

**PROCEDURE FOR ACCORDING RECOGNITION/RENEWAL OF RECOGNITION
TO THE ASSAYING & HALL MARKING CENTRES**

1. RECOGNITION

1.1 The Assaying and Hallmarking Centre seeking recognition from Bureau of Indian Standards under BIS Hallmarking Scheme 2005 shall make a formal request in the prescribed application form obtainable from BIS HQs or from any of its regional Offices. The form can also be down loaded from from www.bis.org.in.

1.2 The Assaying and Hallmarking Centre shall have legal identity and independent status. The promoters of the Centre shall not have any linkage with Jewellers/Artefacts (manufacturer/retailers). However, the Centre may be of a Jeweller's/Artefacts manufacturer's Association.

1.3 The recognition of Assaying and Hallmarking Centres is entirely need-based to support BIS Hallmarking Scheme for certification of Silver and Silver alloys, Jewellery/Artefacts. Application shall be considered based on BIS requirements for utilizing such Assaying and Hallmarking facilities.

1.4 The recognition of Assaying and Hallmarking Centre by BIS shall generally be considered for complete testing as per IS:2113-2002 Silver and Silver Alloys along with BIS criteria for Hallmarking and therefore, the Centre desiring to have recognition under this Scheme shall ensure the availability of complete testing and Hallmarking facilities as well as meet the general/technical criteria as specified in this scheme before applying for recognition.

1.5 While filling in the application form, the applicant shall give all the information desired in the prescribed application form and shall avoid evasive replies. Incomplete application shall be summarily rejected.

1.6 * The Assaying and Hallmarking Centre shall enclose along with the application the requisite fees as prescribed (Please refer Doc. HM/AHC/ F October 2005 for details) (in duplicate) along with copy of the Quality Manual and requisite fees to the Regional Coordinator Hallmarking stationed at the relevant regional Office .

1.7 Application thus received shall be subjected to preliminary adequacy assessment by BIS .

1.8 If the adequacy audit report is satisfactory and BIS need is felt to utilize such an Assaying and Hallmarking Centre, a preliminary visit shall be arranged by BIS for ensuring complete sampling, testing and Hallmarking facilities. The visit is also to ensure the availability and implementation of the related quality system documentation.

*Not applicable in case if assaying center already recognized.

1.9 After getting satisfactory preliminary visit report regarding Assaying and Hallmarking Centre, necessary arrangement shall be made by BIS for assessment of the applicant Assaying and Hallmarking Centre through a team of minimum 2 officers, one of whom is technically competent and trained/experienced in Centre/laboratory Quality Assurance activities e.g. Sampling, Hallmarking, Lab Administration and other activities.

1.10 Assessment team leader will interact with applicant Assaying and Hallmarking Centre and fix up mutually convenient dates for necessary assessment.

1.11 The assessment of the Assaying and Hallmarking Centre shall be done as per 'BIS criteria for Recognition of Assaying and Hallmarking Centres', which gives general as well as technical requirements. The requirements for the operations of the Centre with respect to Receipt, Sampling and Hallmarking are based on ISO 9001, and the specific requirements for assessment of assaying laboratory of the Assessment Centre are based on ISO/IEC 17025. The conformance of Silver jewellery/artifacts for fineness is to be ensured as per IS:2112:2003 with respect to the requirements specified in IS:2113 -2002.

1.12 The assessment team shall submit the assessment report in prescribed format to the concerned regional coordinator.

1.13 The report shall be examined by the RO to compliance to the criteria for recognition of Assaying and Hallmarking Centre and their recommendations shall be put up to the Competent Authority for decision.

1.14 The applicant shall be advised to pay the requisite fees after payment of which the decision of the Competent Authority along with other terms and conditions shall be conveyed to the applicant Assaying and Hallmarking Centre, specifying the period of validity of the recognition with other terms and conditions, in case recognized. Otherwise, the concerned Assaying and Hallmarking shall be intimated about the deficiencies and shall be advised to take corrective actions within a time frame of six months, failing which the application shall be closed.

1.15 The effective date of recognition shall be considered from the date of approval by the Competent Authority.

1.16 Surveillance of the performance of the Centre shall be through assessment by authorized BIS team minimum thrice in an operative period of three years. In case the performance is not up to the mark stricter surveillance may also be resorted to.

1.17 Each center shall without fail provide the details of quantity of jewellery and Artifacts received, rejected and hallmarked along with hallmarking charges collected during preceding month positively by 5th of the next month to the concerned Regional Coordinator with a copy to HMD.

1.18 Hallmarking Department shall maintain an Up-to Date Register of Recognized Assaying and Hallmarking Centres based on information received from the ROs.

2. RENEWAL OF RECOGNITION

2.1 The renewal of the recognition shall be done based on the satisfactory performance reported as per the surveillance assessment carried out during the validity period and satisfactory report of the assessment carried out after receipt of the renewal application form along with hallmarking charges settled up to last day of the previous month as well as the prescribed fees to the concerned regional coordinator and review by the Competent Authority.

2.2 The concerned regional coordinator shall inform all the BIS Regional/Branch offices about the new Assaying and Hallmarking Centre recognized/renewal of the recognition of the existing Assaying and Hallmarking Centre. The ROs/BOs shall in turn inform the same to certified jewellers/jewellery manufacturers under their jurisdiction.

3. TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR RECOGNIZED LABORATORIES

3.1 The following terms and conditions shall be applicable to the BIS recognized Assaying and Hallmarking Centres:

3.1.1 When an Assaying and Hallmarking Centre carries out its functions for BIS, it is required to work as per specific instructions of BIS and the instruction contained in "BIS criteria for recognition of Assaying and Hallmarking Centre" as amended from time to time and shall be a binding on them.

3.1.2 The recognition of Assaying and Hallmarking Centre shall be for a period of three years which shall be renewable before expiry of recognition, subject to satisfactory performance based on surveillance assessment of that Assaying and Hallmarking Centre.

3.1.2.1 The Centre seeking renewal shall submit the renewal application at least one month in advance of expiry date.

3.1.3 BIS may at its discretion, withdraw recognition, or require reassessment due to changes in technical personnel, break-down of equipment, lack of cooperation to BIS experts during verification of any of its activities and/or if a complaint or any other information is received which indicates that the technical competence and integrity/confidentiality of the Assaying and Hallmarking Centre is not satisfactory. The Assaying and Hallmarking Centre shall inform the regional coordinator immediately about the major changes/break-down of equipment, etc. affecting Sampling/Assaying/Hallmarking of Silver Jewellery/compliance to BIS Criteria of Competence.

3.1.4 The Assaying and Hallmarking charges for Silver shall be followed as per BIS guidelines from time to time.

3.1.5 The recognized Assaying and Hallmarking Centre shall agree to participate in proficiency testing/ Inter Laboratory Test Comparison Programmes for assessing the technical competence of the Assaying and Hallmarking Centre. BIS shall not bear any expenditure including assaying charges in this connection while organizing the programme .

3.1.6 The Assaying and Hallmarking Centre shall carry out complete Assaying and Hallmarking within 48 hrs of receipt of jewellery .

3.1.7 The Assaying and Hallmarking Centre may publicize the recognition in the Press or otherwise for any commercial purposes.

3.1.8 The Assaying and Hallmarking Centre shall not use the recognition certificate/letter of recognition after its validity period is over or in case of de-recognition.

3.1.9 A recognized Assaying and Hallmarking Centre shall not use its recognition in any manner as to bring disrepute to BIS and shall not make any statement relevant to its recognition which may be considered misleading by BIS.

3.1.10 The recognized Assaying and Hallmarking Centre shall perform the Sampling, Assaying and Hallmarking as per BIS guidelines, while the Silver jewellery shall be sent to them by BIS certified Jewellers for Hallmarking purposes only. For this purpose, the Centre and BIS Certified Jeweller(s) shall have an agreement between themselves covering the aspects like receipt, safe custody of jewellery and its return; purity of supply; hallmarking charges; conditions for hallmarked articles; time for hallmarking; confidentiality; defects/ damages; liability, etc.

3.1.11 The recognized Assaying and Hallmarking Centre shall not subcontract any part of its activities like sampling, assaying and hallmarking. However, Assaying and Hallmarking Centers may have sample collection centers at various locations.

3.1.12 Test Report/Certificate issued by the centre on samples sent to them for assaying for the purpose of this scheme shall contain all the information as per IS 2113:2002 .

3.2 The surveillance assessment of the recognized Assaying and Hallmarking Centre shall be carried out by BIS at least thrice in an Operative year and the concerned Assaying and Hallmarking Centre shall provide all the facilities for carrying out the necessary assessment. Any surprise check if felt necessary can also be ordered by DDGR .

3.3 Assaying and Hallmarking Centre can relinquish recognition by giving three month's notice in writing to BIS, but they shall ensure either to complete Assaying and Hallmarking of the jewellery articles pending with them or shall return Silver jewellery articles pending along with their requests to Jewellers.

3.4 A recognized Assaying and Hallmarking Centre shall pay to BIS such fees for application, initial assessment, surveillance, renewal and other services as applicable from time to time.

3.5 The recognized Assaying and Hallmarking Centre shall submit the application for renewal of recognition one month in advance of the expiry date of recognition alongwith the applicable fees.

4. DE-RECOGNITION

4.1 The Recognized Assaying and Hallmarking Centre shall stand automatically de-recognized on the expiry of term of approval, if renewal is not sought by the Assaying and Hallmarking Centre concerned along with the prescribed fees in accordance with 3.5.

4.2 The Assaying and Hallmarking Centre shall also stand de-recognized if the renewal is not agreed to by the competent authority of BIS.

4.3 The Assaying and Hallmarking Centre may also be de-recognized any time during the recognition period by BIS due to the following reasons.

4.3.1 If the Bureau feels that the continuation of the BIS recognition of the Assaying and Hallmarking Centre would not be of any assistance to its Hallmarking activities.

4.3.2 If the Assaying and Hallmarking Centre does not carry out the Assaying/ Hallmarking satisfactorily and does not take corrective steps to improve as advised by BIS.

4.3.3 If the Assaying and Hallmarking Centre is found divulging information to the BIS applicants/licensees Jewellers and not maintaining adequate secrecy pertaining to the precious metal Jewellery under test and test results.

4.3.4 If the Assaying and Hallmarking Centre and its personnel are found to be not free from any commercial, financial or other pressure which might influence their technical judgment`

4.3.5 If it acts/works directly or indirectly against the interests of BIS in any form or manner.

4.3.6 If the Assaying and Hallmarking Centre is found violating the terms and conditions of recognition and does not comply with the Undertaking given along with the application.

4.4 In case any of the above irregularities are reported/ observed, the same shall be confirmed and verified appropriately by BIS. The concerned Assaying and Hallmarking Centre shall also be given an opportunity to explain their stand and view point. Subsequently, the findings shall be brought to the notice of the competent authority along with the recommendations for taking action for warning/ de-recognition of the Assaying and Hallmarking Centre depending upon the gravity of the situation.

4.4.1 The Assaying and Hallmarking Centre once de-recognized may be allowed to apply again for fresh recognition only after 3 months time. The recognition of the Center shall be subject to verification of actions taken with respect to the reasons leading to the de-recognition and also approval of the Competent Authority of BIS.

4.4.2 The name of the de-recognized Assaying and Hallmarking Centre shall be promptly informed to all concerned in BIS and BIS Certified Jewellers appropriately including notification on BIS website (www.bis.org.in).