

Product Information

September 2019

Material traceability and type 3.2 certification:

Why do material traceability and type 3.2 certification matter?

Nordheim (Germany) – September 01, 2019 – Material traceability is a grave issue in a global market. For many companies, profit is more important than the quality and safety of people and the plant. For this reason, so-called black vendor lists have come into existence.

Product traceability

Projects in the energy and oil/gas sector have well-known regulations in place to provide transparency in the supply chain and increase quality control. BS EN 10204, the British standard, is the most common for authentication of material certification.

Product tracing system

The system of using plain language descriptions of products and services needs replacing. Trade and industry sectors worldwide need identification and product tracking systems. These systems are relevant because of the expansion of computerization. They came into being with the new developments in communication and global trade.

Product traceability is a method where manufacturers maintain records. They catalog all parts and materials from the time they buy them to delivery of the end product. Each part or batch has a unique number to identify it. The finished product also has a unique number. Traceability allows you to identify and track a product or component to its point of origin.

Material traceability

For most critical applications and equipment, manufacturers must provide complete material traceability. The materials they use must meet the mechanical properties specified in the order. They have to prove that these materials have the correct metallurgy/chemistry properties. Traceability is a means to identify and trace a specific piece/component of steel.

Manufacturers use a traceable reference for the products they make. This reference is usually a heat number or a unique identification code.

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They mark/tag it on the steel. They can trace it to the mill (MTC/MTR) where they test forgings, or in the case of casting, the pouring of molten metals.

Sellers need traceability between the actual material and the material certificates. It assures them that the material meets the specification and the testing requirements.

Blacklisted vendors

If you're in the industry long enough, you'll know that counterfeit products exist. You'll find counterfeit pipes, valves, flanges, and fittings. One cannot imagine how far a person (or a company) would go to make a profit. These companies profit at the expense of process safety and reputation. Not only do they fake the products, but they also forge the documents and certifications.

Recently, a major local project ran into a situation. The supplier needed to make an urgent delivery of more than 600 products. These products were non-conformant to the specified material grade specification.

We know from firsthand experience that some people supply sub-standard material. They then alter the documents to save costs and make a profit. This practice is not only illegal, but it also criminal if we risk the lives of people.

Traceability is an integral part of an organization's product recall management plan. Many companies struggle with recalls. Most often, they have challenges in those first critical phases of examining incidents. These challenges affect the decision to recall.

About one-third of the cost of a recall is the interruption of business operations. So, firms need applicable business continuity programs. Such programs reduce disruption. They enable companies to get back into operation as soon as possible after a recall. Loss of shelf space, or worse – loss of key customers is other risks. These consequences come about with being out of the market for an extended period.

What is 3.2 certification?

Another way of safeguarding your company is not to rely on the paper certificate. Type 3.2 provides a higher level of certification. Users can be confident about the integrity of the material. The manufacturer issues this certification, and third-party inspectors confirm it. Both declare the materials, and the test results follow the specification.

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These authorized inspectors identify the traceability of materials. They also review and witness the testing requirements. For example, they do chemical composition and mechanical tests. Depending on the purchase order, the user may need to do other inspections such as NDE/NDT and corrosion tests.

The need to certify materials came about when the European Union introduced new EC directives such as the Pressure Equipment Directive. It has led to the authentication of material certification requirements. Manufacturers authenticate their products for Type 3.2 certification under the standard BS EN 10204:2004.

An independent company or individual then has to conduct an objective third-party inspection. Representatives from these companies visit the manufacturer. They do a visual examination to see if they meet the requirements for type 3.2 certification. They also do dimensional sample checks.

In the end, they confirm that they can trace the material back to the ladle chemical analysis. This confirmation may be a BS EN 10204 type 3.1 document.

Scope: 5,149 characters including spaces

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Captions:



Picture 1: Material traceability and type 3.2 certification

Pictures by: Armaturenfabrik Franz Schneider GmbH + Co. KG

About AS-Schneider

The family-run company, AS-Schneider, was founded in 1875 and with over 350 employees, is one of the leading manufacturers of Instrumentation Valves, Manifolds and Double Block & Bleed Valves worldwide. In the market segment for Large-Bore Diesel Engine Valves such as those used in marine propulsion and the generation of electricity, AS-Schneider is even the world market leader. With our own subsidiaries in Romania, Singapore, Dubai (UAE) and Houston (USA) and professional partners in more than 20 countries worldwide, we are located everywhere our customers need us.

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