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Graphical symbols — Safety colours and safety signs — Guidance for the development and use of a safety signing system

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National foreword

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This publication does not purport to include all the necessary provisions of a contract. Users are responsible for its correct application.

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Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular, the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see www.iso.org/directives).

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights. Details of any patent rights identified during the development of the document will be in the Introduction and/or on the ISO list of patent declarations received (see www.iso.org/patents).

Any trade name used in this document is information given for the convenience of users and does not constitute an endorsement.

For an explanation of the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT), see www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html.

This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 145, *Graphical symbols*, Subcommittee SC 2, *Safety identification, signs, shapes, symbols and colours*.

This corrected version of ISO/TS 20559:2020 incorporates the following corrections:

— space has been added between the two examples in Figure 2.

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at www.iso.org/members.html.

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Introduction

The primary objective of safety signing systems is to support the provisions of a safe and healthy workplace or public area.

For those responsible for the health and safety of people in an organization or for the safety of people in a public area, implementing an effective safety signing system is a strategic and operational decision. The success of these systems of visual safety communication depends on leadership, commitment and participation from all levels and functions of the organization.

The information contained in this document gives safety professionals a “systems” approach to safety signage that works in tandem with an organization’s occupational health and safety management system (see ISO 45001).

Several ISO documents have been written for the design of the components of safety signing systems. This document provides a framework for systematically using these safety sign components to reduce risk by accurately communicating:

— the nature of potential hazards in facilities and related to equipment, and how to avoid these potential hazards;

— the location of essential safety equipment and fire equipment;

— the accurate identification of materials and related safety precautions;

— evacuation paths that lead persons to a place of safety.

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IMPORTANT — The colours represented in the electronic file of this document can be neither viewed on screen nor printed as true representations. For the purposes of colour matching see ISO 3864-4, which provides colorimetric and photometric properties together with, as a guideline, references from colour order systems.

1 Scope

This document serves to complement the basic standards for safety signs: the ISO 3864 series, ISO 7010, ISO 16069, ISO 23601 and ISO 17398, as well as ISO 45001. This document contains recommendations and explanations on the practical application of safety signs to form a system of communication intended to reduce risk.

2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes requirements of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO 3864-1:2011, *Graphical symbols — Safety colours and safety signs — Part 1: Design principles for safety signs and safety markings*

ISO 7010, *Graphical symbols — Safety colours and safety signs — Registered safety signs*

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO 3864-1 apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminological databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

— ISO Online browsing platform: available at https://www.iso.org/obp

— IEC Electropedia: available at http://www.electropedia.org/

4 General

In many ways, safety signs, labels and markings function as systems of visual information that provide permanent evidence to support an organization's safety training and safety policies. In fulfilling this function, these systems of signage assist an organization to fulfil its legal requirements and demonstrate its commitment to placing the highest priority on the health and safety of its employees and the public. Safety signs function as "systems" in the following ways:

— Each sign or marking component is made up of a system of standardized elements meant to convey a specific meaning within the context of its installed location (e.g. safety colour coding, graphical symbols, shape and layout, supplementary information).

— Each of the components of a safety signing system as defined in Clause 5 is meant to function as a system of signs to convey a certain type of standardized safety communication (e.g. egress routes, the location of fire and safety equipment, hazard identification and avoidance).

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