June 8, 2004

CIF 04-017

To:
ANSI Consumer Interest Forum (CIF)

cc:
ANSI ISO Council (AIC)

From:
James McCabe
Director, Consumer Relations and Public Policy

Subject:
Report and Resolutions from 26th ISO Consumer Policy Committee (COPOLCO) Meeting

Please find attached the resolutions from the 18-19 May 2004 ISO Consumer Policy Committee (COPOLCO) meeting, along with summary reports on the outcomes of a number of key COPOLCO agenda items. If you have any questions or require additional information, please let me know. Thanks.

Workshop Conclusions

The theme of the 17 May 2004 COPOLCO workshop was Regulation, Co-regulation, Self-regulation—Who’s at Risk? Legislation and standards: partners in consumer protection. The workshop explored mechanisms by which voluntary standards interact with regulatory regimes to ensure that products and services meet consumers’ expectations for safety, performance, fitness for purpose, pricing, redress and other criteria. The morning session was a succession of speakers examining these issues. The afternoon consisted of three parallel breakout sessions with reports back from each. The recommendations from the breakout groups subsequently were addressed at the COPOLCO plenary meeting.

Stakeholder Participation

The first breakout session Power through process: how are consumers participating? addressed the issue of how are consumers participating in standardization and public policy activities. COPOLCO took note of comments calling for greater stakeholder participation during the ISO Strategy consultation. COPOLCO also noted a Consumers International (CI) research project on global governance which is exploring the degree to which consumers participate in and influence the work of the ISO, the Codex Alimentarius and the World Trade Organization with the ultimate aim of improving consumer involvement. COPOLCO agreed to form an electronic working group to exchange information about national practices, to consider benchmarking best practices, and to analyze this information in light of the new ISO Strategy once it is approved. SCC (Canada) agreed to host the working group which will establish appropriate liaison with the CI global governance group. (See COPOLCO Resolution 12/2004.)

In a related development, SCC has floated the idea within COPOLCO of developing an international process standard on consumer and public interest participation that could complement country specific situations / requirements but would set an international benchmark which could be applied by a wide variety of organizations and rule making bodies. In its submission to the COPOLCO priorities working group, SCC noted that, while ISO and IEC have adopted the Policy Statement on Consumer Participation, and a number of standards bodies are actively facilitating the direct participation by consumers, there are many situations in standards work and other decision-making structures where the value of consumer and public interest participation is not widely accepted or utilized.
Environment
The second breakout session *Environmental issues: are these a special case?* considered whether the many regulatory and standards initiatives on products and services are producing the desired results for the environment. COPOLCO noted a survey done by Consumers International on “green claims” which identified problems with conformity to ISO 14021. COPOLCO also noted the concerns expressed in the workshop breakout session about claims of conformity to the ISO 14000 series in general and the perception of misleading environmental claims. There was some discussion around whether a further survey should be done exploring this issue. COPOLCO asked the COPOLCO Chair’s Group to consider the outcome of this breakout session in relation to possible further action. *(See COPOLCO Resolution 14/2004.)*

E-Commerce
The third breakout session *Customer satisfaction: E-commerce and the global market: how can standards help?* addressed how the Internet is revolutionizing the way products and services are bought and sold, and explored what role standards can play in ensuring customer satisfaction. COPOLCO recognized that access to the Internet is a concern for developing and transitional economies and stressed the need to avoid the exclusion of such economies. COPOLCO also emphasized that the ISO standards currently under development on external customer dispute resolution systems and codes of conduct should be applicable in the context of e-commerce. In addition, COPOLCO asked its working group on *Consumer protection in the global market* to initiate dialogue with organizations worldwide with expertise in business-to-consumer standards, codes, code development and related practices. Noting its prior recommendations for ISO to develop standards to promote consumer confidence in e-commerce, COPOLCO further asked its working group to consider the feasibility of harmonizing these practices, taking into account the work of these organizations and changed circumstances over the last four years. *(See COPOLCO Resolution 13/2004.)*

Consumer Participation

Address by ISO President
In his address to COPOLCO, ISO President Oliver Smoot stated that one of his main priorities as ISO President is to get more consumer participation into ISO’s technical work. *(His other priorities are achieving the goal of “one standard, one test, one globally-accepted standard” and significantly increasing the participation of developing countries in ISO’s technical work.)* Mr. Smoot stated that the consumer’s voice is critical for ISO as it strives to achieve the overarching objectives of global relevance and global acceptance of its standards. COPOLCO by itself can not drive consumer participation in ISO’s technical work, he added; it must be facilitated by the national standards bodies (NSBs) that are members of ISO. He challenged the NSBs to “look beyond our own self-interest and look for our common self-interest.” He noted that each of the objectives in the new *ISO Strategy* has relevance to consumers. COPOLCO thanked the ISO President for his informative contribution and encouraging remarks about the importance of engaging stakeholders’ interests in ISO’s technical work and strategic directions. *(See COPOLCO Resolution 1/2004.)*

Training
COPOLCO held the third in a series of regional training seminars the morning of 18 May on the theme *Achieving child safety through standards*. Earlier training seminars were held in September 2003 in conjunction with last year’s COPOLCO meeting in Bangkok, and in April 2004 in Cairo at the request of the Egyptian member of ISO. The training programs, made possible with funding from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), and facilitated by Mr. Folke Hermanson Snickars of SIS (Sweden), focus on consumer participation in standardization work, particularly in developing countries. COPOLCO thanked Mr. Snickars, SIS and Sida for their commitment and support, endorsed a proposal to develop and implement indicators to measure the impact of training, and invited the COPOLCO Chair’s Group to take steps to develop these indicators and to consider future training initiatives. *(See COPOLCO Resolution 2/2004.)*
Services Standardization

Generic Guidelines for Services
COPOLCO discussed draft ISO/IEC Guide 76, Services standardization – Recommendations for addressing consumer issues developed by the COPOLCO working group on generic guidelines for services. The document will be revised taking into account comments made at the meeting. COPOLCO members were invited to submit additional comments in writing. A formal consultation with COPOLCO will be circulated. (See COPOLCO Resolution 5/2004.)

Financial Services
COPOLCO heard a report from the convenor of the sub-group that is developing a proposal for standardization of financial services. COPOLCO asked the convenor to prepare the proposal by the end of June for circulation to COPOLCO for approval by correspondence, and for subsequent submission to the ISO Council. (See COPOLCO Resolution 3/2004.)

Tourism
The convenor of the sub-group on tourism reported on efforts to refine the priority areas identified in Bangkok, those being safety, sustainable tourism, hygiene and design for all/accessibility. In addition, members of the group have been dialoguing with representatives of organizations in the tourism industry. COPOLCO thanked the sub-group for these efforts and also thanked the ISO Secretary-General and the COPOLCO Secretary for contacts made with the World Tourism Organization where the potential for cooperation between the two organizations was discussed. In addition, COPOLCO noted various tourism-related initiatives taken within ISO, including NEN’s (Netherlands) project to draw up a proposal for standardization work on sustainable tourism. COPOLCO invited its tourism sub-group to monitor these and other tourism initiatives and to submit information on consumer requirements as appropriate. (See COPOLCO Resolution 4/2004.)

Consumer Protection in the Global Market

Billing by Network Service Providers
COPOLCO discussed the issues raised in the Global Market working group’s proposal for a new ISO standard on retail network services billing. COPOLCO noted that the proposal draws primarily on experience within the United Kingdom. COPOLCO determined to gather more information, for example from Consumers International and from the Latin American region to assess the extent of the problems mentioned internationally. It was also agreed to research whether billing issues are addressed in relevant work programmes of ISO, IEC and ITU. While noting that billing issues affect the telecommunications and water supply services, COPOLCO decided to focus its immediate attention on preparing a justification paper for standardization of billing practices in the gas and electricity sectors. (See COPOLCO Resolution 6/2004.)

Product Recalls
The working group convenor reported that because of lack of resources work had not proceeded on a feasibility study for an international standard on recall procedures for consumer goods, a project agreed to at last year’s COPOLCO meeting in Bangkok. Noting codes of good practice and relevant legislation worldwide, COPOLCO reiterated its support for such a feasibility study for a recall standard that could be used by businesses, regulatory authorities and other relevant organizations. COPOLCO noted the suggestion raised at the meeting that the study also consider the need for including recall criteria in documents relating to conformity assessment. (See COPOLCO Resolution 8/2004.)

Compliance Management
At a pre-plenary meeting of the Global Market working group, a suggestion was put forth by the UK group energywatch that COPOLCO consider recommending a new work item on a standard on compliance programs. Noting an Australian standard on compliance management, energywatch indicated that such a standard would provide guidance to industry on how to set in place systems to effectively implement consumer based codes, standards and regulation. COPOLCO asked the working group to submit a
justification for the suggested new work item for consideration and further discussion by the COPOLCO Chair’s Group. (See COPOLCO Resolution 7/2004.)

Corporate Social Responsibility
COPOLCO noted the recent publication of a report by the ISO/Technical Management Board advisory group on social responsibility, the invitation for public comment via the ISO web site (www.iso.org/sr) and the organization of an international conference on social responsibility on 21-22 June 2004 in Stockholm. Recalling its prior resolutions on this subject, COPOLCO thanked SIS and Sida for their initiative to support the participation of developing countries, and in particular consumer representatives, in the conference, including in a pre-conference meeting on 17-18 June prior to the international conference. COPOLCO also encouraged its members to ensure the participation of consumer representatives in that conference as part of their national ISO member delegations. Representatives from CI and ANEC noted their position papers on CSR work in ISO. (See COPOLCO Resolution 9/2004.)

Consumer Product Safety
COPOLCO reviewed the report and recommendations of the convenor of the ad hoc group on safety. Given the strong interest in the subject generated by the training session on child safety held on 18 May and the support given to the training by the members, COPOLCO supported the continuation of the group’s activity with expanded terms of reference. This is to include research into the way IEC and other standards organizations address vertical and horizontal safety issues, child safety issues identified in the training seminar, existing standards that may not adequately address safety in the context of ISO/IEC Guides 50 and 51, and developing greater consistency and coherence in requirements for safety in standards. COPOLCO agreed to reallocate the leadership of the group to SCC (Canada) and asked the group to prepare a report for consideration by COPOLCO at its 2005 plenary meeting. (See COPOLCO Resolution 10/2004.)

Market Surveillance
COPOLCO had been invited to provide feedback on whether the consumer community would see value in ISO’s Conformity Assessment Committee (CASCO) creating international guidance on market surveillance processes. Inconsistent approaches by governments in mandatory market surveillance activities, and between companies within voluntary product certification schemes was seen as cause for concern. COPOLCO supported the development of such guidelines. (See COPOLCO Resolution 16/2004.)

Consumers International (CI)
COPOLCO commended CI on its global governance project aimed at improving consumer involvement in the decision-making processes of international norm-setting organizations. COPOLCO also noted the report from CI and the concern expressed with regard to exclusion clauses in standards developed by IEC/TC 61, Safety of household and similar electrical appliances. CI is working to request the removal of such exclusion clauses. COPOLCO invited its members to inform CI of any legal issues related to conflicts between legislation and exclusion clauses in standards. (See COPOLCO Resolution 19/2004.)

Future Meetings / Workshops
The next COPOLCO workshop and plenary meeting will be hosted by SCC in Toronto, Canada, on 24-26 May 2005. SCC proposed public safety and security as the theme of the workshop. Child safety and implementation of ISO 9000 in quality of services were also suggested from the floor as possible themes for the workshop. The theme of the workshop will be finalized by the Chair’s Group in coordination with SCC, following further consultation with COPOLCO on the above-noted options. DSM (Malaysia) has offered to host the subsequent COPOLCO workshop and meeting in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in May 2006 with the exact date to be determined. (See COPOLCO Resolution 15/2004.)
Resolutions adopted at the 26th COPOLCO plenary meeting held in Prague
18-19 May 2004

COPOLCO Resolution 1/2004
Address by the ISO President

COPOLCO

notes the address by the ISO President,

thanks the ISO President for his informative contribution and encouraging remarks about the importance of engaging stakeholders’ interests in ISO’s technical work and strategic directions,

expresses its appreciation for ISO’s recognition of consumers’ involvement in its work.

COPOLCO Resolution 2/2004
Consumer participation in standardization

COPOLCO

acknowledges Mr. Folke Hermanson Snickars’ ongoing contribution to the training efforts aimed at enhancing consumer participation in standards work,

reiterates its thanks to Mr. Hermanson Snickars, to SIS (Sweden) and to the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) for their outstanding commitment and support,

endorses the development and implementation of indicators to measure the impact of training,

invites the COPOLCO Chair’s Group to take appropriate measures to develop these indicators and to consider future training initiatives.

COPOLCO Resolution 3/2004
Subgroup group on financial services

COPOLCO

notes the report of the subgroup on financial services and thanks the project leader, Mr. Gunter Cornelissen, for the work performed to date,

requests the project leader to prepare by the end of June an updated proposal for circulation to COPOLCO for approval by correspondence, and for subsequent submission to the ISO Council,

requests its Secretary to take all necessary steps in support of this action.
COPOLCO Resolution 4/2004
Subgroup on standardization of tourism services

COPOLCO

notes the report of the project leader, Mr. Malcolm Bassett, on the refinement of priority areas in regard to the tourism services identified at the 25th meeting in 2003,

thanks Mr. Bassett and the subgroup on standardization of tourism services for the work performed to date and in particular for pursuing the dialogue with representatives of the tourism industry and concerned organizations,

further thanks the ISO Secretary-General and the COPOLCO Secretary for the contacts made with the World Tourism Organization,

notes the potential areas of cooperation between the World Tourism Organization and ISO, and the outcome of discussions during the meeting,

further notes the various tourism-related initiatives taken within ISO, including NEN's project to draw up a proposal for standardization work on sustainable tourism,

invites the subgroup to assist COPOLCO in monitoring tourism initiatives and to submit information on consumer requirements, as appropriate.

COPOLCO Resolution 5/2004
Working group on generic guidelines for services

COPOLCO

thanks the working group on generic guidelines for services for the development of the proposed guidelines to Committee Draft stage,

invites the COPOLCO members to submit any additional comments to the Secretariat in writing by the end of June,

requests the working group to take account of the comments made during the meeting, together with any additional written comments, and to revise the Committee Draft accordingly,

asks the COPOLCO members to respond to a formal consultation on the Committee Draft, to be initiated by the COPOLCO Secretariat.

COPOLCO Resolution 6/2004
Billing by network service providers

COPOLCO

notes the work of the convenor, Mr. Bill Dee, and thanks him and the working group Consumer protection in the global marketplace for their activity report,

confirms the variety and importance of consumer protection issues as set out in the proposal on network services billing appearing at Annex 2 to COPOLCO 14/2004,
notes that the proposal draws primarily on experience and examples gathered in the United Kingdom,

further notes that the issues also affect telecommunications and water supply services, as stated in COPOLCO Resolution 6/2003 and supported by comments made at the meeting,

requests the working group to circulate a survey among the full membership of COPOLCO:

- to assess the incidence and severity of the problems linked to billing of gas and electricity, and
- to consider data from Consumers International and from Latin American countries,

further requests the working group to investigate whether the topic of billing provisions is addressed in the work programmes of IEC and ITU and in the work programme of ISO/TC 224, Service activities relating to drinking water supply systems and wastewater systems — Quality criteria of the service and performance indicators.

entrusts the working group with the task of preparing a detailed justification study on the standardization of network services billing, with an emphasis on gas and electricity, while noting the applicability of basic billing principles to other services,

additionally requests the working group to prepare a report for consideration at the next meeting of the COPOLCO Chair’s Group.

**COPOLCO Resolution 7/2004**

*Proposal for a standard on compliance*

COPOLCO

notes the work of the convenor, Mr. Bill Dee, and of the members of the working group on Consumer protection in the global marketplace,

acknowledges the suggestion for a new ISO standard on compliance management programmes,

asks the working group to submit a justification for the suggested new work item, for consideration and further discussion by the COPOLCO Chair’s Group.

**COPOLCO Resolution 8/2004**

*Proposal on product recall*

COPOLCO

invites the working group on Consumer protection in the global marketplace to study the feasibility of an International Standard on recall procedures for consumer goods, for use by businesses, regulatory authorities and other relevant organizations,

notes the suggestion of the COPOLCO members that the study also consider the need for including recall criteria in documents relating to conformity assessment,

acknowledges the existence of codes of good practice and relevant legislation worldwide,

invites the working group to consider the above initiatives and research and to submit a complete justification study for consideration by the COPOLCO plenary meeting in 2005.
COPOLCO Resolution 9/2004
Corporate social responsibility

COPOLCO

acknowledging

the recent publication of a report by the ISO/TMB Advisory group on social responsibility, the invitation for public comment via the ISO Web site and the organization of an international conference on social responsibility on 21-22 June 2004 in Stockholm,

recalls

COPOLCO's resolutions on this topic passed in 2002 and 2003,

thanks

SIS (Sweden) for the information provided at the present meeting,

commends

SIS and Sida on their support towards the participation of developing countries, and in particular consumer representatives, in the Stockholm conference, including in a pre-conference meeting on 17-18 June prior to the international conference,

encourages

the COPOLCO members to ensure the attendance of consumer representatives at that conference as part of their national ISO member delegations.

COPOLCO Resolution 10/2004
Safety of consumer products

COPOLCO

notes

the report and recommendations of the convenor of the ad hoc group on safety, Mr. John Henry, and thanks him for his leadership of the group to date,

further notes

the strong interest in the subject generated by the training session on child safety held on 18 May and the support given to the training by the members,

supports

the continuation of the group’s activity with terms of reference expanded to include investigations into:

- the way IEC and other standards organizations address vertical and horizontal safety issues,
- the output of the training session on child safety, which identified problem areas in a number of countries,
- areas where the current inventory of normative documents fails to cover safety requirements from a consumer point of view, taking ISO/IEC Guides 50 and 51 as a point of departure, and
- developing greater consistency and coherence in requirements for safety in standards, particularly in regard to the application of relevant existing and future guides, in line with the overall ISO Strategy.

decides

to reallocate the leadership of the group to SCC (Canada),

entrusts

the working group with the task of preparing a report for consideration by COPOLCO at its 2005 plenary meeting.
COPOLCO Resolution 11/2004
2004 workshop conclusions

COPOLCO

notes the conclusions of the workshop on Regulation, co-regulation and self-regulation – Who’s at risk?

expresses its appreciation to the speakers, moderators and rapporteurs for their work.

COPOLCO Resolution 12/2004
2004 workshop conclusions – Break-out session on stakeholder participation

COPOLCO

notes the conclusions of the break-out session on stakeholder participation,

further notes the desirability of stakeholder participation expressed in connection with the consultation on the updating of the ISO Strategy,

accepts the offer from (SCC) Canada to host an electronic (“virtual”) working group which would:

• examine current practice and limitations of consumer representation,
• consider benchmarking of consumer representation in ISO, taking into account existing policies and procedures,
• collect information from members on existing standards or guidance on public participation,
• analyze responses in the light of the ISO Strategy, as and when approved,

requests the working group to establish appropriate liaison with the Consumers International group on Global Governance, with respect to consumer and other stakeholder participation in various organizations,

entrusts the working group with the task of submitting an interim report to the COPOLCO Chair’s Group.

COPOLCO Resolution 13/2004
2004 workshop conclusions – Break-out session on e-commerce

COPOLCO

notes the conclusions of the break-out session on e-commerce, which recognized the barriers that prevent access by developing and transitional economies to the Internet and stressed the need to avoid the exclusion of such economies,

recommends that the forthcoming ISO International Standards on external customer dispute resolution systems and codes of conduct be considered equally relevant in the context of e-commerce,
requests the working group on *Consumer protection in the global market* to initiate dialogue with organizations worldwide with expertise in business-to-consumer e-commerce standards, codes, code development and related practices,

further requests the working group to consider the feasibility of harmonizing these practices, taking into account the work of these organizations and the change in circumstances since the working group’s related recommendations in 2000,

asks the working group to report to the COPOLCO plenary meeting in 2005.

**COPOLCO Resolution 14/2004**

*2004 workshop conclusions – Break-out session on the environment*

COPOLCO

notes the conclusions of the workshop break-out session on the environment and the perception of misleading environmental claims,

acknowledges the results of a survey by Consumers International on "green claims", identifying problems with conformity to ISO 14021,

further notes the concerns expressed by the participants in the break-out session with regard to claims of conformity to the ISO 14000 series in general,

recommends that the COPOLCO Chair’s Group consider the outcome from this break-out group in relation to possible further action.

**COPOLCO Resolution 15/2004**

*Future workshops*

COPOLCO

thanks SCC (Canada) for its invitation to host the 2005 COPOLCO plenary meeting and workshop on 24-26 May 2005,

expresses its thanks and appreciation to DSM (Malaysia) for its invitation to host the COPOLCO plenary meeting in May 2006 at a date to be determined,

notes the discussion concerning the choice of a theme for the 2005 workshop, including a proposal from SCC on public safety and security, with additional suggestions from the members on child safety and on the implementation of ISO 9000 in quality of services,

requests the Chair, SCC and the Secretary to prepare a letter for circulation to the full COPOLCO membership to assess their support in regard to the above,

further requests the COPOLCO Chair’s Group to finalize the theme in coordination with SCC and to proceed with the planning of the 2005 workshop.
COPOLCO Resolution 16/2004

CASCO and market surveillance

COPOLCO

notes the report from CASCO,

further notes CASCO’s invitation to COPOLCO to formulate a position on the need for international guidelines on market surveillance with a view to ensuring consumer protection,

supports the development of such guidelines, particularly in the light of discussions at the workshop and meeting,

requests its Chair to convey COPOLCO’s strong support for this proposal at the next meeting of the CASCO Chairman's Policy and Coordination Group.

COPOLCO Resolution 17/2004

COPOLCO

notes the reports from the OECD, the IEC and DEVCO,

thanks the two organizations and the committee for their reports.

COPOLCO Resolution 18/2004

COPOLCO

notes the reports from ANEC and AP-COPOLCO,

thanks that organization and the committee for their reports.

COPOLCO Resolution 19/2004

Consumers International (CI)

COPOLCO

notes the report from CI,

further notes the outcome of discussions at the COPOLCO workshop and the presentation by CI, at a side event to the plenary meeting, of its Global Governance programme,

commends the work of CI’s Global Governance programme,

notes the concern of consumer organizations in regard to exclusion clauses in standards developed by IEC TC 61 Safety of household and similar electrical appliances,

invites the COPOLCO members to inform CI of any legal issues or of any conflicts between legislation and exclusion clauses in standards identified in their countries.
COPOLCO Resolution 20/2004
COPOLCO work programme

COPOLCO

notes the draft work programme set out in Annex 1 to COPOLCO 26/2004,

requests its Secretary to amend the work programme in the light of discussions at the meeting and to circulate a revised work programme for 2005 to the COPOLCO membership,

further requests its Secretary to submit a finalized version of the COPOLCO work programme to the ISO Council for approval.

COPOLCO Resolution 21/2004
COPOLCO Special Resolution

COPOLCO

expresses its thanks and deep-felt gratitude to CSNI for its warm hospitality and for the excellent arrangements provided for the COPOLCO events,

emphasizes that the excellent organization provided by CSNI greatly facilitated COPOLCO’s discussions and decisions.