shall specify information describing the product or service being purchased. The contractor shall ensure that specified requirements are adequately defined in the purchasing documents prior to their release to subcontractors. Subcontractors must also be notified by you – the certified contractor – that SSPC retains the right to audit their surface preparation and coating application operations.

In all circumstances, SSPC certified contractors should hire only SSPC certified subcontractors for surface preparation and coating application work. SSPC certified contractors must hire SSPC certified contractors as required by the facility owner.

SSPC realizes that there are circumstances when you are hired because of your credentials as an SSPC certified contractor and yet are required as part of your contract to hire painting subcontractors that may not be certified (e.g., minority or set aside contracts). In cases when you do hire non-certified subcontractors to fulfill a contract obligation which cannot practically or reasonably be met by

the contractor or other PCCP certified subcontractor, you will need a written waiver of the QP requirement for the subcontractor from the facility owner. Regardless of the subcontractor's certification status, you are still responsible for the actions of those subcontractors to ensure they perform in accordance with your QP quality programs.

All subcontractors hired by SSPC certified contractors must be formally approved in writing by the facility owner or its official representative. Failure to comply will result in issuance of a severe critical fault under the DAC.

If a certified contractor's job site is audited and one or more of the painting subcontractors performing surface preparation and coating application work at the job site are not in compliance with QP requirements, SSPC will issue the certified contractor a warning for violations of the PCCP Subcontracting Special Provision. A second incident will result in an automatic 12-month suspension from the certification program.

SSPC certified contractors who hire non-certified contractors even though the facility owner, general contractor or specifying engineer specifically call out in their contract or general notice to contractors that all cleaning and painting subcontractors must be SSPC certified, will be subject to disciplinary action (i.e., deliberate violation of specification requirements – a severe violation resulting in suspension) under the **Disciplinary Action Criteria (DAC)**.

If a certified contractor utilizes another contractor's workers (e.g., applicators, blasters, helpers, laborer, pot tenders, equipment operators, quality control inspectors, competent persons) and these workers are paid by another entity – regardless of whether they are under your direct supervision – the workers are considered to be subcontracted from the other entity. If the contract calls for a QP1 or QP2 contractor, the other entity must also be certified or else it is considered a violation of the DAC.

If a certified contractor is borrowing, leasing, renting, etc. workers, and those workers are on the certified contractor's payroll and under the certified contractor's direct supervision, the workers are considered employees of the certified company.

Complaints from facility owners, prime contractors or their representatives concerning SSPC certified contractors allegedly violating subcontracting practices described above will be investigated by SSPC and may result in an unscheduled probable cause audit of job records and job site.

E. Joint Ventures and Auditing

When SSPC audits a project being done by one or more QP certified companies as a **Joint Venture (JV)**, the audit counts as an audit for all the QP certified companies involved in the JV. That is, if the audit is successful, all the JV QP companies audited share in the success. If the audit is not successful, the audit is unsuccessful for all JV QP companies involved. In addition, SSPC reserves the right to audit a non-JV project being done by one or more of the joint venture contractors as part of their routine annual audit.

F. Reporting Work and Citation History on Application

Contractors are responsible for the accuracy and completeness of reporting of regulatory citation history information submitted to SSPC when completing an initial or maintenance application. Failure to accurately report this information on the application will delay the application or result in disciplinary action or if the company is already certified, could result in suspension of the company's certification status.

G. Administrative Suspension and Change of Company Name

Change of company name, ownership or structure does not void a suspension or revocation issued by SSPC. Any company that is suspended or revoked for failing to meet QP audit standards, SSPC administrative policy or any other policy related to QP certification is restricted from reapplying for certification as a newly formed, merged or renamed company. Recertification in any form is prohibited for the stated duration of the suspension. Once the suspension or revocation period has lapsed, any suspension or revocation history and records will be transferred to the new business.

Any representative of the management, including but not limited to, an officer, director, superintendent, quality control supervisor, safety director, general manager, stockholder or any person who exercises directly or indirectly, including through an intermediary person, any degree of ownership, management or control of the suspended contracting company, who forms or purchases a new company or who exercises any degree of ownership of a new, existing or purchased company renders the new, existing or purchased company ineligible for certification while any suspension of the company the person was associated with is in effect. The intent is to prevent management or other key individuals associated with the suspended company from forming or purchasing a new company or exercising any control over an existing affiliated company – such as through an intermediary person – to avoid the consequences of a PCCP suspension.

A suspended contractor may re-enter the program when the suspension or revocation period has lapsed and the conditions for reinstatement have been

met. A newly formed, merged, renamed or otherwise reorganized company must submit an application and follow all procedures for QP Certification.

NOTE: *For purposes of this document, “Affiliated Company” is defined as, “A company, corporation, partnership, joint venture or other business entity operating under a different name than the certified company, which performs surface preparation or coating application or administrative and other support functions for the certified company; and in which an officer, director, owner, partner or stockholder of the certified company, a previously certified company disciplined by SSPC, or the certified company itself, exercises directly or indirectly – such as through an intermediary person or family member – any significant degree of ownership, management or control.”*

XIV. Random Audit Program (RAP) (QP1 and QP2 Only)

A. Contractor Eligibility Requirements for the Random Audit Program

1. The contractor must successfully complete the most recent three-year certification term. That is, the contractor must pass the initial and two subsequent QP1 and QP2 reconfirmation audits and any subsequent audits. During the course of the above audits, a contractor must not have received a rating less than “2” for any critical evaluation item or receive more than three ratings less than “2” on any non-critical evaluation item in the QP1 program; or any deficiency requiring a major **Corrective Action Report (CAR)** or more than three deficiencies requiring a minor CAR in the QP2 program.

NOTE: *The RAP is applicable to both QP1 and QP2 certifications. Companies holding both QP1 and QP2 certifications must qualify for RAP under both programs to enter the RAP.*

2. Establish a record free of disciplinary actions as defined by the **Disciplinary Action Criteria (DAC)** during the certification term.
3. Operate without any major changes in company organization as defined in the QP1 Special Provisions during the course of the contractor’s most recently completed three-year QP1 Certification term or any part of a subsequent uncompleted term. A contractor may change its name without losing eligibility, but it must meet the criteria listed in Special Provisions for such an action.

B. Loss of Eligibility for the Random Audit Program

1. A contractor fails any certification or random audit when it does not achieve a passing score or is rated “Less than 2” on any QP1 critical item or “Less than 2” on four or more non-critical items; or is cited for any deficiency requiring a major **Correction Action (CAR)** or four or more deficiencies requiring a minor CAR under the QP2 program.

NOTE: *Contractors who fail a random audit must submit an accepted Corrective Action Plan within 45 days of notice and undergo a full audit in order to be considered for reinstatement of certification status.*

2. If a contractor undergoes a major organizational change that requires a change in tax ID or EIN.
3. If SSPC assesses any disciplinary action against a contractor as determined by the DAC.
4. If a contractor voluntarily discontinues or disrupts its certification status (e.g., failure to meet an application or submittal deadline; failure to pay fees or expenses when due).
5. Declaration of Bankruptcy.

C. Restoration of Random Audit Program Eligibility

1. Successful completion of a new three-year term (see **A.1.** above) will begin with a full audit in the year following loss of RAP status.
2. Pass a special audit following a major organizational change.

D. Duration of Random Audit Program Eligibility (three years)

1. A contractor is subject to random audit in any of the three years that it is in the Random Audit Program.
2. A contractor must pass a full audit (all items on the checklist) in the fourth year to be eligible for a new three-year term in the Random Audit Program.
3. Random reconfirmation audits consist of – at a minimum – an on-site evaluation at an active job and a visit to the corporate offices to verify compliance with certification program requirements.

E. Application for RAP Eligibility

1. Applications for RAP eligibility are due on October 15 in the following calendar year.
2. To apply, simply submit a letter requesting consideration for entry into the RAP program and include copies of your three most recent SSPC audit summaries and corresponding deficiency schedules as well as evidence of successful completion of projects completed during the most recent QP1 Certification term. Determination will be made no later than January 15. Requests submitted after October 15 cannot be considered.

XV. Scoring

The SSPC auditor rates your company on all applicable* evaluation items. Only findings rated “1” or “2” are reported on the deficiency schedule, which is given to the auditee at the exit interview. Lack of a finding for an evaluation item means that the auditor rated it “3” or did not rate the item.

**More items are evaluated on initial and full audits than are evaluated on maintenance, spot-check or corrective action follow-up audits.*

Below are the ratings and what they mean.

The rating of “1” is a major CAR or deficiency, and indicates:

- a) The required training, written program, practice or procedure is non-existent;
- b) The required training or written program is inadequate; or
- c) The required practice or procedure has not been in place for the minimum time of six consecutive production months, or it has been in place sporadically (e.g., less than 2/3 implemented based on sampling).

IMPORTANT NOTE: *Typically, auditors will not issue major deficiencies for isolated breakdowns in a contractor’s quality system. However, there are exceptions. For example, auditors will issue a rating of “1” when they observe one or more safety violations or safety hazards that could result in an injury or serious incident. An obvious example would be a person working without appropriate fall protection as required by the contractor’s safety and health plan and/or governing regulations. Auditors will also issue a rating of “1” if they discover one or more unauthorized deviations from contract requirements or deviations from good painting practices found in the paint shop, shipyard or field job site.*

The rating of “2” is a minor CAR or deficiency, and indicates the training or written program is adequate but requires minor revision. Examples include a practice or procedure that is in place with isolated instances of non-conformance no more than 1/3 of the time based on sampling, lack of practice or documentation due to personnel turnover, non-performance by field personnel, personal hardship and natural disaster.

The rating of “3” indicates that a contractor – based on audit sampling – consistently adheres to specific training and written program requirements as well as required practices and procedures that consistently meet the letter of the standard. When there are no audit findings it means that all items evaluated during the audit were rated “3.”

A **Corrective Action Report (CAR)**, using the SSPC automated CAP form found on the SSPC website at <http://www.sspc.org/qp-cap> is required for each rating of “1” (major deficiency) found by the auditor. Remedial action for a major CAR requires the submission of a Corrective Action Report followed by an on-site audit to confirm that the contractor has corrected the deficiency and implemented the corrective action plan submitted to SSPC. With the exception of initial audits and maintenance or follow-up audits where multiple CARs are written (e.g., four to five), remedial action for a minor CAR requires that the auditor confirm remediation at the next audit. Minor CARs that are not remedied by the contractor by the next audit turn into a major CAR or deficiency.

Initial Audits require Corrective Action Report submission for all deficiencies cited – both major and minor.

Concerns: Occasionally, the auditor will note a “Concern” on an audit report. A Concern is not a rating – it is simply a statement for the contractor to consider for its own business purposes. No response is required for a Concern.

XVI. QP1 Appendix A

A. General Description

In order to meet the requirements of QP1 **Section 3.2.1**, the contractor must document implementation of the program to:

1. Assess the skills and general training needs of newly hired craft workers* and qualify them for their assigned tasks;
2. Verify the qualifications of existing craft workers;
3. Train inexperienced craft workers (trainees) as necessary;
4. Evaluate the performance of craft workers at least once per calendar year and provide additional training as necessary;
5. Ensure compliance with contract specific worker training/qualification requirements.

**A craft worker is one who performs surface preparation and/or applies coating materials.*

B. Contents of the Program – General Training and Qualifications Requirements

NEWLY HIRED EXPERIENCED CRAFT WORKERS

The program must contain provisions to administer written tests and/or a hands-on evaluation to assess the skills of new hires that claim to have previous experience or verify previous qualifications through a formal training or qualification program.

1. When written tests are used, they shall include information that the contractor determines to be necessary to verify the general knowledge of the trade and the qualifications of the individual tested to perform work assigned. While it is left to the contractor to create or use the test that works best for its business, the contractor must show that the questions and answers are based on training materials, or standards, or publications developed by SSPC, ASTM, PDCA, the IUPAT or its affiliates; NCCER or materials developed by another organization that are acceptable to SSPC.

2. Hands-on Skill Evaluation: At a minimum, abrasive blasters shall be qualified using the SSPC C-7 hands-on skill assessment protocol for testing blasters or an equivalent hands-on evaluation or performance verification acceptable to SSPC. The hands-on evaluation can be done in a controlled qualification session in the shop or yard or in the field at an actual production site. The C-7 skills assessment form is available from SSPC, <http://www.sspc.org/qp-forms>.
3. Spray painters shall be qualified per the contractor's Quality Control Procedures Manual using industry accepted qualification procedures from one or more of the sources listed in **B.1.** above.
4. Specialty skill qualifications for such processes as UHP Water Jetting, Thermal Spray Metalizing or Plural Component Spray shall be developed, whether in-house or outsourced, based on material or equipment supplier best practices when industry standard training or training materials do not exist.
5. Craft workers previously trained or qualified by your company who have been laid off or who have left to work for another contractor, only to return to work for your company within a two-year period, need not be re-qualified to update your assessment of their skills.

TRAINEES

General training for trainees shall be based on training materials developed by SSPC, PDCA, the IUPAT or its affiliates, NCCER or equivalent materials acceptable to SSPC.

C. Qualification to Apply Specific Material and Use New Equipment

The program must contain procedures to qualify craft workers to apply materials or use equipment unfamiliar to the craft worker. The program must also document that those workers have been qualified or trained.

D. Supervisor

Each contractor shall designate a "Supervisor" to be responsible for implementation of the company's craft worker training and qualification program and monitoring its effective use in the field. The Supervisor shall have sufficient technical knowledge and documented training in the use of specific materials and equipment.

E. CAS (Coating Application Specialist Certification Program)

Beginning in calendar year 2013, QP1 contractors are required to implement their QP1 CAS program. Information on CAS QP1 implementation requirements can be found at <http://www.sspc.org/qp-cas-qp1>. QP1 companies based outside of the USA can petition the Corporate Certification Program Manager for a waiver from the CAS requirement if:

1. CAS is not available in the company's geographic area; or
2. CAS is not available in the language of the workplace.

To qualify for a waiver, the company must have in place a viable alternative plan such as SSPC C-7 and C-12 certifications for blasters and painters or other recognized third party accredited craft worker qualification program. Any SSPC waiver would be exclusive of any other waivers already allowed by the program.

F. Annual Performance Evaluation

The contractor must have implemented procedures and documentation to show that his/her production supervisor evaluates and documents each craft worker's performance at least annually. Annual performance evaluation is a major critical item (see **Audit Item Number 9**).

XVII. QP1 Appendix B

A. QCS Formal Training Course (SSPC QCS or equivalent)

Course material should meet the BOK outlined in ASQ Quality Management System (basics) – 16-hour course minimum (final lecture examination, minimum passing grade 80%) – curriculum must include definitions of quality systems, quality manuals and procedures, documentation and data controls, calibration programs, contract document and specification review, work plans and process control procedures, inspection plans, inspection reports, internal audits and SSPC QP audit requirements. Certificates must be issued after successful completion minimum instructor qualifications (SSPC QCS or equivalent, three years' experience in industrial/marine protective coatings QCS and inspection).

QC Inspector Formal Training Course (e.g., include SSPC PCI, NBPI, BCI, NACE CIP Level I, KTA Level I, or equivalent):

- Course material should meet the BOK outlined in ASTM D 3276.
- 24-hour course minimum (final lecture examination, minimum passing grade 70%).
- Course must include an eight-hour hands-on inspection instrument workshop (graded instrument use examination, minimum passing grade 70%).
- Inspection plan development.
- Documentation of inspection results.
- SSPC industry standards and visual guides.
- Specification review and product data sheets.
- Certificates must be issued after successful completion.

- Minimum instructor qualifications (e.g., include SSPC PCS, PCI, NBPI; BCI, NACE CIP Level I, KTA Level I, or equivalent; three years' experience in industrial/marine protective coatings QC inspection).

For QP course equivalency consideration, please submit the following:

- Curriculum, course schedule, and course locations.
- Training materials.
- Quizzes and examinations.
- Instructor roster and instructor qualifications.

SSPC retains the right to audit a QC course being presented for “equivalency” consideration prior to accepting the course as an “equivalent” at the contractor’s expense.

SSPC also reserves the right to audit a previously accepted “equivalency” course at the contractor’s expense or request training records.