supply and support over the life of the program, a thorough review of its financial stability and production facilities is carried out. Furthermore, an in depth assessment of the firm's ability to provide maintenance and warranty support in strict accordance with the "World Airline Supplier Guide" is undertaken by evaluating the infrastructure and organization in place as well as by reviewing "track records".

Other important considerations involve the firms ability to meet the partners' production methodologies (ie. JIT) and delivery lead-time and reliability. The quality standards required depend on the nature of the expected commercial relationship. Prospective suppliers engaged in engineering, manufacturing, installation, and support, generally call for ISO-9001, AQAP-1, and/or MIL-Q-9858A certification (and AQAP-13 for software developers).

Commercial relationships which do not require engineering from the supplier (therefore it is not necessary to audit processes built into engineering phase to secure product quality) must generally meet ISO-9002, AQAP-4, and/or MIL-I-45208A.

For the supply of non-critical components, and where the prospective supplier's activities and quality system corresponds to supplying products whose quality is assured by a final inspection only, ISO-9003, AQAP-9, and/or MIL-I-45208A is necessary.

The supplier certification process can take from four months to well over a year and can be quite costly. Certification by FAA (US), JAA (Europe), other major aircraft manufacturers such as Boeing, McDonnell Douglas, Canadair, or de Havilland, and the "Coordinating Agency for Supplier Evaluation", can help to expedite this process. Costs for certification can be born by the supplier, however, this may depend on commercial considerations.

The Product qualification process is also carried out independently by the respective partners. Generally, the relevant partner prepares a product profile outlining the specifications and performance and develops a program to test adherence to the product definition.

Tests are carried out by either the applicant or an independent testing facility and the results therefrom are forwarded to the partner for evaluation. The partner then accepts or rejects the product based on its ability to meet the predetermined criteria. Once again, prior product certifications can help facilitate the process and costs can be born by the supplier, but depend largely on commercial considerations.

Suppliers of Buyer furnished equipment must also comply with the same procedures. No exceptions are made in situations where a particular carrier demands a specific product from a specific supplier (Appendix 6).