Improving Social Responsibility of Inspection and Testing Institutions by Using ISO 26000

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Abstract. At present, inspection and testing has become one of the most dynamic emerging services. However, some inspection and testing institutions engage in fraud for the sake of interests, which leads to damage to the interests of consumers and seriously affects the credibility of the entire industry. For example, Sanlu Group’s milk power added melamine, German Volkswagen admitted cheating in testing for carbon dioxide emissions, Japan's automobile waste inspection fraud, Randau testing service (RTS) of the British government and police had falsified blood sample tests. Fulfilling social responsibility is an essential requirement for inspection and testing institutions to carry out activities, which is an important guarantee and obligation for credibility and an inherent need for sustainable development. Based on the research and analysis of ISO 26000, this essay focus on how to improve the social responsibility of inspection and testing institutions. It introduces basic characteristics of social responsibility of inspection and testing institutions, such as fairness, honesty and good service. Then it discusses how inspection and testing institutions fulfill their social responsibilities, especially in terms of organizational governance, labour practices and human rights, environment and community involvement, fair operating practices and customer issues.

1. Introduction
Inspection and testing has been accompanied by human life, scientific research and other activities. With the need of production and trading activities for commodity quality control, standardized, process and so on, inspection and testing activities are increasing day by day. Research on inspection and testing institutions began in the 20th century. With the development of trade, there has been a special provision of quality services such as product safety testing and cargo identification to the society. Inspection and testing agencies, such as (UL), an American insurer laboratory established in 1894, play an important role in trade interaction and market regulation.

With the development of inspection and testing activities, all kinds of inspection and testing institutions have emerged, and the good and bad are intermingled, making users have no choice, and even some institutions have damaged the interests of the relevant parties, triggering the call for the government to regulate the behavior of inspection and testing institutions. Market economy is essentially a credit economy, and all market transactions are based on mutual trust. With the increasing complexity of social division of labor and quality and safety, it has become a necessary link for market economy activities to evaluate and confirm the subject matte objectively and impartially by a third party with professional ability. Obtaining the inspection and testing of the third party can significantly enhance the trust of all parties in the market, thus solving the problem of information asymmetry in the market and effectively reducing the risk of market transactions. After the birth of the inspection and testing system, it has been rapidly and widely used in domestic and international economic and trade activities. However, some inspection and testing institutions engage in fraud for
the sake of interests, which leads to damage to the interests of consumers and seriously affects the credibility of the entire industry. For example, Sanlu Group’s milk powder added melamine, German Volkswagen admitted cheating in testing for carbon dioxide emissions, Japan’s automobile waste inspection fraud, Randau testing service (RTS) of the British government and police had falsified blood sample tests.

2. Basic Characteristics of Social Responsibility of Inspection and Testing Institutions

According to ISO/IEC 17000-2004 inspection means “examination of a product design, product, process or installation and determination of its conformity with specific requirements or, on the basis of professional judgement, with general requirements” . Testing means “determination of one or more characteristics of an object of conformity assessment, according to a procedure”. As for inspection and testing institutions, we can say that it is a professional technical organization to inspect and test products prescribed by laws and regulations, which established in accordance with relevant standards or technical norms. Social responsibility based on ISO 26000 means “responsibility of an organization for the impacts of its decisions and activities on society and the environment, through transparent and ethical behaviour that contributes to sustainable development”. Inspection and testing institutions can better promote the healthy and sustainable development of industry by fulfilling their social responsibilities, which provide fair, scientific, standardized and efficient high-quality inspection and testing services for national economic construction and social development. The social responsibility of inspection and testing institutions reflects the overall relationship between inspection and testing institutions and the society from the perspective of institutional responsibility.

2.1. Fairness

Fairness, which is considered to be impartial, is a necessary condition for inspection and testing institutions to provide trust. It is important that all internal and external personnel are aware of the need for fairness. If the inspection fee paid by the customer is the source of income, this is a potential threat to fairness. It is important to maintain trust that the inspection and testing agency makes decisions based on the objective evidence of conformity (or non-conformity) and is not affected by other interests or parties. Commodity inspection activities carried out in accordance with relevant laws, standards or contracts. Threats to fairness may include, but are not limited to: Firstly, self-interest. Such threats stem from individuals or institutions acting in their own interests. In testing, financial self-interest is a threat to impartiality; Secondly, familiarity (or trust). Such a threat arises from the fact that an individual or institution is too familiar or trusted with another person and does not seek evidence of audit; Thirdly, coercion. Such a threat arises from perceived overt or covert coercion by an individual or institution, to replace it with someone else or to report to the competent person.

In the process of transaction, there is a certain degree of asymmetry in the commodity information held by the buyer and the seller. Inspection and testing through professional technical services provides the buyer with the "signal" of whether the product is reliable, and objectively reduces the transaction cost. Institutions are to provide scientific and accurate testing data as main product, concentrated its power as impartial supervision over the quality. However, in recent years, the quality and safety incidents in touched a nerve of the public, the accountability of government regulation, at the same time people focused attention on impartiality of inspection and testing institutions.

2.2. Honesty

For inspection and testing institutions, an important aspect of stakeholders is the consumers or the public. For example, traders and retailers will require suppliers to provide performance indicators of their products in order to attract customers or the public and meet their requirements on quality, health, safety and environmental protection. In order to make the performance indexes of products objective and fair, retailers generally only accept the test results issued by the testing institutions approved by them. When consumers choose and buy commodities, they will make a choice by comparing the performance of each commodity and the market credibility of the testing institution issuing the test results. The development of inspection and testing institutions is based on the public's high concern for
product safety performance, pursuit of high-quality life and enjoyment of green environment. Inspection and testing institutions are a strong guarantee for the public's safe consumption.

Inspection and testing institutions should consciously abide by the requirements of social ethics, business ethics and industry self-discipline, carry out inspection and testing activities in a fair, just, scientific and objective manner, and gain social trust through scientific means, standardized procedures, professional ability, high-quality service and reliable results. Inspection and testing institutions should accept appropriate supervision and fulfill the obligation to respond to supervision, and encourage each inspection and testing institution to continuously grow into a socially and environmentally responsible organization.

Only truly honest and responsible institutions can gain the public's recognition and trust. For the responsible practice, only to ensure the openness and transparency of the organization information, the organization consciously abide by the requirements of laws and regulations, standards and technical norms, strictly abide by the professional ethics of staff, standard operation, to ensure the effectiveness of testing. Only against unfair competition and commercial bribery and fraud, and consciously accept the supervision of the government, consumers and society, to maintain the examination market order, to make the examination activities get social acceptance and trust, in order to improve the examination in a common identity, in the social public trust and satisfaction, and promote the government, consumers and society by the test results. Only when the inspection and testing results are widely accepted, can the inspection and testing institutions give back to the society and fulfill their social responsibilities to the society and the public.

2.3. Good Service
Inspection and testing industry is a service industry, which is promoted by high and new technology or developed from high and new technology manufacturing industry. The professional ability of technical personnel and advanced testing equipment, as well as laboratory operation and management have higher requirements. Due to the professional characteristics of the testing laboratory, in the process of expanding the new field, the construction of the laboratory capacity system and the talent team need a long time to complete. Inspection and testing industry is technology and talent intensive industry. Due to the obvious professional characteristics, the testing content, testing technology and testing standards of different products are widely different, and testing institutions need to invest a large amount of money to establish professional laboratories for almost every new field. In addition, in the fixed field, testing technologies, methods and standards are constantly updated and improved. In order to ensure the quality and level of testing services, inspection and testing institutions still need to continuously invest funds to upgrade equipment capabilities. Inspection and testing institutions strive to provide the society with quality inspection and testing services to meet the needs of customers and the public. Protect the rights and interests of customers and the public, properly handle complaints and suggestions from customers and end consumers.

3. Methods
Under the background of sustainable development, the modern organization which strives to be more responsible for society and environment has become the practical action and common pursuit of the majority of organizations. To this end, inspection and testing institutes should take fully into account the social and environmental impacts of their decisions and activities (including positive and negative impacts) and, to the maximum extent possible, expand and reduce negative impacts, and be responsible for their impact.

ISO 26000 is the most common basic standard in the field of international social responsibility, which sets out a unified definition of social responsibility and its related important terms, the basic principles of social responsibility, the theme of social responsibility and its related topics. The basic practice of social responsibility and the general practice method of integrating social responsibility into the organization. This is essential for a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the concept of social responsibility and its fundamentals, especially for the understanding and implementation of social responsibility.
The seven core subjects of social responsibility described by ISO 26000 include: organizational governance, human rights, labour practices, the environment, fair operating practices, consumer issues, community involvement and development (see Figure 1). ISO 26000 believes that the issue of social responsibility will not only vary according to the industry and enterprises, but also develop and change constantly because of the changes of the times.

![Figure 1. Research framework based on ISO 26000](image)

4. Suggestions

The seven core subjects of social responsibility described in ISO 26000 reflect the basic vision of global unity and the treatment of organizational social responsibility in seven dimensions. In the inspection and testing industry, it is still appropriate for the organization to examine and manage its social responsibility comprehensively and systematically based on this vision and taking fully into account the characteristics of the social responsibility of the industry.

4.1. Organizational Governance

Organizational governance refers to the system of inspection and testing institutions to make and implement decisions in order to achieve their goals. It includes formal governance mechanisms, which are based on established structures and procedures, and informal governance mechanisms, which are based on established structures and procedures, while the formation of the latter is related to the culture and values of inspection and testing institutions and is usually influenced by leadership. Because organizational governance is the decision-making framework within the inspection and testing institute, it is the core function of each enterprise.

Decision-making processes and structures. Each inspection and testing institute has its own decision-making procedures and structures, but these procedures, systems, structures or other mechanisms should promote the implementation and application of social responsibility practice. Inspection and testing institutions should formulate strategic policies and plans, taking into account the issues and principles of social responsibility. Enable the top decision maker of the institute to issue a statement on the relevance of social responsibility to the organization and development strategy. Create and foster an environment and culture that follows the principle of social responsibility. Provide adequate resources for the practice of social responsibility activities. Eliminate the risks caused by insufficient resources. Follow up on the implementation of decisions to ensure that decisions are implemented in a socially responsible manner and that responsibility for the results of organizational decisions and activities should be determined, regardless of whether the results are positive or negative. Promote managers to receive relevant social responsibility education.

Information disclosure management. Inspection and testing institutions shall establish and strengthen communication among stakeholders, strengthen information disclosure in a clear, accurate, timely, honest and complete manner, and improve the transparency of operation. The declaration of fairness issued includes abiding by the relevant laws and regulations of the state, following objective independence, fairness, good faith, assuming social responsibility, and having regard to the state secrets involved in the inspection and testing activities. The inspection and testing institutions should establish and improve the information disclosure mechanism, disclose to the stakeholders in a timely manner, and clarify the social responsibility for issuing the testing data and results to the society.
Stakeholders participate in management. The inspection and testing institutions carry out cooperation with stakeholders, enhance the support and trust of stakeholders, and promote the win-win cooperation between the two sides to the fullest. In order to promote the participation of stakeholders, the inspection and testing institutions should establish communication procedures with stakeholders, identify and respond to the aspirations and expectations of stakeholders, and negotiate and resolve possible conflicts. Encourage employees at all levels to participate effectively in the social responsibility activities of the organization, balance the power, responsibility and ability of the people who represent the decision-making of the organization.

4.2. Labour Practices and Human Rights

The level of an inspection and testing institution depends to a large extent on the quality and level of personnel. The same applies to the performance of social responsibility. Inspection and testing institution should improve the quality of staff. Carry out innovative training, send relevant personnel to participate in provincial, municipal, national and other training, strengthen communication and exchanges with various inspection and testing fields, and expand service horizons. Strengthen the communication and coordination of staff and improve the ability of rapid response, and be able to respond decisively in case of problems and conflicts. Strictly according to the operation instruction to carry on the inspection and testing and eliminates the safety hidden danger.

Employment and labour relations. Be equipped with sufficient personnel. According to the size and actual work of the organization, the inspection and testing organization shall be equipped with adequate management and technical personnel, including managers, inspectors, operators, authorized signatories, etc. The managers, operators and inspectors of the institutions shall receive training related to social responsibility, and each person shall be responsible for the performance of his or her duties.

Occupational health and safety. Due to the high degree of professionalism of inspection and testing laboratories, Some of these laboratories contain some dangerous places, such as high-voltage electrical laboratory, microbiological laboratory of pathogenic bacteria, physical and chemical laboratory of toxic and harmful substances. Inspection and testing institutions should ensure that laboratory staff have relevant professional knowledge, be familiar with related chemicals, understand their physical and chemical properties, and fully understand the risks of related chemicals. Equipped with corresponding facilities in the laboratory, such as fire extinguishing device, exhaust device. In case of high temperature, low temperature, high pressure, vacuum, high voltage, high frequency and experimental conditions and instruments with radiation sources in the process of experiment, relevant safety protection knowledge education should be strengthened to protect the safety of inspection and testing personnel. If sufficient evidence shows that there are higher safety requirements that can significantly improve the level of protection, inspection and testing institutions should not only meet the lower safety requirements. Minimize the health and safety risks of products and services during the design process. Identify potential user groups, intended uses and reasonably foreseeable misuse of processes, products, or services. Identify the potential hazards of products or services at all stages and under all conditions of use and, in some cases, of customized products and services for vulnerable groups. Take necessary measures to rescue consumers in an emergency that endangers their health.

4.3. The Environment and Community Involvement

The toxic and harmful chemical reagents used in the inspection and testing institutions, the residues after microbial testing, the gas discharged in the inspection and testing process, and the waste samples all have the risk of environmental pollution. Prevention of environmental pollution caused by inspection and testing has become an important aspect of their social responsibility. The exhaust gas produced in the inspection process should be recycled as far as possible to avoid air pollution. All inspection and testing institutions are encouraged to jointly explore methods for gas recovery to protect the environment. If there may be any situation that seriously endangers the environment or public safety, it shall immediately report to the inspection and testing supervision and administration department, and make public aware such information when necessary.
4.4. Fair Operating Practices
Establish the quality supervision process, and organize supervisors to identify the personnel who need to be supervised in the professional field, such as interns, post transfer personnel, personnel operating new equipment or adopting new methods. Anti-corruption throughout the operation process. Social responsibility supervision may be carried out in the form of observing field tests, verifying inspection records and reports, simulating tests, evaluating the results of participating in quality control and interviewing, etc. Supervision should have records, and supervisors should evaluate the supervised personnel. There should be no false description and inspection activities beyond the scope of qualification permission. In the aspect of information security and confidentiality, the inspection and testing institution should effectively control the data and information in the whole process, and identify the risks caused by the lack of confidentiality of customer information, reports and data, quotations, samples and so on.

4.5. Customer Issues
Credibility, cost and service are the core competitiveness of the inspection and testing industry. In the process of contract review, inspection and testing institutions should effectively communicate with customers, identify sample information, inspection and testing methods, human resources, equipment and facilities, customer needs and other aspects of social responsibility. Pay attention to the confidentiality of information and the safety of the process. For the release of the report, the inspection and testing institution needs to effectively release the report, identify the integrity and effectiveness of the inspection report, as well as the risk of report modification, report confidentiality and other aspects. Explore the establishment of "Internet detection" service platform, carry out e-commerce online detection services. Fundamentally improve operational efficiency, with faster speed to serve customer expectations, achieve zero distance with customers.

5. Conclusion
This essay discusses how inspection and testing institutions fulfill their social responsibilities, especially in terms of organizational governance, labour practices and human rights, the environment and community involvement, fair operating practices and customer issues. With the deepening of people's understanding of inspection and testing institutions, as well as the increasing number of social problems arising with the development of inspection and testing institutions, the expectations of various stakeholders affect the daily operation and strategic development of the inspection and testing institutions. Effective communication with stakeholders can promote the organization to share with all stakeholders, win-win. The long-term development of co-prosperity.

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