

AMERICAN NATIONAL STANDARDS INSTITUTE

CRITERIA FOR THE
DEVELOPMENT AND COORDINATION
OF
U.S. POSITIONS IN THE INTERNATIONAL STANDARDIZATION
ACTIVITIES
OF THE ISO AND IEC

(approved by the ANSI Board of Directors
on September 6, 1989)

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FOREWORD

Participation in international standards activities of interest to members of the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) requires membership in two international non-treaty standardization organizations, namely the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC). ANSI is the U.S. member body of ISO and the U.S. National Committee of the IEC, a committee of ANSI, is the U.S. member of the IEC. To assure that positions presented to these international bodies are representative of U.S. interests a mechanism must exist for the development and coordination of such positions. This document outlines ANSI's criteria for an appropriate mechanism.

ANSI normally looks to the body which develops national standards in a particular standards area in order to determine the U.S. position in a similar international standardization activity. Such bodies are designated by ANSI as "U.S. Technical Advisory Groups" (TAG's) for specific ISO activities or as "Advisory Groups" for specific IEC activities. Where no national standards group exists, or is available to serve, or where several separate national standards groups exist, special bodies will be established for this purpose.

U.S. positions in ISO and IEC standards activities are developed by participants from companies, technical and trade organizations, government agencies, and individuals. There are approximately 20,000 participants who develop U.S. positions relating to some 2,200 international standards committees. The approximate percentages of interests participating are 10 percent government agencies, 15 percent technical and trade organizations, and 75 percent companies.

REFERENCE 1

Criteria for the Development and Coordination of
U.S. Positions in the International Standardization Activities
of the ISO and IEC

1. Applicability.

These requirements apply to the development and coordination of U.S. positions for ISO and IEC activities.

2. International Requirements.¹

Operating procedures for the development of U.S. positions shall comply with the requirements imposed on members by the relevant international standards body. For example, time limits are imposed on all participating international members of the international body with regard to voting, commenting, and other related matters. Reasonable time extensions may be requested for good cause.

3. General.

The operating procedures of existing or newly established groups² which develop U.S. positions for the standardization activities of IEC and ISO shall, at a minimum, meet the criteria for the organization and operation of TAGs as provided herein. Operating procedures shall be subject to review and approval by ANSI.

4. Criteria for Organization.

The following minimum criteria shall be met in the organization of TAGs which develop U.S. positions on international standards activities:

- 4.1 Openness. Participation shall be open to all U.S. national persons (organizations, companies, government agencies, individuals, etc.) who are directly and materially affected by the activity in question. There shall be no undue financial barriers to participation. Participation shall not be conditional upon membership in any organization, nor unreasonably restricted on the basis of technical qualifications or other such requirements.

¹Note: See the Constitution and Directives of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and the Statutes and Rules of Procedures as well as the General Directives of the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC).

²Note: Hereafter these groups shall be referred to as "TAGs". For the purpose of this document, "TAG" shall apply to both a U.S. Technical Advisory Group for ISO, and an Advisory Group for IEC.

Timely and adequate notice of the formation of new activities related to international standards shall be provided to all known directly and materially affected interests. Notice should include a clear and meaningful description of the purpose of the proposed activity and shall identify a readily available source for further information.

- 4.2 Balance. The process of developing U.S. positions should have a balance of interests and shall not be dominated by any single interest category.

Dominance means a position or exercise of dominant authority, leadership, or influence by reason of superior leverage, strength, or representation to the exclusion of fair and equitable consideration of other viewpoints. The requirement implicit in the phrase "shall not be dominated by any single interest category" normally will be satisfied by the historical criteria for balance; that is 1) no single interest category constitutes more than one third of the membership of a committee dealing with safety standards or 2) no single interest category constitutes a majority of the membership of a committee dealing with product standards.

Unless it is claimed by a directly and materially affected person (organization, company, government agency, individual, etc.) that a single interest category dominated the development of the U.S. position, no test for dominance is required.

In defining the interest categories appropriate to U.S. TAG membership, consideration shall be given to at least the following:

- (1) Producer
- (2) User
- (3) General interest

Where appropriate more detailed subdivisions should be considered. See note ³.

³Note: Further subdivisions that may be used to categorize directly and materially affected persons consist of, but are not limited to, the following:

- (1) Consumer
- (2) Directly affected public
- (3) Distributor and retailer
- (4) Industrial/Commercial
- (5) Insurance
- (6) Labor
- (7) Manufacturer
- (8) Professional society
- (9) Regulatory agency
- (10) Testing laboratory
- (11) Trade association

5. Criteria for Operation.

The following minimum criteria shall be met in the development of U.S. positions in international standards activities:

- 5.1 **Written Procedures.** Written procedures shall govern the methods used for the development of U.S. positions and shall be available to any interested party.
- 5.2 **Listing in STANDARDS ACTION.** Appropriate⁴ international standards activities shall be listed in STANDARDS ACTION in order to provide an opportunity for public comment. The comment period shall be appropriate to the required timing for the action.
- 5.3 **Consideration of Views and Objections.** Prompt consideration shall be given to the written views and objections of all participants including those commenting on the listing in STANDARDS ACTION. A concerted effort to resolve all expressed objections shall be made, and each objector shall be advised of the disposition of the objection and the reasons therefor.

Unresolved objections and any substantive change made to a proposed U.S. position shall be reported to the participants.
- 5.4 **Records.** Records shall be prepared and maintained to provide evidence of compliance with these criteria.
Records shall be retained for an appropriate period of time after the issuance of the international standard to which they pertain. See note⁵ which may serve as a guideline.
- 5.5 **Appeals.** The written procedures shall contain an identifiable, realistic, and readily available appeals mechanism for the impartial handling of substantive and procedural complaints regarding any action or inaction.

⁴Note: Examples of appropriate activities are in the ANSI Procedures for U.S. Participation in the International Standards Activities of the ISO.

⁵Note: See ISO Directives, Section 1A.6 which reads, in part, as follows:

Copies of working documents, results of postal ballots, etc., shall be kept at least until such time as the publications to which they refer have been revised or have completed their next periodic review, but in any case for a minimum of five years after the publication of the related International Standards or technical reports.

6. Guidelines for Determining a U.S. Voting Position.

The development of a U.S. position with regard to voting on international documents is a matter of great complexity. Firm rules for casting affirmative votes, negative votes, or abstentions would be presumptuous and unworkable in many cases. On the other hand, efforts should be made to achieve consistency in the perceived conduct of the United States as a participant in international, non-treaty standards development. Toward that end, guidelines for determining a voting position are included herein in order to provide direction toward a consistent voting policy. These guidelines cannot cover all of the factors which must be considered in determining the U.S. vote. They do, however, represent generally accepted principles which should be applied to normal situations.

- 6.1 If there is an existing U.S. national standard (i.e. an American National Standard or, in the absence of an American National Standard, another standard generally accepted within the United States) and -
- (1) If the national standard can be considered equivalent⁶ to the requirements in the international document, vote affirmative.
 - (2) If the international document includes different, additional, or more stringent requirements than are in the national standard and the U.S. consensus indicates that such requirements are:
 - (a) acceptable and should be considered for inclusion in the national standard (see section 7.2), vote affirmative, or
 - (b) not acceptable, vote negative.
 - (3) If the national standard includes different, additional, or more stringent requirements than are in the international document and the U.S. consensus indicates that the U.S. requirements:
 - (a) should be modified in accordance with the international document, (see section 7.2) vote affirmative, or
 - (b) must be maintained, vote negative, or
 - (c) must be maintained, but the proposed document is considered to represent the best agreement which can be reached at the present time from an international point of view, vote Abstain with a statement that the U.S. cannot modify its national standard for stated reasons.

⁶Note: The word "equivalent" is intended to convey the thought that any product or procedure which meets the requirements of the national standard will also meet the requirements of the international standard and vice versa when tested for conformance by accepted

6.2 If no national standard exists and -

- (1) If U.S. consensus establishes that the international document is:
 - (a) technically acceptable and could be used as a basis for the development of a national standard, vote affirmative, or
 - (b) not technically acceptable, vote negative.
- (2) If the international document is of little or no interest to the U.S., abstain.
- (3) If the international document unnecessarily creates a barrier to domestic or international trade or impedes innovation or technical progress, vote negative.

6.3 Regardless of whether or not a national standard exists -

If no U.S. consensus has been established, abstain.

6.4 The U.S. vote, if negative, must be accompanied by reasons and supporting information such as technical data and logical argument. Also, any known exceptions and/or additions that will be required to conform with U.S. safety practices or regulations shall be noted.

6.5 Exceptions. Exceptions to the above stated voting guidelines should be carefully considered.

7. Criteria for Approval of U.S. Positions on International Standards Activities.

7.1 Introduction. Implicit in the transmittal of U.S. positions on international standards activities to ANSI is the verification that the requirements of this document have been met and that consensus in support of the U.S. position has been established.

7.2 Consensus. Consensus for a U.S. position is established when substantial agreement has been reached by the U.S. national interests that are directly and materially affected by the proposed international standard. Additionally, if the proposed U.S. position is based on giving consideration to changes in an existing U.S. national standard, the consensus shall include U.S. national interests that are directly and materially affected by the U.S. national standard.

- 7.3 U.S. Proposals of Documents as the Basis for the Initiation of International Standards. All U.S. proposals for the initiation of new work items for the development of international standards shall be announced in ANSI's STANDARDS ACTION for review and comment. Such proposals shall be based on appropriate American National Standards, when they exist. In the absence of American National Standards, other appropriate, generally accepted standards may be proposed.⁷ In the absence of both, proposals may be based on a rationale, or a standard under development.

Generally, the public review announcement in STANDARDS ACTION shall be completed before the U.S. proposal is submitted. However, submittal of U.S. proposals may be made prior to the initiation or completion of the public review process when, by formal vote, the TAG determines that the resulting delay would adversely affect the U.S. proposal. Views and objections resulting from public review shall be considered in accordance with 5.3.

8. Criteria for Appeals.

The provision of appeals is important for the protection of directly and materially affected interests and for the organizations involved in the development of U.S. positions in international activities and is required as a part of due process. This section provides for the right to appeal, indicates what may be appealed, and gives general criteria regarding the appeals mechanism.

8.1 Right to Appeal. Directly and materially affected U.S. national persons (organizations, companies, government agencies, individuals, etc.) have the right to appeal any substantive procedural action or inaction in the development of U.S. positions on international standards activities.

8.2 Appeals Mechanism. The following general criteria shall apply to any appeals mechanism provided by the U.S. TAG pursuant to these procedures:

- (1) Appeals shall be addressed promptly and a decision made expeditiously.
- (2) The right of the involved parties to present their cases shall not be denied.
- (3) Appeals procedures shall provide for participation by all parties concerned without imposing an undue burden on them.
- (4) Consideration of appeals shall be fair and unbiased and shall fully address the concerns expressed.
- (5) Records of appeals shall be kept and made available to the involved parties.

⁷Note: Permission from the sponsor, to propose documents as the basis for the initiation of international standards, should be obtained.

8.3 Access. Appeals shall be directed in accordance with the written procedures used for the development of pertinent U.S. positions. See 5.1. The ANSI Appeals Board will not normally hear an appeal of an action or inaction until all other appeal procedures have been exhausted.

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