



GUIDE 59

Code of good practice for standardization

First edition 1994

Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) and IEC (the International Electrotechnical Commission) form the specialized system for worldwide standardization. National bodies that are members of ISO or IEC participate in the development of International Standards through technical committees established by the respective organization to deal with particular fields of technical activity. ISO and IEC technical committees collaborate in fields of mutual interest. Other international organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO and IEC, also take part in the work.

In the field of information technology, ISO and IEC have established a joint technical committee, ISO/IEC JTC 1. Draft International Standards adopted by the joint technical committee are circulated to national bodies for voting. Publication as an International Standard requires approval by at least 75 % of the national bodies casting a vote.

ISO/IEC Guide 59 was approved by the ISO and IEC members in 1993.

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1 Introductory commentary

1.1 Standards play an important role in trade and commerce within and between all countries of the world. These standards are developed by many bodies, at sub-national, national, regional and international levels, a significant number of which prepare their documents by consensus processes. Alongside the growth of international trade and technological cooperation, standardizing bodies have developed procedures and modes of cooperation which are commonly considered to constitute good practices for standards development at all levels. These practices are set out here in the form of a code, applicable to governmental and non-governmental consensus bodies.

1.2 At international level, the voluntary standardization process is essentially coordinated under the auspices of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC), and the International Telecommunications Union (ITU). These bodies are apex organizations for an extensive infrastructure which has its foundations at national level, and extends into regional activities whenever necessary. This global system (i.e. standardization at national, regional and international level) is linked together via collaboration agreements between ISO, IEC and ITU at international level; by similar agreements between standardization organizations at regional level, such as CEN, CENELEC and ETSI in Europe; and at the base, through an extensive array of collaboration agreements between the national members of the three apex organizations.

1.3 Within the global standardization system, the national members of the three apex organizations assume the major responsibility for ensuring coherency and coordination. For this reason a distinction is made, in the definitions and under clauses 6 and 7 of this code, between a **standardizing body** (of which there may be many in the same country) and a national **standards body** which in addition is the national member of one or more of the international apex bodies, and of the corresponding regional organizations where relevant.

1.4 Adoption of this code is voluntary and intended to ensure openness and transparency, together with an optimum degree of order, coherence and effectiveness in worldwide standardization processes. Provisions which should be of a binding nature are given in the form of requirements, using the modal auxiliary "shall".

2 Definitions

For the purposes of this code, the definitions of ISO/IEC Guide 2:1991 apply to any body which approves stan-

dards using procedures based on the principles of consensus. Such bodies form a subset of the bodies covered by Annex 3 of the GATT 1991 Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade, as explained in annex A to this code.

3 General provisions

3.1 This code is intended for use by any standardizing body, whether governmental or non-governmental, at international, regional, national or sub-national level. Standardizing bodies that have adopted this code may notify this fact to the ISO or IEC member in their country, which will forward the notification to the ISO/IEC Information Centre in Geneva. The notifications should include the name and address of the body concerned and the scope of its current and expected standardization activities. Regional or international standardizing bodies, and standardizing bodies in countries without ISO or IEC members, may notify their adoption of this code directly to the ISO/IEC Information Centre.

3.2 Members of ISO shall make every effort to become members of ISONET or to appoint another body to become a member, as well as to acquire the most advanced membership type possible for the ISONET member. Other standardizing bodies shall make every effort to associate themselves with ISONET (see annex B for description of the ISONET system).

3.3 The standardizing body shall afford sympathetic consideration to, and adequate opportunity for, consultation regarding representations made, with respect to the operation of this code, by other standardizing bodies that have accepted it. The standardizing body shall make an objective effort to resolve any complaints.

4 Procedures for the development of standards

4.1 Written procedures based on the consensus principle should govern the methods used for standards development. Copies of the procedures of the standardizing body shall be available to interested parties in a reasonable and timely manner upon request.

4.2 Such written procedures should contain an identifiable, realistic and readily available appeals mechanism for the impartial handling of any substantive and procedural complaints.

4.3 Notification of standardization activity shall be made in suitable media as appropriate to afford interested persons or organizations an opportunity for meaningful contributions. This entails timely notification in appropriate