



# guidance



## Guidance for **ISO national standards bodies**

Engaging stakeholders  
and building consensus



### Why an owl?

Why an owl to symbolize the work of the ISO/TMB Process Evaluation Group? Because owls have a reputation for wisdom and seem to have a critical, evaluative look...

# Content

<b>Section 1.....</b>	<b>3</b>
About the ISO Technical Management Board (TMB)	
Process Evaluation Group (PEG) .....	3
<b>Section 2 .....</b>	<b>5</b>
ISO/TMB PEG Task 2 – Why was it important?	
Why was it pursued? .....	5
<b>Section 3 .....</b>	<b>9</b>
Principles and guidance on stakeholder engagement and consensus decision-making for ISO NSBs .....	9
3.1 Stakeholder engagement for new ISO projects .....	9
3.2 Stakeholder engagement and consensus decision-making on ISO work .....	13
3.3 National participation at ISO standards development meetings .....	19
3.4 Establishment and operation of national mirror committees (NMCs) .....	23
3.5 Leadership of NMCs .....	26
<b>Annex A .....</b>	<b>29</b>
PEG Task 2 – Input collection methodology and summary observations....	29
1. Initiation of new ISO work .....	29
2. Establishment of ISO NMCs .....	30
3. NMC membership .....	30
4. Addressing differing ISO technical subjects in NMCs .....	32
5. Decision-making in mirror committees .....	32
6. Participation at ISO standards development meetings .....	34
7. Mirror committee leadership .....	35

## **Annex B ..... 37**

Additional guidance from the ISO/TMB on stakeholder engagement .....	37
Benefits of early public information on proposals for new work .....	39
Benefits of early stakeholder engagement in ISO standards development .....	41
Monitoring stakeholder engagement at the working group (WG) and technical committee level by committee leadership .....	43
Identification of stakeholder categories to be engaged given the subject area .....	46
Direction from ISO and guidance for NSBs on appropriate stakeholder categories to be engaged and nominated to participate given the subject area .....	47
Providing proper attention to aspects of representation (for example, stakeholders, economic status, regions, gender, etc.) .....	49
Guidance on use of existing structural and sub-structural approaches (e.g. a Project Committee [PC] operating in PC and Working Group [WG] modes) .....	51
Increased national consultation networks beyond National Mirror Committees prior to or throughout the development process .....	53
Use of international stakeholder groups (including election processes within them) .....	55

## **Annex C ..... 59**

Categories for the classification of experts nominated to working groups .....	59
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# Section 1

## About the ISO Technical Management Board (TMB) Process Evaluation Group (PEG)

In recent years, to be responsive to both current and new stakeholder needs and to maintain itself as a highly relevant International Standards developer, ISO has seen its work programme expand and evolve into new subject areas. Compelling challenges for ISO regarding its standards development processes have come with this evolution, as stakeholder expectations of the ISO system change.

As a result, the ISO Technical Management Board (ISO/TMB) formed its Process Evaluation Group (PEG) to investigate the responsiveness of the ISO standards development processes to these changing dynamics. The ultimate intent of the PEG's efforts was to safeguard the outcomes of the ISO system and to promote the existing value, strength and authority of International Standards and the processes by which they are produced. Indeed, the ISO/TMB agreed that the PEG's work had to uphold the commitment of the ISO system to participation via national standards bodies (NSBs), as well as through the consideration of the input received from liaison organizations.

Essentially the PEG had two main tasks:

## Task 1

To review the situation and consider the possibility of alternative models<sup>1)</sup> of standards development operations and participation in ISO.

## Task 2

To examine processes for consensus decision-making and stakeholder engagement within national standards bodies (NSBs) and liaison organizations, which could impact the credibility of resulting ISO standards.

Please note that this document is a result of the PEG's pursuit of Task 2 above.

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1) It is important to note that, in the majority of cases, the existing ISO model was already working well, being well defined and accepted by stakeholders.

## Section 2

### ISO/TMB PEG Task 2 – Why was it important? Why was it pursued?

Any discussion of the rationale for PEG Task 2 must begin by recognizing the following important statements made in ISO governance documents:

*“ISO members are committed to developing globally relevant International Standards by... Organizing national input in a timely and effective manner, taking into account all relevant interests at national level...”*

*“ISO parties are committed to... Communicating in a fair and transparent manner to interested parties when work on new standards is initiated and subsequently on the progress of their development...”*

**From the ISO Code of Ethics, 2004**

*“For the ISO work in which they choose to participate, ISO members are expected to organize national consultation mechanisms, according to their national needs and possibilities, which prepare national positions that reflect a balance of their country’s national interests...”*

**From the List of Fundamental Principles  
of the ISO System, 1999**

*“...National bodies have the responsibility of ensuring that their technical standpoint is established taking account of all interests concerned at national level...”*

**From the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1,  
Foreword, Item C on Discipline**





Generally, ISO processes and national body engagement have been viewed as successful to result in ISO standards reflecting a double level of consensus – among market players and experts at the drafting stages of the standards, and among countries at the formal voting stages of the standards.

However, **when the PEG began its tasks, within some ISO activities there had been some concerns expressed regarding the integrity of ISO national body processes for stakeholder engagement and consensus decision making. The credibility of these national processes is vital to ensure the credibility of the resulting ISO standards and, ultimately, of the ISO brand in the marketplace.** It is important to recognize that the ISO standards development process is one that is collectively owned and implemented by ISO and its members in accordance with broadly accepted principles and guidance.

It is important to consider that international and some broadly based regional organizations also make active contributions to the development of ISO standards as recognized liaisons.



**Therefore, if the credibility of internal processes of national bodies has an impact on the credibility of ISO standards and ISO itself, then in principle, the same is true for the internal processes of organizations in liaison and their input.**

It is for this reason that the PEG decided to seek input from ISO NSBs and liaison organizations on their internal processes for stakeholder engagement and consensus decision making. The process for collecting input and summary observations of that input is detailed in **Annex A** to this document.

Through consideration of this input, the PEG developed the principles and guidance presented in **Section 3** of this document. The WTO Committee on Technical Barriers to Trade has established certain principles for the development of international standards that should be observed when international standards, guides and recommendations are developed, to ensure transparency, openness, impartiality and consensus, effectiveness and relevance, coherence, and to address the concerns of developing countries. The correct reference for the WTO/TBT document providing these principles is *Decisions and Recommendations Adopted by the WTO Committee on Technical Barriers to Trade since 1 January 1995, Annex B. G/TBT/1/Rev.9, 8 September 2008*.

These principles, especially in relation to transparency, openness, impartiality and consensus, communicate important ideas that, if implemented by standards bodies, contribute to the credibility of the internal processes of ISO NSBs and international liaison organizations. Therefore, these ideas have been incorporated in the development of the principles and guidance presented in **Section 3** of this document.

One of the unique strengths of the ISO system is the diversity that exists among NSBs and liaison organizations. Such diversity is seen not just in geographic location, number of staff or annual budgets of the NSBs or liaison organizations, but also in the array of approaches they employ that may be suitable to support their engagement in ISO standards development.

Differences in approach may occur for many reasons, and may be based on differing organization operational models, stakeholder dynamics or available resources. Embracing and sharing the range of effective approaches and good practices enriches the total ISO process, while forcing very specific expectations on all parties may inhibit creativity, innovation and the engagement of important market players in ISO's work.

**Effective and cooperative consensus standards development must be built on a foundation of mutual respect and constructive collaboration among all parties engaged. Therefore, ISO, NSBs and liaison organizations benefit from diversity of thought and approach and from mutual respect.**

Within the documents developed during this ISO/TMB PEG task, we tried to find a balance between helpful principles and guidance to benefit the processes of NSBs and liaisons while recognizing and respecting the sovereignty of NSBs and liaison organizations to determine their processes.

## Section 3

### Principles and guidance on stakeholder engagement and consensus decision-making for NSBs

#### 3.1 Stakeholder engagement for new ISO projects

This section provides principles and guidance to enable NSBs to assess their level of interest in, and support for, new work proposed in ISO that does not relate to existing ISO committees and in the absence of an existing and relevant NSB national committee.

##### Principles

- 3.1 P1** For new ISO projects, the proposer of the initiative should indicate the range of organizations/stakeholder groups supporting the initiative, as well as those that, according to their interests and identified needs should, as a minimum, be involved in its development in order to facilitate the arrangements of national consensus building.
- 3.1 P2** The range of relevant national stakeholders to be engaged will depend on the ISO subject and will vary from one subject to another.
- 3.1 P3** NSBs should be committed to informing and seeking input from a broad range of relevant national stakeholders on any new ISO projects when they are proposed.

- 3.1 P4** All relevant national stakeholders should be given equal access to information and equal opportunity to provide input.
- 3.1 P5** Information on new ISO projects should be provided to the national stakeholders in a timely manner and at the earliest appropriate opportunity to allow all relevant national stakeholders to access the information, determine their interest in it and provide input effectively by any deadlines.
- 3.1 P6** NSBs should make provision for a range of approaches to support timely and effective stakeholder engagement and participation based on the needs of the stakeholders.
- 3.1 P7** NSBs should seek input that represents organizational perspectives (e.g. companies, organizations, trade associations, government agencies, consumer interest groups, etc.) and/or the perspective of individual experts.
- 3.1 P8** **NSBs should be committed to base decisions on whether to support the proposed new work and their level of involvement in the ISO activity (P or O) on consideration of the collected input received from relevant national stakeholders.**
- 3.1 P9** Comments submitted by NSBs should reflect the national consensus rather than a compilation of all comments expressed at the national level. Submittal of redundant or even contradictory comments should be avoided.

## ..... Guidance

To assist in achieving these principles, the following guidance may be helpful:

- 3.1 G1** ISO members should conduct a national consultation with all relevant stakeholders. This could take place via a step-wise approach such as:
- Identification of potential stakeholders – In addition to any internal processes, advertisements and general meetings, NSBs are encouraged to seek input on potentially relevant stakeholders from trade organizations, other organizations, governmental agencies, user/consumer groups that can complement the NSBs knowledge. This is especially the case in a new field for standardization
  - Providing stakeholders with information on the project proposal
  - Collecting feedback from stakeholders regarding whether there is a need for the proposed International Standard(s). This could be done via e-mail input, or by conducting a workshop or an in-person meeting, teleconference or Web-based discussion of the proposed International Standard(s)
  - Identifying those stakeholders willing to participate in the new ISO work on an ongoing basis
- 3.1 G2** Once relevant stakeholders have been engaged in the process and have contributed views and comments on the proposal, based on the input received, a responsible individual within the NSB should develop a recommended response for review and endorsement as the NSB position and comments on the ISO proposal.

- 3.1 G3** There are many ways of engaging with the relevant stakeholders, both proactively and passively. For example, if your organization has a Website, details of the proposal should be placed on the site and a more targeted identification can be made via notices in relevant publications, on-line news items to stimulate discussion, and through already established sectors within NSBs. Furthermore, active outreach and communications to identified stakeholders should be pursued. Stakeholders in need of funding to support their participation should seek out sources of such funding.
- 3.1 G4** NSBs new to active engagement in the ISO system may wish to seek advice and best practices from other NSBs who have had substantial experience.





## 3.2 Stakeholder engagement and consensus decision-making on ISO work

This section provides principles and guidance to support the efforts by NSBs related to stakeholder engagement and consensus decision-making in the development of national positions on ISO work on an ongoing basis.

### Principles

**3.2 P1** The approach by which an NSB determines its national position is the decision of the NSB.

**3.2 P2** NSBs should establish an appropriate process to develop national positions and comments on ISO work, as well as to determine the NSBs' representation at ISO meetings. It is recommended that national mirror committees (NMCs) are formed whenever possible, but some NSBs may determine their national positions by other means.

**3.2 P3** Some NSBs may already have national committees in a field where new international projects are started. The NSB should use this existing national committee in the capacity of an NMC if it is interested in serving in such a capacity and able to fulfill the requirements of such a role.

**3.2 P4** Differences in approach may be based on differing operational models, national dynamics or available resources. Regardless of the specific approach used, what is vital is that the development of the national position is informed by, and responsive to, the input collected from the relevant national stakeholders.

**3.2 P5** A description of how the NSB determines its national positions should be publicly available to all national stakeholders or made available to them upon request.

- 3.2 P6** It is the responsibility of the NSB to arrive at a national position that reflects and reconciles the range of views of its national stakeholders that have a legitimate interest in the ISO subject.
- 3.2 P7** At times, the development of a national position may require consideration of stakeholders' interests in other related NMCs.
- 3.2 P8** Decisions within NSBs should be taken based on the consensus principle and such decisions should carefully consider the balance of interests across the input collected from relevant national stakeholders.
- 3.2 P9** **All relevant national stakeholders should have equal access to participation in the NSB's process for development of national positions, and all national stakeholders formally engaged in the NSB's process should be assured of fair and equitable treatment and consideration in that process.**
- 3.2 P10** All relevant national stakeholders and NSB procedures must be committed to the development of a national position that reflects consensus across multiple stakeholders and stakeholder categories.
- 3.2 P11** When consensus is reached among stakeholders within an NSB on technical content issues and on a national position on ISO work, it is expected that the NSB will submit the stakeholder consensus position and technical comments to ISO in accordance with its established procedures. It is recognized that on occasion an NSB may need to make editorial revisions for political or legal reasons.
- 3.2 P12** Comments submitted by NSBs should reflect the national consensus rather than a compilation of all comments

expressed at the national level. Submittal of redundant or even contradictory comments should be avoided.

- 3.2 P13** When consensus is reached within an NSB on a national position on ISO work, all relevant national stakeholders should respect and support that national consensus position within ISO activities and at ISO meetings, and they should not express views within the ISO activity that may limit the success of the national consensus position.
- 3.2 P14** Where consensus cannot be reached and a fundamental objection cannot be overcome, it is important that the NSB has a procedure for dispute resolution or appeals.
- 3.2 P15** If all efforts to achieve consensus on a national position fail and where there is therefore no agreement on a national position, a position of abstention should be submitted to ISO.
- 3.2 P16** A P-member of an ISO committee should represent broad national interest.
- 3.2 P17** If an ISO member is requesting P-membership of a committee, an NMC or equivalent process should be in place to determine a national consensus position.
- 3.2 P18** **If there is very limited national interest (e.g. one or a very small number of stakeholders) in the standardization area, it is recommended that Observing O-membership should be sought. An NSB may seek Participating P-membership in the ISO activity provided that the limited level of interest represents the existing and relevant national stakeholders.**
- 3.2 P19** ISO committees and their leaders, NSBs and liaison organizations and their delegates and experts should respect the consensus positions submitted by NSBs and liaisons.

NSBs with concerns regarding the credibility of another NSB's consensus position, based on the process to develop that position, should pursue their concerns via direct bilateral dialogue with the concerned NSBs.

- 3.2 P20** NSBs should periodically assess their processes and procedures for stakeholder engagement and consensus-decision making on ISO work, and seek to continually improve them as necessary.

## ..... Guidance

To assist in achieving these principles, the following guidance may be helpful:

- 3.2 G1** Consensus is defined in the *ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1* as:  
“General agreement, characterized by the absence of sustained opposition to substantial issues by any important part of the concerned interests and by a process that involves seeking to take into account the views of all parties concerned and to reconcile any conflicting arguments. Consensus need not imply unanimity.”
- 3.2 G2** In practice, consensus has its origins in the desire to achieve the general acceptance and application of a standard within its intended sphere of influence. This entails trying to ensure that the interests of all those likely to be affected by it are taken into account and that the individual concerns are carefully and fairly balanced against the wider public interest.
- 3.2 G3** Achievement of consensus entails recognizing the wider interest and sometimes making certain compromises. Arguments for and against the existence of an ISO project should be pursued at the stage where the project proposal is considered and action is taken on it. However, once an

**ISO project has been approved, all NSBs and stakeholders involved in the process should be committed to advancing the global relevance of International Standard(s) within the agreed-upon scope, and they should not seek to hinder its further development. Where a member sustains a fundamental objection and supports it with sound arguments, these concerns will be taken seriously.**

- 3.2 G4** NSBs have an obligation to address, and make an effort to resolve, all views expressed.
- 3.2 G5** When establishing national positions on International Standards (committee drafts (CD), draft International Standards (DIS), final draft International Standards (FDIS)) etc.) it is good practice for the NSB to identify for its own records the range of stakeholders that have been involved in the national decision making process. ISO processes and voting questions at all stages (proposal, CD, DIS, FDIS) should remind NSBs that they should be conducting broad stakeholder consultations in the development of positions and comments, and ask them to verify that they are doing so.
- 3.2 G6** When a national position has been established, it is good practice for the NSB to communicate this national position to all relevant stakeholders that have been engaged in its development.
- 3.2 G7** The procedure to appeal NSB decisions should, as a first step, promote informal and open dialogue between the concerned parties to attempt to resolve conflicts via informal rather than formal means whenever possible.



- 3.2 G8** Any formal appeal process should be fair and transparent and include provisions to ensure that the decision-makers are perceived by the concerned parties as being neutral on the issue in question.
- 3.2 G9** NSBs may organize national meetings, teleconferences or Web-based discussions to assist in the development of national positions. All relevant stakeholders should have an opportunity to participate.
- 3.2 G10** Again, as under Item 3.1G4 above, NSBs new to active engagement in the ISO system may wish to seek advice and best practices from other NSBs who have had substantial experience.



### 3.3 National participation at ISO standards development meetings

This section provides principles and guidance on selecting and preparing (1) national delegation members to attend meetings of ISO technical committees (TCs), project committees (PCs) and subcommittees (SCs), and (2) national experts to attend ISO working group (WGs) meetings.

#### Principles

- 3.3 P1** National delegations and national experts are appointed by the NSB.
- 3.3 P2** The identification of NSB delegations and experts should occur within an NMC, or by equivalent means, within the NSB.
- 3.3 P3** **All relevant and interested stakeholders who are members of the NMC should be afforded fair and equitable consideration to serve as an NSB delegate or expert.**
- 3.3 P4** The NSB delegation should be able to represent all aspects of the agreed national position. This might entail having more than one delegate attend the ISO meeting.
- 3.3 P5** **All members of an NSB delegation to an ISO TC/PC/SC meeting should be expected to speak with one voice to advocate for the NSB's national position.**
- 3.3 P6** National experts to an ISO WG should be selected on the basis of their relevant technical expertise.

## ..... Guidance

To assist in achieving these principles, the following guidance may be helpful:

- 3.3 G1** National delegations should be selected from the members of the NMC and be actively engaged in the work of the NMC.
- 3.3 G2** The selection criteria may be based on a number of factors, for example technical expertise, effective communication skills in English (the meeting language by default), and active participation in the work of the NMC.
- 3.3 G3** National experts should be selected and nominated through the NMC. Though selected for their individual technical knowledge and expertise, such experts should be aware of national positions in order to minimise conflict as the project progresses. WG experts should regularly report to their NSB or NMC on the progress of work within the WG.
- 3.3 G4** It is preferable that appointed individuals from national delegations and national experts be in a position to commit the necessary time and resources.
- 3.3 G5** Continuity of participation in national delegations and as WG experts throughout the life-cycle of an ISO project should be preferred and encouraged.
- 3.3 G6** **All national delegation members or WG experts with a financial need should have fair and equitable access to, and consideration for, such funding from any source. It should not be assumed that the NSBs themselves will be able in all cases to provide such funding. Any source for such funding should have procedures established for the administration of the funding program, the application process to acquire the funding, and the criteria for approving requests for the**

**funding. These procedures should be open, transparent and available to any relevant party for the fund.**

- 3.3 G7** National delegations should select a head of the delegation. If another delegate can speak to an issue more effectively than the head of delegation, the head of delegation should seek to be recognized to speak and then request the other delegate to speak for him or her.
- 3.3 G8** Members of national delegations and WG experts should have sufficient language skills to effectively communicate in the environment of the particular ISO committee or WG.
- 3.3 G9** Preparation of national delegations and national experts before meetings should include:
- A briefing by the NMC on national positions (this may occur via a physical meeting, a teleconference or a Web-based discussion)
  - Formal or informal training on ISO rules and procedures (e.g. *ISO/IEC Directives*)
  - Access to documentation, meeting minutes and any papers that are relevant to the technical subject and meeting
- 3.3 G10** National delegations and national experts should maintain close communication, which should include a debriefing by the national delegation members or national experts to the NSB or NMC following the international meeting.
- 3.3 G11** NSBs and NMCs should very carefully consider whether they should allow one or a very small number of delegates from a single organization to represent the NSB at an ISO meeting when the organization(s) may be the only interested stakeholder within the NSB.

**3.3 G12** If new business is raised for action at the meeting that was not appropriately communicated to the committee in advance of the meeting, the national delegation should seek that such action be deferred until effective national consultations of all NSBs that are P-members can take place.

**3.3 G13** NSBs and/or their NMCs should provide their delegates and experts with guidance concerning how much negotiating flexibility they have regarding the national consensus position and comments at an ISO TC, SC or WG meeting. In addition, the NSB and/or its NMC should advise the delegates and experts as to their positions and negotiating flexibility in relation to positions and comments of other NSBs.



## 3.4 Establishment and operation of national mirror committees (NMCs)

This section provides principles and guidance to NSBs on NMCs to ISO work, for NSBs that choose to use an NMC approach.

### Principles

- 3.4 P1** Internal procedures for the establishment and operations of NMCs should exist and should be publicly available.
- 3.4 P2** For those NSBs who form NMCs, an NMC should be established as early as possible in the process to ensure that the NSB is in a position to respond to the ISO process.
- 3.4 P3** Some NSBs may already have national committees in a field where new international projects are started and the NSB should use this existing national committee in a capacity as an NMC if it is interested in serving in such a capacity and able to fulfill the requirements of such a role.
- 3.4 P4** The NSB should make every effort to identify the relevant stakeholders that should be engaged in the NMC and those stakeholders that the NSB has been engaged with early in the process, should be contacted at this stage to ensure continuity.
- 3.4 P5** The composition of the NMC should demonstrate participation of representative organizations across the relevant stakeholders with a legitimate interest in the ISO subject.
- 3.4 P6** All members of the NMC should have equal participation rights and equal access to relevant information.
- 3.4 P7** Attempts should be made to achieve balance with respect to the composition of the NMC. Procedures should exist to safeguard against dominance by any stakeholder or stakeholder category.

- 3.4 P8** Once the NMC committee has been established, the composition of the committee should be reviewed regularly and additional stakeholders may be invited to participate throughout the life-cycle of the ISO work.
- 3.4 P9** NSBs should provide suitable information, advice or training on ISO standardization to all members of the NMC.
- 3.4 P10** The NMC's formation should be approved by the NSB, for example by senior management or by a governance group made up of relevant stakeholders.
- 3.4 P11** NMCs should maintain records of their decisions.

## ..... Guidance

To assist in achieving these principles, the following guidance may be helpful:

- 3.4 G1** Relevant stakeholders to be contacted and invited to participate will depend on the subject matter of the ISO activity. Examples of how this may be approached may include enquiries, Internet searches, networks, personal approaches, advertisements, etc.
- 3.4 G2** For NSB senior management or a governance group made up of relevant stakeholders to approve the establishment of the NMC, the following information should be provided :
- Background and justification for the ISO activity
  - Scope of the proposed ISO activity
  - Proposed NMC membership
  - A clear statement for the level of participation (P or O) in the ISO activity
  - A work programme or business plan of the ISO activity
  - A commitment of sufficient resources in place in order to establish and operate the NMC



**3.4 G3** For the purposes of openness and transparency, the procedure for the establishment of an NMC should be made publicly available (e.g. through the NSB Website, presentations, experts communicating within the community, etc.)

**3.4 G4** NMC members should be encouraged to develop their knowledge of standardization operations and procedures. This could be achieved via introductory information packages, training and education sessions, mentoring programs, IT tools, etc.

**3.4 G5** The consensus development process of NSBs and NMCs should be open to all who are directly and materially affected by the standardization activity in question. Any stakeholder may contribute via public review and comment without joining the NMC if it wishes, but it is the responsibility of the NMC to develop the national consensus positions. This includes an obligation to consider input received from the public review and comment. There should be no undue financial barriers to participation. If a fee for participation is charged, then it should be reasonable and fair. A fee waiver or fee reduction option is encouraged. Where potential funding sources for participating (underrepresented) stakeholders are known, such information should be made available as appropriate.



## 3.5 Leadership of NMCs

This section provides principles and guidance for NSBs on the selection, qualifications and training of NMC Chairs and NMC Committee Managers, for NSBs that choose to use an NMC approach.

### Principles

- 3.5 P1** The selection of the chair and committee manager of a new NMC should take place as soon as possible after the establishment of the new ISO committee and decision to establish a new NMC.
- 3.5 P2** **Once the establishment of the NMC is approved, the NSB or a governance group of relevant stakeholders may assign the secretariat role for the NMC to an internal staff member or outsource the secretariat role to an external organization. Where the secretariat role for the NMC is outsourced, an agreement should be signed between the NSB and the external organization, and there should be ongoing monitoring by the NSB, to ensure good performance.**
- 3.5 P3** NMC chairs are selected on the basis of their chairing abilities, willingness and availability to be committed for the duration of a project, subject-matter knowledge and understanding of ISO. Where possible, chairs should be selected from amongst the members of the NMC.
- 3.5 P4** NMC committee managers are selected on the basis of their knowledge of ISO rules and procedures, availability of adequate resources to manage the NMC and willingness to be committed for the duration of a project.
- 3.5 P5** The NMC chair and committee manager have the primary responsibility to act in a neutral manner to facilitate the NMC's decision-making and to ensure: that all relevant stakeholders on the NMC have fair and equitable access to information, that they have an opportunity

to provide input, and that consideration of their input is given in the development of the national position.

## ..... Guidance

To assist in achieving these principles, the following guidance may be helpful:

- 3.5 G1** The selection process for NMC chairs and committee managers is a very important part in establishing an effective NMC. For this reason, steps should be taken to ensure that the selection is highly informed, e.g. by clearly placing the issue on the agenda of the first meeting.
- 3.5 G2** NMC chairs and committee managers are appointed by the NSB, in some cases on the basis of a nomination and approval process within the NMC.
- 3.5 G3** **Effective chairing abilities are the most important skills for an NMC chair. These abilities include managing the NMC's decision-making processes, effectively resolving disagreements, guiding the NMC to consensus, and managing meetings and discussions that cross stakeholder categories and perspectives. Training for NMC chairs should, inter alia, focus on the enhancement of these skills.**
- 3.5 G4** **Extensive knowledge of ISO rules and procedures are the most important skills for NMC committee managers. This includes knowledge of the *ISO/IEC Directives*, the ability to use the required IT tools and good drafting skills. Training for committee managers should, inter alia, focus on the enhancement of these skills.**

- 3.5 G5** Training for both chairs and committee managers can be provided through any number of means such as manuals, seminars, workshops, training courses, and individual advice upon request. This also includes ensuring that the NMC is well informed regarding the expected duties of chairs and committee managers.
- 3.5 G6** It may be useful for the NSB to facilitate information exchanges among chairs and committee managers across all of the NSB's NMCs, to promote the sharing of experiences and good practices. This can be done via seminars and workshops or via online tools.
- 3.5 G7** NSBs have a responsibility to ensure that chairs and committee managers are aware of their roles and responsibilities both nationally and internationally.
- 3.5 G8** NSBs should also ensure that they regularly update chairs and committee managers on any developments or changes (e.g. *ISO/IEC Directives*) that may impact the work of the NMC. Effective chairing abilities are the most important skills for an NMC chair

# Annex A

## PEG Task 2 – Input collection methodology and summary observations

To collect input for consideration to produce Section 3 of this document, the ISO Secretary-General issued a letter to all ISO full members, inviting them to submit their input on a series of questions via an online survey tool. Of the approximately 100 ISO full members that received this invitation, responses were received from 41. This was regarded as a very good survey response, and in particular, it should be noted that the responses showed a very good distribution of developed and developing countries, as well as geographic diversity.

The numbered items presented below represent the questions asked of ISO national bodies, and following each question are the PEG's summary observations on the responses received.

### 1. Initiation of new ISO work

- 1.1** When ISO embarks on a new field of standardization, and in the absence of a relevant national committee, how does your NSB assess the level of interest in, and support for, this ISO activity in your country?

#### **Summary observations:**

*A number of good practices were identified within the responses – almost all conduct some form of stakeholder engagement to assess the level of interest within their country. A few limit their consultations to an assessment by staff within their respective organizations.*

## 2. Establishment of ISO NMCs

- 2.1** Do you have an internal procedure for the establishment of NMCs for ISO activities?

**Summary observations:**

*Forty of 41 respondents have such a procedure.*

- 2.2** If yes, please provide details of the procedure.

**Summary observations:**

*A few procedures were identified within the responses. Some chose not to go into detail of the procedure but advised that a committee is established, if relevant. In a number of the responses, it is apparent that the national committee is considered if the national body is approached by an external party as opposed to a proactive approach by the national body to identify and create. Some respondents do not have any (or many) NMCs.*

- 2.3** Please advise if, and how, this procedure is made publicly available.

**Summary observations:**

*It appears that in the majority of cases, the procedures are made publicly available. Where the procedure is not publicly available, all those involved in the development of standardization appear to be provided with the details.*

## 3. NMC membership

- 3.1** How do you identify stakeholder groups and ensure balance of participation in your NMC?

- 3.2** How do you determine which stakeholders will be involved?

**Summary observations:**

*Stakeholder identification is central to the establishment of consensus positions, but there are few specific procedures surrounding how to do this activity and few procedures regarding*



*the balance of participation were provided in the responses to question 3.1. Responses to question 3.2 indicated that there are also differences among the respondents regarding the type of stakeholders that are contacted to participate.*

**3.3** Do your procedures allow for new members to join the NMC at any time?

**Summary observations:**

*Forty of the 41 responses indicated that new stakeholders may join their NMCs at any time.*

**3.4** Please describe any special resources or approaches that support the participation of persons in particular stakeholder groups in the NMC.

**Summary observations:**

*Responses on this question represented a broad spectrum of input. Some NSBs responded that they provide special support either in the form of training and orientation of delegates and experts or in the form of funding to support participation in the NMC. Other NSBs indicated that they provide no special support.*

**3.5** How do you address the composition of NMCs in cases where there is limited but strong interest in your country in the outcome of an International Standard?

**Summary observations:**

*A number of NSBs responded that they have no special procedures to address this issue. Others indicated it would be unlikely that an NMC would be formed and unlikely the NSB would take active participation in an ISO activity if the interest is so limited. Still others indicated that they would conduct further outreach to seek more interest to participate, or they would try to proceed as much as possible with the limited interest they have.*

## 4. Addressing differing ISO technical subjects in NMCs

- 4.1** Do you approach the establishment and membership of the NMC differently dependent upon the subject area and the participation level (P, O, etc.)?

### **Summary observations:**

*Fourteen respondents indicated that they handle establishment and membership of NMCs based on subject or level of participation, and 25 respondents indicated that they do not.*

- 4.2** If yes, please provide details.

### **Summary observations:**

*Some responded that the process for establishing mirror committees is always the same, but the members or stakeholder groups may be different depending on the subject. Some respondents indicated differing approaches in relation to O (observer) membership, and some indicated that, in the case of O membership, they may not form mirror committees at all.*

## 5. Decision-making in mirror committees

- 5.1** Please describe how you take decisions (e.g. by consensus, by voting, requirements to take decisions) in your mirror committees.

### **Summary observations:**

*The majority of responses indicated that decisions are taken in accordance with the consensus principle, while some NSB mirror committees have numeric voting procedures to be implemented when consensus may be in question.*



**5.2** Please describe what happens within your mirror committees if agreement cannot be reached on a decision.

***Summary observations:***

*A variety of responses were provided, including abstaining when consensus is not reached, instituting a numeric voting procedure if consensus is not reached or clear, and in some cases, referring the final decision on the NSB position to a staff person from the NSB's senior management.*

**5.3** Please describe any mechanism in place for appeals of decisions taken by mirror committees.

***Summary observations:***

*Most NSB responses indicated that their national mirror committee procedures contain provisions for handling appeals. Others indicated that they had no such procedure but that the national mirror committee would continue to discuss the item until it was resolved. Almost all responses indicated that appeals are referred to the parent group of the body that took the action being appealed. This can extend up to governance bodies of the NSB. One respondent indicated that it handles appeals as it would customer complaints under an ISO 9001 quality management system.*



## **6. Participation at ISO standards development meetings**

- 6.1** Please describe how you select and approve your national delegation members to meetings of ISO TCs, PCs and SCs, and your national experts to ISO WGs.

### ***Summary observations:***

*In almost all responses, the national mirror committee decides on the members of the national delegation or the experts from the NSB who attend ISO meetings.*

- 6.2** Please describe how you prepare your national delegation members to meetings of ISO TCs, PCs, SCs.

- 6.3** Please describe how you prepare your national experts to meetings of ISO WGs.

### ***Summary observations:***

*In response to questions 6.2 and 6.3, most NSBs responded that they provide all appropriate ISO committee or WG documentation to the delegates and/or experts and hold national meetings in advance of ISO meetings to discuss issues and determine positions and comments to be carried forward to the meeting. Some NSBs also provide specialized training programs and orientation sessions to prepare delegates and experts.*

- 6.4** Please describe any special resources or approaches that support the participation of persons in particular stakeholder groups in the international committee meetings.

### ***Summary observations:***

*In general, responses to this question were similar to the responses provided to question 3.4 above.*

## **7. Mirror committee leadership**

- 7.1** Please describe any procedure you have for the selection and appointment of mirror committee chairs and committee managers.

### ***Summary observations:***

*In general, most responses indicated that the mirror committee chairs are selected by the mirror committee membership based on considerations such as: leadership skills, consensus-building, capability and expert knowledge of the subject of the ISO committee. Generally, committee managers of mirror committees are assigned these roles by the management of the NSB, or the management of an external organization administering the mirror committee on behalf of the NSB.*

- 7.2** Please describe any procedures you have for the qualifications and responsibilities of mirror committee chairs and committee managers.

### ***Summary observations:***

*Many respondents indicated that their mirror committee procedures contain details on the qualifications and responsibilities of mirror committee chairs and committee managers.*

- 7.3** Please describe any programmes or activities you have for training or preparation of mirror committee leadership.

### ***Summary observations:***

*A number of respondents indicated that they provide orientation sessions and specialized training courses for mirror committee leaders. Some NSBs also organize regular conferences of mirror committee chairs and committee managers that provide good opportunities to network, discuss issues of common concern and share good practices.*





# Annex B

## Additional guidance from the ISO/TMB on stakeholder engagement

### About this Annex

The results of the PEG's pursuit of Task 1 included a number of papers which provide further guidance on various aspects of stakeholder engagement. These papers were based on the responses to the PEG survey of NSBs and organizations in liaison (see **Annex A**) and also draw from the experience gained through the development of ISO 26000 Social responsibility.

Below are the subjects addressed in the papers. Any questions about their contents can be directed to the TMB secretariat at [tmb@iso.org](mailto:tmb@iso.org).

Benefits of early public information on proposals for new work.....	39
Benefits of early stakeholder engagement in ISO standards development.....	41
Monitoring stakeholder engagement at working group (WG) and technical committee level by committee leadership .....	43
Identification of stakeholder categories to be engaged given the subject area.....	46
Direction from ISO and guidance for NSBs on appropriate stakeholder categories to be engaged and nominated to participate given the subject area.....	47
Providing proper attention to aspects of representation (for example, stakeholders, economic status, regions, gender, etc.) .....	49
Guidance on use of existing structural and sub-structural approaches (for example, a PC operating in PC and WG modes) .....	51
Increased national consultation networks beyond NMCs prior to or throughout the development process .....	53
Use of international stakeholder groups (including election processes within them) .....	55

A resource page on **ISO Connect** is available, together with a short e-learning course on stakeholder engagement, which presents the theory of stakeholder engagement and some guidance for how this theory can be implemented by NSBs. The content of the modules is based on the best practices and experience of ISO's members, using input that was collected from the member survey.





# Benefits of early public information on proposals for new work

## Background

In the ISO/TMB PEG Task 1 survey responses (see [Annex A](#)), a number of comments were expressed regarding the value of early public information on proposals for new work and particularly the benefits that such an approach would bring to the ISO standardization system.

## Principles and recommendations

- ▶ The ISO/TMB recognizes the value that early public information on proposals for new work will bring to the ISO system
- ▶ The engagement of stakeholders in the standardization process is an essential part of the ISO process and the earlier that stakeholders can be engaged in new work items and new fields of activity at the national level, the more effective the national consultation on the proposals for new work will be
- ▶ Early information on proposals for new work will allow public review of proposed standards. This will enable all stakeholders to learn about new proposals for standards and provide valuable feedback to national standards bodies
- ▶ Ultimately, the aim of such a system is to enable ISO and its members to publish standards that cater exactly to stakeholder needs and promote best practice where needed
- ▶ The engagement of stakeholders at the new work proposal stage will have a positive impact on the stakeholder engagement throughout the standard development process

- ▶ The ISO Central Secretariat (ISO/CS) makes available on a monthly basis a listing of all new work item proposals, new fields of activity and existing preliminary work items to the NSBs to assist the NSBs in this task. The ISO/TMB encourages its partners in the World Standards Cooperation (WSC), International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) and International Telecommunication Union (ITU), to do the same
- ▶ It is recommended that all ISO members establish a system at the national level that will enable early public information on proposals for new work ; this may take the form of a publicly available website
- ▶ It is recommended that proposals made available to the public contain as much information as possible regarding the scope, purpose of the standard and any additional information. This should allow the user to be well informed about the proposal and able to send considered feedback to the relevant NSB

NOTE : In this paper, proposals for new work includes NPs (new work item proposals), TS/Ps (new fields of activity proposals) and PWI (preliminary work items).





# Benefits of early stakeholder engagement in ISO standards development

## Background

In the ISO/TMB PEG Task 1 survey responses (see [Annex A](#)), a number of comments were expressed regarding the value of early stakeholder engagement within the ISO standards development process.

## Principles and recommendations

- ▶ The ISO/TMB recognizes the value of early stakeholder engagement in the ISO standards development process.
- ▶ An open and transparent system is a cornerstone of the ISO standards development process and it is essential therefore that engagement with stakeholders takes place as early as possible in the process. Early engagement with stakeholders creates opportunities to build relationships, understand concerns, resolve / manage issues, minimize risks and involve those with an interest in the standard being developed.
- ▶ Early engagement with stakeholders at the national level is essential in order to ensure that nationally all stakeholder interests are involved in the decision-making at various stages within the process, regarding the consultation on new work and as such that internationally we can be confident that national decision-making on projects is engaging with all relevant stakeholders.

- ▶ Early engagement with stakeholders at the international level is crucial to ensure that from the outset all relevant viewpoints are brought together at the earliest opportunity and stakeholders have an opportunity to be involved in the decision-making and development process.
- ▶ Early stakeholder engagement can prevent problems occurring later in the standardization process. Problems are far more likely to occur when people are engaged later in the process when the standard is being drafted, and objections are raised at this point.
- ▶ In principle, all relevant stakeholders should have access to and ability to participate in the standardization process.
- ▶ Members are recommended to consult all relevant stakeholders at a very early stage in the process, particularly in advance of returning the national position on the new work item proposal.
- ▶ The ISO/CS or the relevant TC are recommended to consult all relevant liaison organizations at a very early stage in the process, preferably in advance of deciding the national position and comments on a new work item proposal.

# Monitoring stakeholder engagement at the working group (WG) and technical committee level by committee leadership

## Background

In the ISO/TMB PEG Task 1 survey responses (see [Annex A](#)), a number of comments were expressed regarding both the importance of committee leadership having a clear understanding of the types of stakeholders that should be engaged in and participating in the technical committee activity and also in terms of the experts participating at the working group level. Comments expressed indicated that this understanding should extend to a stakeholder monitoring role within these areas.

Feedback received also indicated that whilst the above was considered to be very important, it was considered to be equally important that the NSBs maintained the responsibility for selecting and nominating delegates to SCs, PCs and TCs and selecting and nominating experts to WGs. In addition, whilst it was considered valuable to have a range of stakeholders participating in the TC, the national delegation principle should be upheld.

## Principles and recommendations

- ▶ Consistent with the national delegation principle that is an essential element of the ISO standardization process, NSBs (via a national committee, or equivalent) are the responsible bodies for selecting and nominating national experts to WGs and delegations to SCs and TCs.
- ▶ The ISO/TMB recognizes that it is important that ISO's WGs and technical committee structures are constituted with experts and delegates, adequately qualified and equipped for the task, broadly representative of all those stakeholder groups with a legitimate interest in the project and conscious of its potential impact.

- ▶ The ISO/TMB recognizes that it is also important for committee leadership to have an understanding of the stakeholders engaged internationally on any given standard development activity in order to ensure that there is appropriate representation of stakeholders participating in the standard development.
- ▶ NSBs should not just nominate NSB staff to the relevant WG but national experts from particular stakeholder categories.
- ▶ The stakeholder category to which experts belong must be entered when stakeholders are registered in the ISO Global Directory (see **Annex C**) (**ISO stakeholder engagement**).
- ▶ WG leadership should be aware of the stakeholders identified by the proposer on the new work item proposal and in advance of the first meeting establish which stakeholder categories the nominated experts represent.
- ▶ Where the WG leadership identify stakeholder gaps between the original stakeholders identified on the proposal and those nominated to the WG, the leadership should report this information to the parent TC (or SC) and notify the relevant ISO/CS Technical Programme Manager, with details of the stakeholder imbalance. The committee leadership of the TC (or SC) working with the ISO/CS Technical Programme Manager contacts the NSB and liaison organizations in order to request the nomination of a particular stakeholder category to the relevant area.
- ▶ It is imperative that the committee leadership and the ISO/CS contact the relevant NSB and liaison organization if a potential gap is identified and does not approach any individual from a particular stakeholder category in isolation – this shall always take place via the NSB or liaison organization.

- ▶ Quotas shall not be used, because it's not possible to make general rules for stakeholder balance, due to diversity of technical sectors.
- ▶ It is recommended that for SC, PC and TC meetings that NSBs nominate a delegation comprising of a range of stakeholder categories.
- ▶ It is recommended that when nominating a delegation to a meeting of a SC, PC or TC, details of the stakeholder categories of those delegates are included and these are monitored by the leadership of those technical structures.
- ▶ While it may be useful to monitor stakeholder engagement on TC/SC delegations, it is important to note that these are national delegations which are mandated to represent a national position at TC/SC meetings, not individual stakeholder positions.



# Identification of stakeholder categories to be engaged given the subject area


## Background

In the ISO/TMB PEG Task 1 survey responses (see [Annex A](#)), a number of comments were expressed regarding the value of identifying the stakeholders that should be engaged in the standards development activities early on in the process. Such an approach would enable NSBs to have a clear understanding, particularly on new fields of activity, of the type of stakeholders that should be engaged at a national level and therefore it would have significant benefits to the ISO standardization system as a whole.

## Principles and recommendations

- ▶ To identify the range of stakeholders that should be engaged in the standardization activity from those stakeholder categories that will have an interest in the subject area being standardized.
- ▶ The range, type and number of stakeholder categories that should be engaged will be dependent on the subject area being standardized, but the technical committees should, as a minimum, review those stakeholders defined by the ISO/TMB (see [Annex C](#)) and determine whether those stakeholders will have an interest in the subject area being standardized.
- ▶ It is recommended that in the initial identification of stakeholders, technical committees do not limit the stakeholder categories but attempt to identify all stakeholders that will have an interest (however seemingly marginal) in the activities of the technical committee.
- ▶ It is recommended that the stakeholder identification is regularly reviewed to ensure that all relevant stakeholders are identified. It is good practice for a technical committee to have regular workshops/brainstorming of the stakeholders in the technical committees to ensure that all possible stakeholders have been identified and engaged in the process.





## Direction from ISO and guidance for NSBs on appropriate stakeholder categories to be engaged and nominated to participate given the subject area

### Background

In the ISO/TMB PEG Task 1 survey responses (see [Annex A](#)), there were a number of positive comments with regard to the value of having direction from ISO on appropriate stakeholder categories to be engaged and nominated to participate in the standards development process. Some NSBs felt that, whilst stakeholder engagement is key in any standards development activity, such a direction (and pressure from the technical structure itself) encouraged the NSB to develop a strong engagement strategy and to constantly seek such stakeholders and that such a direction in fact assisted the NSBs in this engagement exercise.

### Principles and recommendations

- ▶ ISO/TMB recognizes that NSBs and liaison organizations have various effective mechanisms in place to engage stakeholders in the standards development process.
- ▶ ISO/TMB recognizes that in some cases, particularly where there is significant public interest (e.g. new fields of activity in areas traditionally not developed by ISO) in the standard under development, that it may be valuable to give direction and guidance to NSBs on the stakeholders that should be both engaged in and nominated to the working group developing the Standard.

- ▶ In determining if a subject area requires enhanced stakeholder engagement, based on the proposers' original identified stakeholders and the feedback from members on those stakeholders identified, ISO/TMB may determine which stakeholder categories need to be engaged in the standards development activities and provide direction to ISO members.
- ▶ ISO/TMB will encourage the NSBs to follow any direction it provides and to constitute the national committee (or equivalent) with those stakeholders and to nominate those stakeholders to participate in the standards development process.
- ▶ It is proposed that guidance for NSBs on appropriate stakeholder categories to be engaged and nominated to participate use the definitions established by ISO/TMB (see [Annex C](#)).
- ▶ It is proposed that NSBs do not just nominate NSB staff to the relevant WG but competent national experts from particular stakeholder categories.
- ▶ ISO/TMB also recognizes that there may be numerous reasons why not all of the stakeholders identified would necessarily be engaged at the national level. What is important is that those stakeholders have been given the opportunity to participate even if they choose not to do so.
- ▶ ISO/TMB encourages NSBs to keep records of their engagement initiatives and pursuit of the identified stakeholders provided by ISO/TMB.

## Providing proper attention to aspects of representation (for example, stakeholders, economic status, regions, gender, etc.)

### Background

In the ISO/TMB PEG Task 1 survey responses (see [Annex A](#)), a number of comments expressed the need for attention and commitment by the ISO committee to issues of representation and balance among ISO NSBs and liaisons, stakeholder categories, national economic status, geographic diversity, gender and other considerations. It is argued that, especially in subjects requiring broader public interest engagement, including subjects of wider societal interest, proper representation and balance will lead to a more credible ISO standards development process and enhanced credibility in the resulting ISO standards. These concerns on representation and balance relate not only to the delegates and experts involved, but also to the selection of ISO committee leaders.

### Principles and recommendations

- ▶ ISO committees addressing subjects requiring broader public interest engagement, including subjects of wider societal interest, shall determine the appropriate diversity necessary in their participation and leadership that will lead to credible standards development efforts and resulting deliverables. These elements of diversity should be identified as early as possible in the ISO committee or at the outset of a new project.
- ▶ It should not be assumed that the same diversity aspects will apply to any or all ISO committees addressing subjects requiring broader public interest engagement, including subjects of wider societal interest. For example, issues such as national economic status, geographic diversity or gender may be highly relevant in some ISO committees and subject areas more so than in others. Furthermore,

some stakeholder categories may be more relevant in some ISO committees and subject areas than in others.

- ▶ While appropriate representation of all stakeholders is a desirable goal and should be encouraged in these ISO activities, it is very difficult to achieve. Despite all good faith efforts to achieve balance, not all parties can be compelled to become involved. What is important is that the ISO committee, and its leaders and members are committed to working to achieve the best possible representation.
- ▶ Lack of perfect balance should not be considered a barrier to proceeding with standards development nor should it lead to criticism of the ISO standards development process or the resulting deliverables. What is important is that all stakeholder interests are appropriately taken into account in determining consensus.



# Guidance on use of existing structural and sub-structural approaches (e.g. a Project Committee [PC] operating in PC and Working Group [WG] modes)

## Background

In the development of ISO 26000, there was some perception that the ISO Working Group on Social Responsibility (WGSR) had a unique and different structural approach to those that normally develop ISO standards. In fact, the ISO/TMB purposefully formed this structure as an ISO working group (WG) for the following reasons:

- ▶ To allow the effort to develop ISO 26000 to be conducted to the degree possible consistent with the ISO/IEC Directives and traditional ISO structures
- ▶ To allow subject matter experts to participate freely as individual technical experts in the WG in the drafting of ISO 26000 consistent with **Clause 1.12.1 of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1** where it states:

*The experts act in a personal capacity and not as the official representative of the P-member or A-liaison organization by which they have been appointed with the exception of those appointed by C-liaison organizations.*

The ISO/TMB recognized at the time that establishing this activity as a WG rather than as a technical committee (TC) was responsive to concerns expressed that this more open engagement of the subject matter experts was necessary for effective stakeholder engagement and credibility in the SR subject area. At the time of the formation of the WGSR, the ISO/TMB had not yet established the option of Project Committees (PCs).

In its review of the ISO/TMB PEG Task 1 survey responses (see **Annex A**), the PEG recognized the need to provide some guidance on the applicability and responsiveness of existing and traditional ISO committee structures to address subjects requiring broader public interest engagement, including subjects of wide societal interest.

## Principles and recommendations

- ▶ The ISO/TMB recognizes and supports the "double-level" consensus mechanism in ISO standards development: first among subject matter experts at the WG standards drafting level and then among ISO NSBs at the committee draft (CD), draft international standard (DIS) and final draft international standard (FDIS) voting levels.
- ▶ Existing ISO committee structures are applicable and responsive to the need for effective stakeholder engagement for experts to be directly engaged in the drafting of ISO standards as follows:
  - ISO TCs and SCs establish WGs and/or Project teams for the purpose of drafting ISO standards within the scope of the TC or SC with participation modeled as described above in Subclause 1.12.1 of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1.
  - ISO PCs are expected to conduct the drafting of their standards in accordance with Clauses 1.12.1 and 2.4 of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1 which provides the same procedures used by TCs and SCs for the preparation and drafting of their standards. Therefore, like TCs and SCs, ISO PCs may also establish WGs and/or Project Teams for the drafting of standards.
- ▶ Therefore, these structures support an effective combination of stakeholder engagement of experts acting in a personal expert capacity for drafting standards in WGs, with NSB-based plenaries of the TC, SC or PC for formal decision-making.
- ▶ The ISO standards development system extends to the engagement of all relevant stakeholders by ISO NSBs at the national level and by external liaisons at the organizational level, in support of their positions, who, through ISO processes can comment and participate in ISO standards development.

# Increased national consultation networks beyond National Mirror Committees (NMC) prior to or throughout the development process

## Background

The WTO Committee on Technical Barriers to trade has established principles for the development of international standards that should be observed by NSBs when developing international standards. One of these principles relates to the openness and transparency of the system and in particular that at the draft international stage, all stakeholders at a national level should have access to and ability to comment on the draft standards.

In addition to recognizing the above, in the Process Evaluation Group (PEG) Task 1 survey responses (see [Annex A](#)), it was identified that a number of NSBs established networks beyond their national mirror committee (NMC) for input into the standardization development activity prior to the draft international stage. It was also highlighted that it may be valuable in future in some subject areas for networking to take place with stakeholder forums at the national level via the NSB.

The value of strengthening the NMCs and national delegations in the international context is of significant importance to the ISO Standards development activities. The NMC, the international input and the resulting standard development should be strengthened if all stakeholders, including traditionally 'underrepresented stakeholders' take an active part in the NMC. Such national stakeholders will be benefited in the international environment by exchanging views with international colleagues.

## Principles and recommendations

- ▶ Recognizing the importance of the national delegation principle, it is recommended that at a national level, stakeholders that cannot participate in the NMC are still engaged in the process via the relevant stakeholder groups represented on the NMC. This will ensure that the NMC has an extended stakeholder engagement process and as many stakeholders as possible can be engaged in the process of the standard development.
- ▶ It is recommended that NSBs utilize national networks for consultation and discussion during the standard development activities and support these where possible at the national level in order to strengthen the input at the NMC level.
- ▶ It is recommended that in certain subject areas requiring enhanced stakeholder engagement, that an informal network of NSB-NSB stakeholder category forums be established in order to have dialogue with other NSBs on key areas of importance and in advance of meetings.





# Use of international stakeholder groups (including election processes within them)

## Background

Throughout the development of ISO 26000, informal meetings would occur among experts in each stakeholder category at the international meetings of the ISO Working Group on Social Responsibility (WGSR). These international stakeholder group meetings were not considered formal sub-structures within the operations of the ISO WGSR, and they took place, usually in the early morning or evening on the margins of the formal sessions of the ISO WGSR. Purposes of these meetings included:

- ▶ Networking among experts within each stakeholder category
- ▶ Discussion and sharing of viewpoints on issues within the development of ISO 26000
- ▶ Determination of stakeholder category consensus on issues within the development of ISO 26000
- ▶ Selection of stakeholder category representatives by the experts from that category to participate and represent the stakeholder category in formal ISO WGSR structures such as the Chairman's advisory group (CAG) and the integrated drafting task force (IDTF)



On many occasions within the formal ISO WGSR structures and working sessions, the WGSR leaders would call upon representatives of each international stakeholder group to comment on the perspective of these groups on issues within the development of ISO 26000.

In the ISO/TMB PEG Task 1 survey responses (see [Annex A](#)), a number of ISO WGSR experts commented on the benefits of these international stakeholder groups and the possible applicability of supporting this approach in other ISO activities for subjects requiring broader public interest engagement, including subjects of wider societal interest.

## Principles and recommendations

- ▶ The ISO/TMB recognizes some benefits to experts from stakeholder categories organizing meetings within their categories in conjunction with ISO committee meetings as described above.
- ▶ If international stakeholder groups decide to organize and meet in conjunction with a specific ISO activity, the organization of these meetings should remain informal and external to the formal ISO structures. Organizational and operational details of these groups should be determined by the groups themselves and not by their related ISO committee. These groups should be open to all officially named delegates and experts to the ISO committee from NSBs or liaison organizations.
- ▶ Given their informal and external nature, ISO committee leaders and hosts of ISO meetings should not be expected or required to organize these meetings or provide time and meeting space and support services for them. However, ISO committee leaders and hosts may voluntarily choose to do so.
- ▶ If an ISO committee decides to compose a subgroup seeking balance to the degree possible among the stakeholder categories, the ISO committee may choose to rely on these informal international stakeholder groups to select their category representatives.

The selection/election process for the leaders or representatives of the informal international stakeholder groups will be determined within and by consensus among the members of the groups.

- ▶ ISO committee leaders may seek to have representatives of the informal international stakeholder groups express category consensus viewpoints in the formal ISO standards development sessions. However, this should not prevent or limit the ability or effectiveness of individual experts to have fair and appropriate consideration of their input as provided by the ISO Directives. Furthermore, individual experts are not obligated to advocate for any positions developed within the informal international stakeholder groups.
- ▶ ISO committees and their leaders should take care and make efforts to ensure that the existence and discussions of these informal stakeholder groups do not result in polarized stakeholder category positions that impede the achievement of consensus within the ISO committee across all experts and stakeholder categories.



# Annex C

## Categories for the classification of experts nominated to working groups

ISO's members are supposed to engage all relevant categories of stakeholders (see table below) to build their national positions. Working group (WG) convenors are also responsible for ensuring a balance of interest and representation of all relevant stakeholder categories in their WGs, and must issue a new call for experts in case of imbalance (see the **ISO Supplement, Subclause 1.12.2**).

More information is also available on ISO Connect: <https://connect.iso.org/x/x4CLC>

Category	Title	Typically including:
A	Industry and commerce	Manufacturers; producers; designers; service industries; distribution, warehousing and transport undertakings; retailers; insurers; banks and financial institutions; business and trade associations
B	Government	International and regional treaty organizations and agencies; national government and local government departments and agencies, and all bodies that have a legally recognized regulatory function
C	Consumers	National, regional and international consumer representation bodies, independent of any organization that would fall into the <i>industry and commerce</i> category, or individual experts engaged from a consumer perspective

Category	Title	Typically including :
D	Labour	International, regional, national and local trade unions and federations of trade unions and similar bodies the main purpose of which is to promote or safeguard the collective interests of employees in respect of their relationship with their employers. This does not include professional associations <sup>1)</sup> .
E	Academic and research bodies	Universities and other higher educational bodies or professional educators associated with them ; professional associations <sup>1)</sup> ; research institutions
F	Standards application	Testing, certification and accreditation bodies ; organizations primarily devoted to promoting or assessing the use of standards <sup>2)</sup>
G	Non-governmental organization (NGO)	Organizations that usually operate on a charitable, not-for-profit or non-profit distributing basis and that have a public interest objective related to social or environmental concerns. This category does not include political parties or other bodies whose main purpose is to achieve representation in government or governmental bodies.
<p>Notes</p> <p>1) Professional associations are regarded as: associations of individuals practicing, or being closely associated with the practice of, specific professional skills or sets of closely related skills; and having a purpose, at least in part, to advance the development of those skills and the understanding of the arts, sciences and technologies to which they relate.</p> <p>2) <i>Accreditation</i> refers to the accreditation of testing and certification bodies.</p>		





# About **ISO**

ISO (International Organization for Standardization) is an independent, non-governmental international organization with a membership of 164\* national standards bodies. Through its members, it brings together experts to share knowledge and develop voluntary, consensus-based, market-relevant International Standards that support innovation and provide solutions to global challenges.

ISO has published more than 22500\* International Standards and related documents covering almost every industry, from technology to food safety, to agriculture and healthcare.

For more information, please visit [www.iso.org](http://www.iso.org).

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