Pursuing ANSI Accreditation for the CCA Credential

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Why Pursue ANSI?

- ANSI will showcase the validity and integrity of your credential.

- ANSI recognition is international.

- Businesses know ANSI's high standards and respect those who meet them.

- Government agencies are likely to accept ANSI accreditation as a benchmark.

- ANSI accreditation is a significant barrier to entry for competitors.

Summary of ANSI Standards for Personnel Certifications

- Impartial, transparent governance
- Involvement of stakeholders
- Standardized policies and procedures
- Valid, fair, objective, and consistent eligibility and testing protocols
- Confidentiality and security
- Measurement of continuing competence
- Qualified, impartial staff and volunteers

Key Issues: Governance

- **ASA bylaws should delegate certification governance and administration specifically and totally to ICCA.**

- **Insure involvement of all stakeholders in selection of ICCA board members, with no one interest predominating.**

Key Issues:
Policies and Procedures

- **ICCA needs a Management System to document all certification processes** (required by Std 4.4)

- **Assure consistency throughout all regions**

- **Need greater ICCA oversight of local board functions**
  - **Enhance exam security**
  - **Assure consistency**
  - **Establish metrics**
  - **Perform regular audits**

Key Issues:
Eligibility and Testing

- Must assure objectivity and consistency in all eligibility and testing outcomes.

- Test scope must be developed via recognized psychometric processes.

- Assess eligibility before allowing to test.

- Examiners and proctors must be impartial, and must not be involved in training or coaching the candidates.

Key Issues: Confidentiality and Security

- Require confidentiality agreements from all who work with certification.

- Maintain certification records in files/databases with limited access.

- Create and maintain separation between certification and all training activities.

- Improve oversight of test administration to eliminate potential security breaches.

Key Issues: Continuing Competence

- Provide rationale for recertification interval.

- Recertification requirements must reflect the same knowledge and skills as needed to become newly certified.

- Recertification submittals must be evaluated against objective criteria to insure consistent results.

Key Issues: Staff and Volunteers

- **Staff and volunteers must be "qualified."**
  - Require appropriate knowledge and skills.
  - Provide proper training.
  - Monitor and assess performance periodically.

- **Staff and volunteers must also:**
  - Sign confidentiality agreements;
  - Be impartial and objective;
  - Not be involved in activities that present potential conflicts of interest.

Actions Needed to Prepare for Accreditation

Governance and Policy/Procedures

- **ASA bylaws may need revision.**

- **ICCA needs a Management System Manual.**

- **Candidate eligibility should be evaluated *before* testing.**

- **Certification should be awarded by ICCA, not by ASA, and not by local boards.**

Actions Needed, cont'd

Staff and volunteers

- ICCA should audit local board processes to ensure ANSI requirements are met.

- Some local board volunteers are involved in training and continuing education activities which could present conflicts of interest.

3 Possible Solutions to Issue of Local Board Involvement

A. Keep current concept in general, but:

- Reduce number of local boards to wider regions based on agricultural similarities.

- Require local boards to separate training activities from certification activities, and appoint different volunteers to each function.

- Provide standardized policies and procedures to be followed for all certification activities.

- Monitor and audit local performance.

- Reassign awarding of final certification to ICCA.

Possible Solutions, cont'd

B. Transfer to ICCA office staff all certification decisions currently delegated to local boards; allow input from local volunteers.

C. Create a dual certification/certificate program.

- ICCA office staff and volunteers administer CCA eligibility, the core examination, and recertification, and award the CCA credential.

- Local boards can provide training and award *certificates* in local/regional practice.

Timeline

- **It takes about 2 years for the average certification organization to bring itself into compliance with ANSI standards.**

  - Governance issues require action by board(s).

  - Policies and procedures must be reviewed, and policy revisions acted upon by board(s).

  - Psychometric studies may be needed to validate testing protocols.

  - All certification operations must be fully documented.

Timeline: 1st Year

- **Review operational policies, procedures.**
  - Assess what revisions are needed.
  - Prepare and present proposed revisions to board(s).

- **Review eligibility and testing protocols.**
  - Conduct any needed psychometric studies.

- **Review and revise volunteer recruitment and selection practices, as needed.**

Timeline: 2nd Year

- **Finalize board actions, as needed, and implement the results.**

- **Develop Management System Manual based on revised policies and procedures.**

- **Complete all psychometric studies, and implement the results.**

- **Publish policies, procedures, processes, eligibility requirements, etc.**

- **Compile documentation and submit the ANSI application.**

Timeline: Caveats

- 1st & 2nd year progress are estimates only.
- Factors affecting the timeline:
  - Number of board actions needed
  - Scope of revisions to operations needed
  - Amount of staff time devoted to ANSI preparations
  - Amount of consulting time budgeted for ANSI preparations
  - Commitment to making the changes needed

ANSI requires that all policies, procedures, and processes *must be implemented* before the application will be considered.
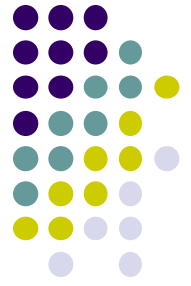
Cost: Preparation

- **Approximately ⅓ to ½ time for one mid-level staff member**

- **Approximately $20,000-25,000 per year for consulting services**

- **Approximately $3,000 - $5,000 per psychometric study, if needed**

- **Clerical time for assembly of documentation**

- **Design/printing costs for any new brochures, web pages, or other publications**

Cost: ANSI fees

- **Application fee: currently $3,000**
- **Assessors' two-day on-site visit fee: currently $5,000 ($1,250 per day x 2 assessors), plus travel expenses**
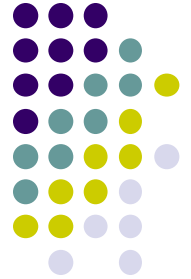- **Annual fees after accreditation: based on annual revenue of the certification body**

ANSI Annual Fees

| ANNUAL REVENUE | | ANNUAL |
FROM	TO	FEE
$0	$250,000	$2,500
$250,001	$500,000	$3,000
$500,001	$1,000,000	$4,000
$1,000,001	$2,000,000	$6,000
$2,000,001	$4,000,000	$10,000
$4,000,001	$6,000,000	$16,000
Over $6,000,000		$20,000

Commitment

- **Commitment of the ICCA Board is critical to success.**

- **ANSI accreditation is all or nothing: If local boards continue to be involved in the certification process, they must ALL conform to ANSI's standards and adhere to the policies and procedures that are developed.**

Summary

ANSI accreditation offers many benefits.

The CCA program has many strengths, and they will be enhanced by the changes you undertake in order to meet the ANSI standards.

Preparation for ANSI application requires significant expenditure of resources, and a firm commitment from ICCA leadership.

~~ Questions and Discussion ~~