Title	**EU Block Voting – Weighted Voting in ISO and IEC.**
Objective / Issue	To clarify issues related to perceived European block voting including weighted voting proposals/discussions
Background	Two related phrases that are often misunderstood and misinterpreted are **BLOC VOTING** and **WEIGHTED VOTING**. Some participants from the United States feel/perceive that Bloc Voting exists and is a significant detriment to the acceptance of U.S. positions in the international standards arenas of the International Organization of Standards (ISO) and the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC). Also, some feel that Weighted Voting is the answer to Bloc Voting and that the ANSI and the USNC/IEC should work to have this concept accepted in both ISO and IEC, respectively.
Summary Clarification of issues related to perceived European block voting	What is **Bloc Voting?** A group of ISO Member Bodies or IEC National Committees, usually on a regional basis, voting or taking exactly the same positions for the purpose of defeating the positions of other voting countries to achieve a regional advantage. **Statement:** An ISO Council study of voting patterns at the DIS and FDIS levels for votes conducted in the period 1998 to 2001 showed there was no discernable regional pattern in the 112/3563 votes (3.1%) which failed at DIS or the 7/2883 votes (0.24%) which failed at FDIS. In other words, CEN members voted with other ISO members, most times including the United States, in the approval of drafts or were split when opposing drafts. Of course, similar (but not identical) practices in the CEN member countries may lead to delegates from those countries taking a common view in some ISO committees. This is understandable and not wrong. What is wrong is for delegates from CEN member countries to insist that an ISO standard include requirements needed solely to achieve compliance with certain European legal obligations. In such cases, the global relevance of the ISO standard may be compromised. ANSI staff also reviewed all ISO DISs and FDISs on which ANSI voted in 2001 and 2002 to find cases or patterns of regional bloc voting. In 2001, out of 1064 DISs and FDIS on which ANSI voted, ANSI staff identified only four cases where the voting numbers seem to indicate regional bloc patterns of Europeans versus non-Europeans. In 2002, out of 1141 DISs and FDIS on which ANSI voted, ANSI staff identified only three cases where the voting numbers seem to indicate regional bloc patterns of Europeans versus non-Europeans. In all other cases, there appears to be no disagreement between the European and non-European regions on approving or disapproving the DISs or FDISs, or the European or non-European regions are split, with a significant percentage of each bloc agreeing with the other bloc. Conclusions from this statistical analysis: • From reviewing the statistics alone, it cannot be determined that ISO standards lacking global relevancy and favoring one region have been advanced, or that ISO standards that are globally relevant have been blocked from advancing. • There is no statistical evidence of widespread European or non-European bloc voting throughout the ISO system, although the possibility exists and has occurred for specific cases to occur that will require further investigation and corrective action by ANSI and ISO.

IEC and the USNC have also investigated this subject and have, basically, come to the same conclusion. Block voting is not considered to be a generalized phenomenon but one that may occur on a case-by-case basis. U.S. delegates to ISO and IEC meetings should be vigilant to this possibility and report any evidence of its occurrence to their Technical Advisory Groups and to their contacts at ANSI and the USNC/IEC.

Summary Clarification of weighted voting proposals/ discussions

What is **Weighted Voting?** CEN/CENELEC voting policy dictates that where a vote is found to be necessary, a simple majority of those voting is required. In addition, there are four cases where, in addition to the requirement for a simple majority, the votes cast by the members shall be accorded specific weightings. These are:

a) formal approval of EN (European Standard) and HD (Harmonization Document);
b) formal approval of TS (Technical Specification);
c) any initiation of a work item to become an EN or TS within a CEN TC;
d) approval of B-deviations (for HDs only).

The assessment shall be made by the CEN/CENELEC body responsible in each case, which shall allocate weightings.

ISO and IEC operate on the basis of one vote per ISO Member Body or IEC National Committee. The IEC Statutes and Rules of Procedure state this policy as follows, "Each Full Member National Committee shall have one vote in all bodies of the Commission."

Statement:
Some U.S. contacts have expressed the belief that Weighted Voting should be implemented in ISO and IEC and that, if it were, the U.S. would realize a much more equitable voting status vis-à-vis the rest of the world than is the current case with the system of "one country/one vote." Both ISO and IEC and also ANSI and the USNC/IEC have examined this allegation on several occasions and have found little evidence to suggest that weighted voting would significantly change the voting outcome in the specific cases examined. Here too, on a case-by-case basis, weighted voting may change the outcome in a particular case but this experience cannot be generalized across the entire spectrum. Also, as has been pointed out by many developing countries in ISO as well as smaller developed countries, having a vote equal to all other full members is very important to them and their level of participation. They have stated many times that the United States and European members of ISO must get over their fixation on themselves, and not forget that there are many other players in ISO who would not support ANSI and CEN members becoming even more powerful due to weighted voting. In addition, if weighted voting was to be initiated, the annual dues ANSI and USNC/IEC currently pays to both ISO and IEC would invariably be increased dramatically.

It is also our view that the recent introduction of ISO's Global Relevance principles and policies will make concerns regarding bloc and weighted voting a moot point. Indeed, in two specific cases the ISO/TMB has applied its global relevance principles to halt progress on projects that would have resulted in ISO standards lacking global relevance outside Europe, despite overwhelming voting numbers supporting these projects.
Weighted Voting, like Bloc Voting, will be reviewed from time to time to ensure that the current situation has not changed.

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