American National Standards – bringing safer products to the consumer

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Objectives

This session will help participants understand:

- What are standards?
- What is conformity assessment?
- Who uses standards?
- Who develops standards? When, and where?
- How can you participate in standards setting?
What are standards?

*Document* established by consensus and approved by recognized body that provides for common and repeated use, rules, guidelines or characteristics for activities or their results aimed at achieving the optimum degree of order…

*ISO/IEC Guide 2*
What are standards?

There are standards for:

- Time
- Weights and measures
- Design and performance characteristics of products and materials (e.g., physical, chemical, electrical, mechanical)
- Procedures for quality systems and services
- Public information symbols
- Safety, health and environmental protection
What is Conformity Assessment?

- Any activity concerned with determining directly or indirectly that relevant requirements are fulfilled.

ISO/IEC Guide 2

- For example, a process whereby a product, process, service or system is evaluated or measured against a standard
Who Uses Standards?

- Consumers
- Industry
  - Cost reduction
  - Interoperability
  - Regulatory compliance
  - Market access
  - Competitive advantage
- Government
  - Procurement
  - Regulation of health, safety & environment
  - Trade
Types of standards & who develops them

• Voluntary Consensus
  – Developed via a formal process characterized by openness and due process, involving professionals from the private and public sectors (American National Standards)

• Consortia Standards
  – Developed outside the formal process by companies that work together to solve a specific market need
  – Participation generally is limited to members of the consortium
  – A significant financial commitment may be required

• Regulatory Specifications
  – Written or adopted by government agencies (Milspecs)

• De Facto
  – The marketplace determines acceptance (Microsoft Windows)
Examples of Standards Developers

• Standards Developing Organizations
  – National Electrical Manufacturers Assn. (NEMA)
  – American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME)
  – National Fire Protection Association (NFPA)

• Government Agencies
  – Department of Defense
  – Department of Commerce / National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST)
  – Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)

• Companies
  – Hewlett-Packard
  – Caterpillar Inc.
  – Ford Motor Company
Cardinal Principles of the Consensus Process

**Openness** – All materially affected parties may participate in standards development

**Transparency** – Records, processes open and publicly available (no secret meetings)

**Consensus** – Decisions by more than a simple majority (not unanimity). Seeks to take into account views of all parties concerned, and to reconcile conflicting arguments

**Balance** – No dominance of standard group by one segment

**Due Process** – Written, documented procedures including an appeals process
An Introduction to ANSI and the World of Standards

NACAA 2003 Conference

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“What is ANSI?”

American National Standards Institute

- Founded in 1918 by five professional/technical societies and three federal government agencies
- From the beginning, a private-public sector partnership
- Only accreditor of U.S. Standards Developers
- Only body that approves standards as American National Standards
- Provides access to international and regional standards bodies
- Offers a neutral policy forum
- Information provider

ANSI is not a government agency or a standards developer.
Private Sector & Public Sector Working Together

Academia
Individuals
Government
Companies
Trade Associations
Professional Societies
Standards Developers
Consumer and Labor Interests
• NIST’s role, as delegated by the Secretary of Commerce, is to coordinate federal activities in voluntary standards.

• Formerly known as the National Bureau of Standards
  – works with industry and government to advance measurement science and develop standards

• NIST coordinates standards activities with government agencies and the private sector.
Accreditation Process

Apply

Public Review

Procedures

APPROVED

Accreditation

Review of Due Process Requirements
STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT INVOLVES . . .

- Research
- Gathering viewpoints of all interested and materially affected parties
- Discussion
- Compromise
- Agreement on content
- Preparation of drafts
- Agreement on drafts
- Publication
Public Review

- ANSI procedures require a “Public Review” of draft standards as a part of the open, due process driven consensus process
  - Published in ANSI’s weekly publication *Standards Action*
  - Available free to the public [http://www.ansi.org/standardsaction](http://www.ansi.org/standardsaction)
  - All who are materially affected are invited to comment
  - Consensus does not imply unanimity, but all comments/objections shall be addressed and an effort made towards their resolution
Examples of American National Standards for consumer product safety and performance

- UL 588-2002, Christmas Tree and Decorative Lighting Outfits
- ASTM F963-96ae2, Standard Consumer Safety Specification on Toy Safety
- ANSI Z315.1-1996, Tricycles—Safety Requirements
- ANSI B175.1-2000, Gasoline Powered Chain Saws, Safety Requirements for
- ANSI A14.1-2000, Ladders—Portable Wood, Safety Requirements for
Participate!

The process is only as good as the people who participate.

- Consensus body (i.e., standards writing committee)
- Public Review
- ANSI’s Consumer Interest Forum
For more information:

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Thank you!