New Standards Initiatives from ISO COPOLCO

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What is ISO-COPOLCO?

- International Organization for Standardization (ISO) – Geneva, Switzerland
  - Comprised of 159 National Standards Bodies
    - E.g., ANSI (U.S.), SCC (Canada), JISC (Japan)
- Committee on Consumer Policy (COPOLCO) established in 1978
  - 95 ISO member bodies
  - International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC)
  - Liaison organizations: Consumers International, OECD
  - Provides closer links between standards world and consumers, the ultimate customers and beneficiaries of standards
COPOLCO Terms of Reference

- Study means of helping consumers benefit from standardization, including participating in national and international standardization
- Provide a forum for exchange of information on standards
- Advise ISO Council on consumer viewpoint of current and potential ISO work
- Advise ISO Council on need to revise policies or actions regarding consumers
COPOLCO Issues and Priorities

Priorities Working Group has identified 15 standardization areas of high interest to consumers

- Product safety
- Services
- Needs of the elderly, people with disabilities
- Environmental issues
- Global market issues, incl. standards for customer satisfaction, ecommerce, personal data privacy, social responsibility
COPOLCO Priorities (continued)

- Fire safety
- Second hand goods
- Contraceptive devices
- Image safety
- Safety of household appliances
- Performance of household appliances
- Child related products
- Furniture
- Health informatics
- Public information symbols
Annual COPOLCO Workshops

- 2002 – Corporate social responsibility
- 2003 – Consumer confidence and the role of standards. Principles and ethical practice
- 2004 - Regulation, co-regulation, or deregulation: Who's at risk? Legislation and standards, partners in consumer protection
- 2005 - A safer world for consumers – How can standards help?
- 2006 - How can environmental standards promote sustainable consumption?
COPOLCO Achievements

- Informational publications
- Policy statements
  - E.g. Needs of older persons and peoples with disabilities – explains universal design and basic principles
- Proposals for new standards
  - E.g., Complaints handling standard – harmonizes methods of responding adequately to claims on products and services
- Guides
ISO/IEC Guides Produced by COPOLCO

- ISO/IEC Guide 14, Product information for consumers
- ISO/IEC Guide 37, Instructions for use of products of consumer interest
- ISO/IEC Guide 41, Packaging – Recommendations for addressing consumer needs
- ISO/IEC Guide 46, Comparative testing of consumer products and related services – General principles.
- ISO/IEC Guide 74, Graphical symbols – Technical Guidelines for the consideration of consumers' needs
ISO/IEC Guides Developed with COPOLCO Input

- ISO/IEC Guide 51, Guidelines for the inclusion of safety aspects in standards
- ISO/IEC Guide 71, Guidelines for standards developers to address the needs of older persons and persons with disabilities
Concerns raised by COPOLCO product safety working group and others
Lack of awareness / use of Guides
No guidance provided on how to use Guides
Guides not widely available
Guides not promoted enough
Ad Hoc WG developed a strategy paper to promote greater awareness and use
COPOLCO Recommendations on Guides

- Develop guidance materials / Encourage training
- Actively Promote Guides
- Require / encourage TCs/SCs to use / apply Guides
- Emphasize role / value of Guides in ISO/IEC Directives
- Improve web access
- Consider providing free access
- Publish multilingual editions / encourage translation
- Review and revise at regular intervals
How Can You Get Involved?

- Contact ISO Member in Your Country
- Comment on COPOLCO new work item proposals
- Participate in National Mirror Committee for COPOLCO
  - ANSI Consumer Interest Forum
    - Members include consumer groups and advocates, industry trade associations, CPSC, testing organizations, et al.
    - Meeting May 2 to prep for May 24-25 COPOLCO annual meeting
- Participate in National Mirror Committees to ISO Technical Committees
  - U.S. Technical Advisory Groups
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