



Testing Similar Products Policy

Version 3.1

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Companies often offer product models that are essentially the same product with some variations. In such cases, VeraSol offers companies the option to use the full test results for at least one product, and targeted testing for the variant products. This option is provided as a service to companies to help reduce testing costs; without this option, every product would need to be tested in its entirety.

In this policy, the product that is fully tested is referred to as "product A" and the variant as "product B." Since it is possible to have more than one variant product, and each variant is unique, the VeraSol team will work with companies on a case-by-case basis to minimize the scope (and cost) of testing the variant products.

Procedural Guidelines on the Handling of Product Variations

1. The primary product ("A") must undergo full testing.
2. Test results for the primary product ("A") may be applied to a variant product ("B") in cases where the design and specifications of the system with respect to the relevant performance parameter are identical. For example, if products "A" and "B" use the same solar PV module, then test results for the PV module for product "A" may be applied to product "B".
3. New tests are required for product "B" to address differences in design or component specification between products "A" and "B." Here, it is important to consider differences in component specification as well as system level effects. For example, if product "B" has a different battery than product "A", then new tests for battery capacity (component level test) and full-battery run time, solar run time, and lighting service (system level tests) would be required. Depending on the specifics of the product design, additional new tests may also be required.
4. In all cases, test results must be generated that allow for full characterization of the quality and performance of each product. Results for product "B" may be drawn from a combination of results for product "A" (where applicable) and new tests of product "B" if needed to fill in a Standardized Specifications Sheet and determine whether product "B" meets IEC 62257-9-8.
5. In all cases, if future testing (market check testing, renewal testing or other testing) indicates that either the primary product or variant product no longer meet the quality standards for an aspect that was determined to be identical and for which results were referenced, **both product "A" and product "B" will lose their quality verified status** until corrective actions are taken according to the [Policy for Renewing Test Results](#) and [Market Check Testing Policy](#).

6. In the case that product "A" and product "B" are sold by different companies, product "B" may reference test results from product "A" provided that company "A" gives written permission for company "B" to reference test results from product "A" and gives company "B" access to test results from product "A". Additionally, both companies must acknowledge in writing they have read and understand point 5 (above).

Determining the Scope of Testing for Variations on a Similar Product

1. **Companies must submit a request for VeraSol to consider a reduced scope of testing for particular product(s).** The request should include a table of product attributes that indicates the degree of similarity (e.g., "identical," "same supplier but 2x larger," etc.) for each aspect of the products in question. Table 1 (page 3) provides an example of the template for reporting similarities and differences. This template can be found on the VeraSol website [here](#). Additionally, a guide for completing the template can be found [here](#). Companies should also include clearly-labeled photographic images of the primary product and each of the variants. The photographs should include all product/system components that can be shown without disassembling the respective products.
2. **The VeraSol team will determine which test results are required to produce valid results for multiple product variations.** VeraSol will provide a proposed testing plan for the variations. VeraSol will also specify a sampling plan for the primary and variant products (i.e., VeraSol will specify the number of samples that must be collected for each product and—where applicable—each product component).
3. **Sample collection and testing commence after the company signs the VeraSol Product Certification Agreement.**
4. **Test results for each product will be provided.** Typically, the main product will receive a full test report and the variations will receive partial reports. VeraSol will issue one or more cover letters that clearly describe which results apply to each product.
 - a. If the primary product ("A") meets IEC 62257-9-8, then the variant products ("B") may also be in a position to pass (if all new test results for product "B" also meet or exceed the relevant requirements).
 - b. If the claims made by the company regarding product similarity are confirmed by testing and other relevant criteria are met, VeraSol will offer program support (Standardized Specification Sheet and VeraSol Certificate) for each of the products that meet IEC 62257-9-8.
 - c. If the claims regarding similarity are dubious, the company will receive the test reports, but further sampling and testing may be required to allow for complete characterizations for each of the variant products. The VeraSol team will issue a cover letter that includes a description of the required additional testing.
5. In cases where similar products are not tested at the same time, but instead one product references results from an older test, similar procedures will be used to determine the appropriate test plans. The expiration date of the VeraSol Standardized Specification Sheet and Certificate for the new product may be dependent on the expiration date of the older product. Please see the [Product Support Expiration Policy](#) for details.

Figure 1: The VeraSol Product Variation Details Form.**INSTRUCTIONS FOR FILLING THIS FORM:**

1. Include the name of the product that has **already been fully tested** (from which you want to reference results) in **Column C**.
2. Include the name of the product you are submitting for testing (the variation of the Product in Column C) in **Columns D, E, F, etc.**
3. Provide information for **ALL yellow cells** for each product variation. If the aspect is the same it is acceptable to write "no change" or "same" in **Columns D, E, F, etc.**
4. If you are creating a product family, answer these questions in the **Family Variation Details** sheet.

Element	Primary Product/Kit	Current Variation 1	Current Variation 2	Current Variation 3	Current Variation 4
Enter the kit that has been previously tested or referenced here.	Enter the kit that will be tested and is similar to the Primary Product.	Enter the kit that will be tested and is similar to the Primary Product.	Enter the kit that will be tested and is similar to the Primary Product.	Enter the kit that will be tested and is similar to the Primary Product.	Enter the kit that will be tested and is similar to the Primary Product.
<i>[Insert name]</i>	<i>[Insert name]</i>	<i>[Insert name]</i>	<i>[Insert name]</i>	<i>[Insert name]</i>	<i>[Insert name]</i>
Performance					
Full-battery run time for each light output level					
Runtime time for each light output level					
Does other difference in the performance?					
Light source					
Light output level 1					
Number of light points (e.g., number of lamps)					
Number of light output levels					
Luminous flux for each light output level					
Light point mount/color					
Light point housing size and lens cover type					
Is there a Central Control Regulator (CCR) in the lamp?					
Operating voltage or voltage range					
Type (e.g., high/low power LED, through-hole/surface mount LED, CFI, etc.)					
Number of light sources (e.g., number of LEDs per lamp)					
Control in the LEDs					
LED Mount/color					
Additional details (e.g., yellow, etc.)					
Preferred Lens Mount/cover type and method					
Note: Optimal 2000 hr testing is preferred, but not required.					
Additional testing requirements testing needs and include					
Additional Verbal Data					
Does the light source have IEC 60598-4 certification?					
Have any changes been made to the manufacturing process?					
If so, what changes have been made?					
Are other differences in the light source?					
Optimized Testing: Additional testing may increase testing needs and include additional Verbal Data.					
Would you like additional testing of this light point to be tested for light output? Note: The highest testing will already be tested by default.					
Would you like additional testing of this light point to be tested for power consumption? Note: The highest testing will already be tested by default.					
Would you like this light point to be tested for light distribution? This test determines the full width half maximum angle and/or average light distribution characteristics for light points.					
Light output level 2					
Number of light points (e.g., number of lamps)					
Number of light output levels					
Luminous flux for each light output level					
Light point mount/color					
Light point housing size and lens cover type					
Is there a Central Control Regulator (CCR) in the lamp?					
Operating voltage or voltage range					
Type (e.g., high/low power LED, through-hole/surface mount LED, CFI, etc.)					
Number of light sources (e.g., number of LEDs per lamp)					
Control in the LEDs					
LED Mount/color					
Additional details (e.g., yellow, etc.)					
Preferred Lens Mount/cover type and method					
Note: Optimal 2000 hr testing is preferred, but not required.					
Additional testing requirements testing needs and include					
Additional Verbal Data					
Does the light source have IEC 60598-4 certification?					
Have any changes been made to the manufacturing process?					
If so, what changes have been made?					
Are other differences in the light source?					
Optimized Testing: Additional testing may increase testing needs and include additional Verbal Data.					
Would you like additional testing of this light point to be tested for light output? Note: The highest testing will already be tested by default.					
Would you like additional testing of this light point to be tested for power consumption? Note: The highest testing will already be tested by default.					
Would you like this light point to be tested for light distribution? This test determines the full width half maximum angle and/or average light distribution characteristics for light points.					
Energy Source					
PV Module					
Type (e.g., monocrystalline, polycrystalline, amorphous, etc.)					
V _{oc} at STC					
I _{sc} at STC					
V _{mp} at STC					
P _{mp} at STC					
PV Module Mount/color					
Strain Relief/Junction Box type (indicate any changes)					
PV module cable mount/color and marking					
Are other differences in the PV module?					
Is the PV module designed to be used outdoors?					
Does the PV module cable contain any V-splices or connectors that are included in the test and used?					
Does the outdoor connector have IEC 60529 test report documentation or IP25 or higher rating?					
Have any changes been made to the manufacturing process?					
If so, what changes have been made?					
Have any changes been made to the junction box, housing or other?					
Does the PV module have IEC 60730, IEC 62738, or IEC 62745 certification?					
Enter YES (and which certification you have) or NO					
Other Energy Source					
Type (e.g., mechanical dynamo, BC, etc.)					
Additional details					
Battery					
Battery Pack Capacity (mAh)					
Battery Cell Capacity (mAh) and number of cell in series and parallel					
Chemistry (e.g., Li-ion, NiMH, etc.)					
Battery Pack Nominal voltage (V)					
Battery Cell Nominal voltage (V)					
Battery Mount/color					
Cell size (e.g., 14250, 26500, 32700)					
Have any changes been made to the manufacturing process?					
If so, what changes have been made?					
Are the battery be included from the supplier by the user or include the battery without opening or enclosure that is not included in the report during installation, operation, or maintenance?					

About VeraSol

An evolution of Lighting Global Quality Assurance, the VeraSol program supports high-performing, durable off-grid products that expand access to modern energy services. VeraSol builds upon the strong foundation for quality assurance laid by the World Bank Group and expands its services to encompass off-grid appliances, productive use equipment, and component-based solar home systems. Like Lighting Global Quality Assurance, the VeraSol program is managed by CLASP in collaboration with the Schatz Energy Research Center at Cal Poly Humboldt. Foundational support is provided by the World Bank Group's Lighting Global program, UKaid, IKEA Foundation, Good Energies Foundation, and others.

Please visit VeraSol.org for more information.