



GUIDE 69

Harmonized Stage Code system (Edition 2) — Principles and guidelines for use

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Foreword

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0 Introduction

0.1 The standardization process has a number of definite steps or stages which can be used both to describe the process and to indicate where in the process any one item has reached. In general terms the methods used to develop and publish standards via the formal standardization process operated by international, regional and national standards bodies are very similar no matter which body is overseeing the process. Thus, at a high level, it is possible to have a common view of the standardization process and with it a common set of stages. There are differences between the processes of individual bodies, however, and this has led to the development of different stage systems for each body.

0.2 The development of so many systems has led to some confusion amongst users and it was decided to develop a Harmonized Stage Code system which could be used and understood by all bodies. The first version of this was developed in 1993. This has now been revised and simplified.

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1 Scope

This Guide establishes a Harmonized Stage Code (HSC) system intended to be used in databases for tracking standards development projects. It sets out the principles and guidelines for the use of the harmonized stage codes, and is intended to facilitate exchange of information concerning standards projects between international, regional and national standards bodies.

2 General principles of the system

2.1 The purpose of the HSC system is not to re-invent the stage system and make each body follow it exactly. Its purpose is to provide a common framework for the transfer of core data, thus allowing each body to map its own processes and system onto the core matrix. Each standards body can develop its own stage system for its own use.

2.2 It is recognized that different customers have different requirements from a stage code system. Standards organizations need a detailed system to enable workflow to be properly monitored, analysed and controlled. The general public needs only an overview which is simple to understand. The HSC system enables these requirements to be satisfied by providing a matrix overview of the whole process, whilst allowing the details to be included within it.

2.3 A neutral procedural framework of codes has been established for application to the different procedures currently in use by international, regional and national standards organizations.

2.4 This framework can be used for either mapping an existing stage code system onto the framework or for developing a new stage code system around it.

2.5 The HSC matrix takes an unusual approach in that it mixes both stages/milestones with decisions, in that some events have mutually exclusive sub-events, whilst some do not. This is necessary because of the nature of the standards process, which mixes periods of activity (and therefore completed activities) with decisions which could or must be made either during or after those periods of activity. Whilst this approach reduces the need to hold information about these decisions in separate database fields, it is recommended that certain information (e.g. project status) is held in other fields.

2.6 Only the given codes within the framework are valid for data transfer. Other codes may be included for internal purposes only (see clause 5), but they shall not be transferred to other bodies as part of a database extract. This is governed by the rules indicated within the ISONET Manual.

2.7 Only certain stages are possible. Those that are not possible are indicated.

2.8 The system allows tracking of the development of a given project in the same way in databases being used at international, regional and national levels. The adoption of a project from one level to another (e.g. international to national, or regional to national) is therefore able to be incorporated in the overall sequence of codified events.

2.9 The framework proposed can accommodate new procedures that may be developed in the future. The overall standards-making process is similar in each organization, thus any changes to existing processes are likely to be