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# Metal Building Assembler Accreditation AC478

## The Building Officials Overview

Verifying competent companies are assembling metal buildings on site



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ME!

## Metal Building Assembly & Accreditation

The popularity of metal buildings has increased significantly due to cost-efficiency, durability, recyclability, and other reasons. As a building official, it is important to verify that competent companies are working on sites to assemble these buildings. The International Accreditation Service (IAS), a subsidiary of the International Code Council (ICC), has created the AC478 Metal Building Assemblers Inspection Accreditation Program, also known as AC478 Accreditation Program, to help qualify competent companies doing this work.

### How does the Accreditation Program work?

IAS accredits the inspection practices of companies that assemble metal building systems. Building departments, designers, and owners can use the IAS AC478 Accreditation Program to identify contractors that have demonstrated their competence to erect metal buildings. The accreditation is based on requirements in IAS Accreditation Criteria AC478 and the International Building Code®. Getting accredited involves an assessment of the company's management system, that includes the assembly processes, internal safety, training programs, periodic jobsite inspections, etc. IAS accreditation establishes a benchmark for companies qualified to assemble and erect metal buildings.

To achieve accreditation, assemblers must be able to demonstrate that they have internal resources of personnel, organization, experience, knowledge, management procedures and commitment to assemble metal building systems according to manufacturer's instructions and project specifications.

## What are some of the areas that are assessed by IAS?

- ◆ Control of project documentation including access to these documents from the field.
- ◆ Training program adherence for field personnel.
- ◆ Safety program documentation and adherence including job-site specific plans, JHA's and yearly program reviews.
- ◆ Quality documentation and adherence to manufacturer's specifications. Quality checklists, inspections and management are all assured of being in place and adhered to.

An onsite assessment assures that the plan and documentation that are set out in the program are adhered to in the field. This is all verified by IAS annually through on-site assessments of the firm's projects to confirm that the appropriate standards are in place and being applied. This assures building officials that the assembler has comprehensive quality assurance processes in place that provide high-quality, reliable buildings.

### Why require an accredited assembler?

- ◆ IAS accreditation is recognized as a reliable indicator of technical competence.
- ◆ IAS accreditation is used by organizations to improve the quality and technical capabilities of their services and to improve their public image and marketability.
- ◆ IAS worked with metal building assemblers, metal building manufacturers, industry professionals and building departments to develop widely accepted accreditation programs.
- ◆ IAS accreditation is recognized by most federal, state and local governmental bodies.
- ◆ IAS is a subsidiary of the ICC and a third-party, nonprofit, internationally recognized accreditation body that is regularly evaluated for compliance with international standards by peer accrediting organizations worldwide.





## What are the Benefits for Building Officials to require accreditation of companies?

Building officials gain a layer of protection for their jurisdiction when buildings are being assembled by companies accredited through AC478. When a firm is evaluated for accreditation, attention is focused on assembly procedures, inspections, quality assurance, training regiments and commitment to safety. In fact, accredited companies must have a safety plan and a job safety analysis risk assessment tool to identify and control workplace hazards. Each accredited firm must provide:

- ♦ A description of procedures and policies that ensure the safety of all people.
- ♦ A safety manager whose experience confirms his or her competence and who demonstrates consistent results in establishing, maintaining and implementing a safety program.
- ♦ An assurance that the safety manager has direct access to the firm's top executives.

## How will you know if a building has been erected by an AC478-accredited assembler?

Compare the name of the contracted assembler with the complete list of accredited companies and facilities (<https://www.iasonline.org/services/metal-building-assemblers/>). If the project specifications require an accredited assembler, the building owner or general contractor should have a copy of their certificate.

## Is there an Accreditation Mark that is used to identify accredited companies?

Yes. Accredited companies may use the IAS AC478 Accreditation Mark on their website, business cards and promotional materials to indicate they are an accredited company.



## There are other accreditation and certification programs like AISC erector programs. Don't these accomplish the same things as AC478?

No. Those programs only address the primary steel erection and welding process, not the complete package of a systems engineered building. Only the IAS AC478 Accreditation Program addresses all aspects of a metal building system assemblers' operation.

## Why are those needs unique?

Metal Building Systems are highly engineered, optimized structures, with virtually all elements of the building structure working as an integral system to meet the strength and serviceability requirements for the project. As such, they present unique challenges and require proper techniques to perform as designed.

## With conventional construction, I don't have accreditation programs for roofing and siding. Why isn't that adequate for metal building systems?

Metal building systems are engineered to work together as a whole package. If siding and roofing are not correctly installed on conventional construction, it doesn't affect the structural integrity to the extent that it does with metal building construction. Metal building erectors need to be highly aware of the engineering and critical



components of metal building design to assure building owners and building officials that they have a quality product that will withstand the effects of weather and design loads. When properly assembled, metal building systems provide efficient, cost-effective solutions.

### **If I require that only AC478-accredited companies can bid projects in my jurisdiction, will I be restricting competition such that construction costs unfairly rise?**

No. There are a significant number of companies with multiple accredited facilities throughout the U.S. who can provide you with competitive choices. A list of accredited firms, along with certificates, can be seen on <https://www.iasonline.org/services/metal-building-assemblers/>.

### **Why is the AC478 Accreditation Program a principal focus of the MBCEA?**

The Metal Building Contractors and Erectors Association (MBCEA) wants to make sure the industry can advance with quality construction of metal buildings and differentiate between the high-level performers and bad actors in the industry. Building owners, fabricators, architects and building officials are looking to AC478 as the standard.

### **Demand an accredited building assembler!**

Avoid costly delays and rework.

### **Does IAS have any other accreditation programs for the metal building industry?**

Yes, IAS offers the AC472 Accreditation for companies that design and fabricate custom engineered metal building systems. It also offers the AC473 Accreditation for companies that are manufacturers of cold-formed steel (structural and nonstructural) components that do not require welding.

### **International Accreditation Service, Inc.**

The International Accreditation Service (IAS) is a nonprofit accreditation body and a wholly owned subsidiary of the International Code Council (ICC). IAS assesses and accredits building departments, special inspection agencies, testing and calibration laboratories, fabricator inspection programs, and oversees the AC478 Accreditation Program for Metal Assemblers.

### **More Information**

#### **International Accreditation Service**

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