ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN STANDARDISATION

1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this Guide is to describe the operational roles and responsibilities of all participants in the standardisation process used by Standards Australia.

It is aimed at those who are actively involved in the process of standardisation to allow an understanding of the interlocking responsibilities amongst participants.

2 INTRODUCTION

Within the standardisation process, individuals and organisations have well defined roles and responsibilities. These have been developed and refined over many years to ensure the objectives of standardisation are met and to maintain the high reputation that the Australian Standards have in the community.

In order to meet stakeholder requests, Standards Australia has evolved a number of different options to develop new projects. These options are known as the Standards Development Pathways.

3 STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT PATHWAYS

Standards Australia's Standards Development Pathways describe the allocation of responsibility and resourcing across the common Standards development process. Standards Australia directs its resources to the core function of Standards development through prioritised support of the pathways.

Stakeholders wishing to propose a Standards development project to Standards Australia are encouraged to discuss the pathway options with a National Sector Manager and select the most appropriate pathway for their project.

> *NOTE: More details of the Standards Development Pathways are provided in SG-001 – Preparation of Standards.*

4 MANAGEMENT OF THE STANDARDISATION PROCESS

The governance of the standardisation process and the role of Standards Australia are covered in detail in *SG-005 – Technical Governance of the Standards Development Process*. The following is a summary as it relates to those involved in preparing Standards.

"The Accreditation Board for Standards Development Organisations (ABSDO) operates to encourage and accredit Standards Development Organisations (SDO) in Australia to produce internationally aligned Australian Standards. Standards Australia is accredited by ABSDO and operates in accordance with the rules for standardisation laid down by ABSDO. Further information can be obtained on the ABSDO website at http://www.absdo.org.au"

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4.1 Standards Development Committee (SDC)

The Standards Development Committee (SDC) is responsible for the governance of Standards development within Standards Australia. Its roles include:

- Assisting the Standards Australia Board in fulfilling Standards Australia's responsibilities as Australia's peak National Standards Body;
- Overseeing Standards Australia's activities as a developer of Australian Standards and related documents;
- Providing process governance and ensuring Standards Australia's compliance with appropriate processes for the development of Australian Standards;
- Determining Standards Australia's mandate and priorities for the development of Australian Standards and related documents;
- Ensuring appropriate process approval[1] prior to the publication of Australian Standards developed by Standards Australia; and
- Assisting with dispute resolution escalated from the Production Management Group (PMG) in accordance with agreed policies and procedures.

4.2 Production Management Group (PMG)

The PMG is an internal committee of Standards Australia whose main responsibility is to provide management oversight of the development of Australian Standards and related documents. It is basically an operational committee that functions under the authority of the SDC.

The main roles of PMG are:

- Ensuring that the project outcomes are in the best interests of Standards Australia and the wider community;
- Approving the formation, disbanding and changes to the Terms of Reference and constitution of Technical Committees;
- Monitoring the performance of Technical Committees;
- Approving new projects and the agreed pathway;
- Allocating resources and priorities for Standards development and related projects;
- Assisting with dispute resolution in accordance with agreed policies and staged dispute resolution procedures;
- Evaluating and approving escalated major project variations to original timeframe, scope, budget and schedule; and
- Ensuring the proper application of Standards Australia's policies and processes for Standards development.

[1] 'Process Approval' applies to the process by which the Standard has been developed, i.e. compliance with the rules and policies of Standards Australia. Technical content has been approved by the committee developing the Standard.

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5 COMMITTEES

Technical Committees (also known as Main Committees) are the foundation of the standardisation process. These consist of individuals who are nominated by organisations that represent the views and notions of large groups of affected parties. Each committee has specific Terms of Reference prescribing the subject areas and related outcomes that are the responsibility of the committee.

Full details of the formation and structure of committees can be found in *SG-002 – Structure and Operation of Standardisation Committees*. The following is a brief summary of a committee's role and responsibilities.

Within their Terms of Reference, Technical Committees are responsible for:

- Preparing the required Standard;
- Providing overall direction for the project, including setting and agreeing objectives, approaches and outcomes;
- Reviewing the existing Standards;
- Contributing technical expertise to international standardisation activities;
- Appointing a drafting leader, and where appropriate, a drafting team;
- Providing assistance and advice to the PM;
- Identifying issues and risks that impact the project and communicating these to the PM;
- Communicating critical decisions, documents and deliverables from the project to the PM;
- Working towards resolving issues and where these cannot be resolved, recommending a possible solution to Standards Australia;

  NOTE: The PM can supply methodologies for conflict resolution. Where the committee cannot resolve issues during drafting (e.g. text changes are not sufficient) the committee may recommend to PMG that the project be terminated or that a handbook or other lower consensus document be published. Where issues cannot be resolved at the ballot stage, the resolution of negative votes (i.e. determination that consensus has been achieved) is escalated to SDC.

- Evaluating and recommending to Standards Australia variations to the original scope, timeline, benefits and budget; and
- Making a recommendation to Standards Australia to cancel or suspend a project, where appropriate.

6 COMMITTEE MEMBERS

While Technical Committees as a whole have defined responsibilities and are made up of representatives of Nominating Organisations, committees are made up of individuals, and it is these individuals who are essential to the successful completion of standardisation projects.

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6.1 Committee member responsibilities

The responsibilities of all committee members, irrespective of the development pathway used are:

- Committing the resources for drafting, reviewing and discussing projects within the agreed timeframes;
- Attending meetings whenever possible. If a committee member is unable to attend a meeting, they must send a delegate to represent them;
- Participating fully in all committee work and, based on the member's knowledge and experience in the subject, provide technical input into the Standard being prepared;
- Being impartial and broadly representing national interests and priorities;
- Following international and Standards Australia's principles of transparency and consensus, and actively contribute to reaching committee consensus;
- Pursuing the objectives of the member's Nominating Organisation and the area of expertise represented;
- Working towards alignment with existing International Standards wherever practical and relevant;
- Fully and impartially considering public comment on drafts and providing meaningful reasons for the non-acceptance of proposed changes;
- Voting at the ballot stage and if the vote is negative, clearly presenting the technical justification;
- Tracking and monitoring project progress;
- Raising project issues and risks that need to be recorded and resolved, and assisting with the resolution of these;
- Working within the polices outlined in this and other Standardisation Guides;
- Ensuring that relevant interests in the subject matter, not readily apparent, be made known to the committee i.e. declare conflicts of interest; and
- Complying with Standards Australia's *Code of Conduct for Committee Members*.

NOTE: These responsibilities also apply to members of subcommittees and working groups.

6.2 Relationship with the member's Nominating Organisation

A committee member who represents a Nominating Organisation has the responsibility of:

- Consulting with their Nominating Organisation on a regular basis to ensure that the viewpoint a member expresses is the viewpoint of the organisation as a whole. This is particularly important where there are major differences amongst committee members or where the member is considering a negative vote;
- Clearly and effectively presenting the views of their Nominating Organisation and its members;
- Using the benefits of membership for the good of the Nominating Organisation and the area of interest represented (not just the member's employer);

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- Following the technical meetings and providing the Nominating Organisation with a brief report of the outcome of the meeting(s); and
- If attendance at meetings is not possible, contacting the Nominating Organisation so that a delegate can be arranged.

6.3 Drafting Leader

At the start of a project, the committee will normally appoint a Drafting Leader (DL). The DL can be a member of the committee or an external documentation specialist. The primary role of the DL is to develop and author the document at all stages of its development (i.e. committee draft, public comment draft, ballot draft and final approved Standard). While it may be desirable for the DL to have technical expertise in the subject matter, it is not essential (the responsibility for technical content is the responsibility of the committee as a whole). The key requirement for the DL is to have good documentation and authoring skills.

The responsibilities of the DL are:

- Developing and authoring technical and non-technical draft content, including identification of graphics and illustrations if required;
- Consulting with the Project Manager and the Chairperson to develop the drafting schedule;
- Managing the drafting process to ensure it meets the drafting and project schedules;
- Attending committee meetings discussing the draft and, where appropriate, acting as a review leader when the draft is being considered;
- Circulating the requested / scheduled draft to the committee (via the PM) when it is in acceptable format and as complete as practicable;
- Identifying issues and risks that may affect the preparation of a document, and in conjunction with the committee and the PM, managing and resolving these;
- Identifying issues in the text of the document that may result in the document being misleading, inconsistent, incomplete, or difficult to use;
- Providing advice to the committee on the resolution of issues arising;

  NOTE: Types of issues that can be raised include whether one clause is in conflict with another; if a test method requires clarification; if a section needs restructuring to make it flow better, etc.

- Incorporating comments both from the committee members and the public;
- Ensuring a consistency of style and resolution of conflicting content when incorporating text from different sources (e.g. from other members of the committee);
- Negotiating with Standards Australia or an external provider for the preparation of necessary graphics and illustrations or for the provision of photographs;
- Providing Standards Australia a completed and in format copy of the draft for public comment or for publishing as a final Standard; and
- Addressing any feedback provided by Standards Australia (e.g. formatting or editorial issues).

If a formal Drafting Team is to be established then the DL has the following additional responsibilities:

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- Establishing a Drafting Team in consultation with the committee and the PM;
- Leading and guiding this Drafting Team;
- Arranging and administering meetings (face-to-face or electronic) to develop the draft;
- Collating and incorporating input from team members; and
- Preparing and circulating a new draft for further discussion by the team and/or committee.

6.4 Drafting Team

While small Standards or minor revisions of an existing Standard may only need the DL, for large or complex Standards it is sometimes necessary to appoint a Drafting Team (working group) to develop the text of the Standard. This allows the full committee to concentrate on other projects or activities. A Drafting Team generally comprises of members of the main committee and each member brings to the team their expertise in a particular area of the subject under consideration. While the Drafting Team may develop the document, the responsibility for the technical content always remains with the main committee.

Responsibilities of Drafting Team members include:

- Assisting in the development and authoring of content;
- Providing appropriate technical knowledge and expertise when requested by the committee;
- Attending meetings of the Drafting Team;
- Providing content and comment in a timely manner and ensuring the drafting process meets the drafting and project schedules;
- Actively working towards reaching consensus within the Drafting Team;
- Responsible for identifying technical issues pertaining to the development of the draft content and risks that may impact the project - including identification of possible resolution options;
- Identifying issues and risks that may affect the preparation of the document or issues in the text of the document that may result in the document being misleading, inconsistent, incomplete or difficult to use; and
- Providing advice to the committee (in conjunction with the DL) on the resolution of issues arising.

6.5 The need for consensus

The International Standards Organisation (ISO) definition of a consensus is:

> *General agreement, which is characterised 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.*
>
> *NOTE: Consensus need not imply unanimity.*

In constituting a committee, Standards Australia endeavours to obtain representatives from all significant sectors of interest concerned with the particular project. Those representatives will often come to the table having differences of opinion as to the nature and the level of the requirements that are to go into

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a particular Standard. Resolution of the views of these competing interests, via an open and structured process, forms the basis of consensus standardisation.

When an agreement cannot be reached on a matter, the Chairperson must ensure that key points of difference are summed up and proposed action(s) to be taken are noted to reach a resolution.

If a matter of major significance is the subject of disagreement and it is clear that the views are irreconcilable, advice may need to be taken from outside the committee. In such cases, the matter may need to be discussed with the senior management in Standards Australia or referred to the Production Management Group (PMG) or the Standards Development Committee (SDC) for consideration. It should also be noted that there are occasionally situations where there is no national consensus on a particular subject. If that is the case, and it is not possible to develop a Standard on the subject, other options may be worth considering as set out in *SG-003 – Standards and Other Publications*.

6.6 Statements to the Public

It is important that a committee member, particularly a Chairperson, does not make public statements on behalf of their committee or Standards Australia until the matter has been discussed and agreed with their committee and the relevant PM. All statements made to the press or other media are to be pre-agreed with Standards Australia's senior management and the Media and Communications department.

6.7 Obligations

A committee member is expected to contribute to mutually acceptable outcomes, and to not criticise the committee's work or findings outside the committee. Disagreements or differences of opinion are to be mediated and resolved within the committee process, and not escalated to the public arena or media.

Once a Standard has been published, committee members and the interests they represent are expected to encourage the use of the Standard.

7 NOMINATING ORGANISATIONS

7.1 The role of the Nominating Organisations

Technical Committees that are responsible for writing Standards must be composed of individuals who are independent of self-interest or influencing the content of a Standard for their own or their employers', advantage. Interests around the committee table must be concerned with the following broader sector or national views:

- Benefit to Australia;
- Health, safety and welfare of users and consumers;
- The community;
- The environment;
- Industry best practice;
- New and emerging technologies; and
- Fitness for purpose.

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To achieve these objectives, committees are composed of representatives of organisations that represent the views of a large group with a common interest. These organisations are referred to as Nominating Organisations since they nominate their representatives to the committee, and a committee member is responsible to the organisation that nominated them.

Further information on the relationships of Nominating Organisations to Technical Committees can be found in *SG-002 – Structure and Operation of Standardisation Committees*.

7.2 Responsibilities of the Nominating Organisations

It is expected that a Nominating Organisation is:

- Arranging for continuous representation of the organisation's interests on the relevant committees;
- Informing Standards Australia of any change in representation;
- Ensuring that the organisation's representative is:
  - Familiar with the relevant technical matters;
  - Able to effectively represent the views of the organisation (e.g. able to make decisions at meetings without referring all matters back to the Nominating Organisation); and
  - Able to competently and actively participate in committee meetings and contribute to the development of Standards.
- Briefing its representatives so that the collective view of the Nominating Organisation can be presented to the relevant committees;
- Requiring that its representatives brief the Nominating Organisation on relevant issues arising from committee meetings;
- Arranging for a delegate to attend if its representative is unable to attend a committee meeting, and informing Standards Australia of the substitution in advance of the meeting;
- Encouraging the use of Standards that it has helped prepare; and
- Complying with Standards Australia's *Code of Conduct for Nominating Organisations*.

NOTE: When it becomes evident that a representative is not acting in the interest of their Nominating Organisation, Standards Australia will defer the issue back to the Nominating Organisation for resolution.

8 CHAIRPERSONS

8.1 Leadership role

The Chairperson and the Project Manager (PM) form the leadership team that guides a committee through the process of developing Australian Standards and joint Australian/New Zealand Standards. As Standards are produced by cooperative effort and round-table discussions, the Chairperson and the PM have a key role in ensuring that such Standards represent the views of all concerned to the maximum extent possible.

One of the most important functions of a committee leadership team is to ensure that when preparing Standards, the standardisation process is strictly adhered to.

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8.2 Responsibilities

The principal tasks of a committee's Chairperson are facilitating collaborative discussion, managing the conduct of committee meetings and providing a leadership role to ensure the required commitment is achieved and the objectives and benefits defined in the project proposal are delivered. Therefore, the responsibilities of a Chairperson include:

- Understanding the principles of the standardisation process, including the policies of Standards Australia relating to transparency and consensus (as explained in the Standardisation Guides);
- Developing an understanding of the committee objectives and meeting dynamics;
- In conjunction with the PM, ensuring compliance with the scope and objectives defined in the proposal and the Project Management Plan (PMP);
- In consultation with the committee and the PM, recommending variations to the original project scope, time, benefits or budget;
- Encouraging the committee members to effectively prepare for committee meetings to allow a decisive and efficient work flow and meeting of targets and priorities;
- Facilitating discussions and mediating disagreements between members to avoid delays in the Standards development process;
- Maintaining impartiality at all times to ensure that the opinions of all stakeholders are heard;
- Focusing the discussion to the point under consideration to ensure that the agenda can be completed in a timely manner;
- Summarising the consensus view for noting and action when a consensus of opinion has been reached;
- Ensuring that once a consensus on a matter has been reached, the matter is not re-opened for further discussion, unless it is critical;
- When an agreement cannot be reached on a matter, the Chairperson must ensure that key points of difference are summed up and proposed action(s) to be taken are noted to reach a resolution;
- With regards to the detailed drafting of Standards, avoid focusing discussions on editorial and purely drafting points. This is because the detailed drafting is the responsibility of the Drafting Leader or the drafting team; questions regarding the style and format are addressed by the PM;
- Facilitating the resolution of any negative votes resulting from the committee ballot; and
- Ensuring that the committee gives full consideration to the adoption of an existing International Standard if it parallels the scope of the draft being prepared.

NOTE: The PM will assist the Chairperson to achieve the agreed outcomes.

8.3 Declaration of Interests by the Chairperson

A Chairperson has a dual role to represent the interests of their nominating body as well as to act as a neutral facilitator for committee discussions. It is therefore important that the Chairperson declare their interests along with the rest of the committee members.

The Chairperson must also make it clear when they are putting forward the views of their nominating body as opposed to their normal role of speaking from a position of neutrality as the committee Chair.

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When necessary, a Chairperson may need to stand down from chairing discussions on subjects where there could be a perceived conflict of interest. This could be necessary in situations where perceptions could substantially detract from the committee's conclusions. In such circumstances, the PM, or if agreed by the committee, another committee member, may chair that part of the meeting.

9 PROJECT MANAGERS

9.1 General

All Technical Committees have a PM who works with the Committee Chairperson to assist the committee to meet its agreed outcomes.

The general responsibilities of a PM, irrespective of the pathway, are to plan, execute and manage all committee / project activities in accordance with the agreed time frame, quality, scope and budget. This involves:

- Acting as the point of contact for committee / project administration;
- Ensuring that a balanced committee exists at project commencement and throughout the life of the project;
- Facilitating the 'Kick-Off' meeting;
- In conjunction with the committee, developing and maintaining the PMP;
- In conjunction with the Chairperson, ensuring compliance with the scope and objectives agreed in the project proposal and the PMP;
- Creating a Project Schedule and managing progress against the forecasted schedule;
- Identifying and managing major issues and risks that impact the project in conjunction with the Chairperson, and if appropriate, Nominating Organisations. Where appropriate, resolving issues and risks in consultation with the Chairperson and Standards Australia;
- Managing project inter-dependencies including direct dependencies between project program or work activities that are being undertaken;
- Administration of the committee including:
    - Organising meetings (e.g. notices of meetings, agendas, booking meeting rooms);
    - Ensuring all documentation is available for the meeting;
    - Ensuring that meeting minutes are prepared;
    - Distributing documents and drafts; and
    - Maintaining current details of members and their organisations.
- Assisting the DL to meet their responsibilities;
- Receiving and collating public comments and distributing them to the committee;
- Arranging for public comment to be reviewed and recording resolution of comments;
- Maintaining a secure repository for project documents;

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- Facilitating audits of documents and standardisation processes; and
- Providing monthly status reports to both the Standards Australia Project Office and project stakeholders to ensure that the stakeholders and the interested parties are informed of project progress, issues and risks.

The PM responsible for a Technical Committee will attend each meeting of the Main Committee but may not attend all meetings of Sub Committees and Working Groups.

Depending upon which pathway is used to develop the Standard there are additional responsibilities for the PM and these are outlined below.

9.2 Standards Australia Resourced and Externally Funded pathways

For committees and projects operating under these pathways, the PM would normally be a Standards Australia staff member (or a Standards New Zealand staff member in the case of some joint committees).

In addition to the general responsibilities mentioned above, the Standards Australia staff member will also be responsible to the committee for:

- Maintaining the Standards Hub Committee Workspace;
- Providing a final determination on the style and formatting of the Standard;
- Arranging publication of the Public Comment Draft;
- Conducting the committee ballot;
- Arranging publication of the final Standard;
- Providing guidance on Standards Australia's policies and procedures;
- Collating data from committee meetings, relevant overseas Standards and other sources as necessary;
- Advising on questions relating to standardisation policies. The PM is expected to have access to the latest national and international developments in standardisation; and
- Where necessary, coordinating with other committees or Standards bodies.

9.3 Committee Driven and Bureau pathways

Under these pathways, there are two PMs that are involved in the committee and its project(s):

- The External Project Manager (EPM), who is appointed and managed by the committee / Bureau; and
- The Shadow Project Manager (SHPM) who is a Standards Australia staff member.

External Project Manager (EPM)

In addition to the functions listed in 9.1, the EPM, supported by the sponsoring organisation(s), has additional responsibilities for:

- Maintaining committee member lists, including contact details;

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- Maintaining the Standards Hub Committee Workspace (Bureau pathway);
- Conducting the committee ballot;
- Maintaining a secure repository for project / committee documents;
- Facilitating audits of documents and processes;
- Liaising on a regular basis with the SHPM regarding standardisation policies and management of the committee / project; and
- In conjunction with the Chairperson, evaluating and recommending variations to the original scope, time, benefits or budget.

The EPM plays a vital role in managing projects and it is essential that one individual is allocated this responsibility. Obviously, actual tasks can be carried out by other individuals, (e.g. secretarial functions, minute taking, drafting) but the EPM takes the ultimate responsibility for project management, project administration and, in the Bureau pathway, committee administration.

Shadow Project Manager (SHPM)

The SHPM is responsible for:

- Assisting with project initialisation and system setup;
- Ensuring that a balanced committee exists at project commencement and throughout the life of the project;
- Advising on questions relating to standardisation policies. The SHPM is expected to have access to the latest national and international developments in standardisation;
- Providing guidance and mentoring on Standards Australia's processes, policies and procedures, including the SP3 Project Management Methodology;
- Providing a final determination on the style and formatting of the Standard;
- Arranging any necessary training and/or provision of Guidance documents;
- Maintaining the Standards Hub Committee Workspace (CD pathway);
- Reviewing and arranging the publication of the Public Comment Draft;
- Assisting with the resolution of any areas of persistent conflict, for instance, any negative votes in the postal ballot that cannot be resolved by the EPM:
- Arranging publication of the final Standard;
- Reviewing and ensuring quality requirements and Standards of critical project documents;
- Coordinating with other committees for expert advice or information sharing where necessary;
- Monitoring (auditing) the conduct of the project to ensure compliance with Standards Australia's policies and requirements; and
- Undertaking project audits and escalating non-conformances where appropriate.

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10 DOCUMENT HISTORY

To follow details the history of this document:

Date	Author	Amendment Details	Change Source
		v1.2 – combined SG-004, SG-008 & SG-011	
20/07/09		v2.0 – Review, rationalisation, editing & styling	
18/05/10	Policies and Procedures Officer	v3.0 – Update section 3 to reflect changes to Standards Development Pathways	SA Project Office
21/02/12	Process & Procedures Officer	v3.1 – Update all hyperlinks after new corporate website released	SA Project Office

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