



**Requirements for the Accreditation  
of a  
Standards Development Organisation**

**SDAC-001  
Version 2.2**

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Standards Development and Accreditation Committee  
Standards Australia  
GPO Box 476  
Sydney NSW 2001

L10, 20 Bridge Street  
Sydney NSW 2000  
P 02 9237 6028 F 02 9237 6010  
[www.absdo.org.au](http://www.absdo.org.au)

## INTRODUCTION

This document contains the minimum requirements for organisations seeking to be accredited as a Standards Development Organisation (SDO). The requirements are based on the following principles which are in turn based on existing Australian processes and *ISO/IEC Guide 59:1994 Code of good practice for standardization*.

### Principles

1. Structural and resource requirements of the organisation.
  - a) Continuity of operations.
  - b) Competencies.
  - c) Legal responsibility.
  - d) Documentation and records.
2. Openness and transparency.
3. Balance.
4. Consensus.
5. Equal access and participation by concerned interests.
6. Consistent processes.
7. Lack of dominance.
8. Net benefit of the proposed standard.
9. Appeals process.
10. Compliance with SDAC procedures for accredited SDOs.

This new document replaces the previous *Requirements for Accreditation of Standards Development Organisations* and *Criteria for Designation as an Australian Standard* although many of the provisions of these documents have been retained.

Users of this document should be aware that a 'NOTE:' associated with a requirement is for information only and does not have to be complied with.

Documents referred to in the requirements are listed in a Bibliography at the end of the document.

## APPLICATION OF THE REQUIREMENTS

1. Accreditation is granted for the development of Standards within a specified scope of accreditation, and particular conditions may also be prescribed in relation to each SDO's accreditation. Accreditation may be refused on the grounds that another SDO already covers the same scope of accreditation.
2. Accreditation of an organisation will be considered by the Standards Development and Accreditation Committee (SDAC) on the basis of a submission by the Organisation committing itself to—
  - a) meeting the requirements of this document;
  - b) an assessment audit that demonstrates arrangements for meeting the scope of standardization work and policy oversight of that work for which application for accreditation has been made; and
  - c) that satisfactory arrangements have been agreed regarding publication, distribution, royalty payments or any other necessary aspects.
3. Accreditation will include the requirement that where potential for conflict in the area of coverage of documents produced by another party exists, whether covered by the accreditation or not, that the parties seek resolution of the issue.
4. Applications will be treated as being in the public domain to the extent that the SDAC may invite public comment and the comments of stakeholders on the application to become an SDO.
5. The SDAC may also take into account the nature of any likely conformity assessment activities (such as testing, inspection, and certification) and the likely bodies that will undertake such activities.
6. The term of accreditation will normally be three years but conditions may be varied by the SDAC.
7. Surveillance audits to maintain accreditation will be conducted in accordance with an agreed schedule which will depend upon the level of standards writing activity of the SDO but not more frequently than yearly.
8. Audit team members will act at all times impartially and maintain confidentiality.
9. Any changes to the terms of accreditation will be verified at the next surveillance audit.
10. In the event of default with compliance of the terms of accreditation by the SDO, at its discretion the SDAC may require remedial action, or may suspend or cancel accreditation on such conditions or terms as the SDAC may determine.
11. An SDO is required to pay all relevant fees to Standards Australia to achieve and maintain accreditation. A schedule of fees is published by Standards Australia on their accreditation website.

## DEFINITIONS

### **Consensus—**

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.

NOTE: Consensus need not imply unanimity.

[ISO/IEC Guide 2]

### **Consensus agreement—**

when all of the major interests involved with the subject of the Standard have collectively accepted the content of the document and have voted affirmatively. This normally implies a unanimous affirmative vote, but occasionally it may be achieved where there are one or more outstanding negative votes.

### **Consumer—**

individual member of the general public, or consumer organizations, purchasing or using property, products or services for private purposes.

### **General interest—**

those with a demonstrated interest and relevant expertise that are not associated with the production, distribution, direct use, or regulation of the product(s), material(s) or service(s).

NOTE: May include technical or professional associations and trade unions.

### **Net benefit—**

the value or benefit of a standard to the Australian community that exceeds the costs likely to be imposed on suppliers, users and other parties in the community as a result of its development and implementation.

### **Procedure—**

specified way to carry out an activity or a process (ISO 9000:2006)  
[Alternatively: a series of actions conducted in a certain order or manner].

NOTES:

1. Procedures can be documented or not.
2. Where documented procedures are required this is specified.
3. Documented procedures can be electronic or physical documents.

### **Procedures, Standards Management—**

procedures for standards related activities within the organisation other than for the process of developing a standard. Used to be called 'Administrative procedures' and can include such processes as standards review and complaint handling.

### **Procedures, Standards Development—**

description of the standards development process from initial project proposal to the final publication, including establishment or review of SRBs.

**Process—**

a series of actions or steps taken in order to achieve a particular end.

[Alternatively: a set of interrelated or interacting activities which transforms inputs into outputs - ISO 9000:2006]

NOTE : Inputs to a process are generally outputs of other processes.

**Producer—**

those who are predominantly involved in production (i.e. manufacture), promotion, retailing, importing or distribution of the subject product(s), material(s) or service(s). Often termed a **Supplier**.

NOTE : A supplier can also be a contractor in contractual situations.

**Project—**

a planned piece of work that has a specific purpose.

[Alternatively: unique process consisting of a set of coordinated and controlled activities with start and finish dates, undertaken to achieve an objective conforming to specific requirements, including the constraints of time, costs and resources. ISO 9000:2006]

**Project manager—**

the person responsible for managing a standard's development project (Clause 2.4).

**Regulator—**

any federal, state, municipal or other government instrumentality responsible for regulating the acceptability, sale or use of the subject products, materials or services and those bodies that enforce these rules and regulations.

**Standards Reference Body—**

the group (committee) of technical experts having the responsibility for the technical content of the standard they are developing.

**Technical content—**

the requirements, specifications, and/or recommendations, and associated tables and figures, that comprise the body of the standard. The technical content is developed within the scope of the standard.

**User—**

those who predominantly represent end users of the subject product(s), material(s), or service(s) and who are not involved in any way in production and/or distribution of the subject product(s), material(s) or service(s).

NOTE : Users can include consumers; general interest users; industrial users where the product(s), material(s), or service(s) is an input to a production process; and labour users where the product(s), material(s), or service(s) may be used in the workplace.

## **ABBREVIATIONS**

ISO	International Organization for Standardization
IEC	International Electrotechnical Commission
SA	Standards Australia
SDAC	Standards Development and Accreditation Committee, a governance committee of Standards Australia
SDO	Standards Development Organisation
SRB	Standards Reference Body
TBT	Technical Barriers to Trade (Agreement)
WTO	World Trade Organisation

## REQUIREMENTS

### SECTION 1 THE ORGANISATION

#### 1 ORGANISATION

- 1.1 The SDO shall be a representative organisation with the objective of furthering the interests or status of its members or constituents.

NOTE: Examples of representative organisations include industry associations, professional bodies, consumer organisations. They usually have a membership of allied interests (organisations and/or individuals) and provide a range of stakeholder interactions.

- 1.2 The SDO shall have credibility and repute within its business sector, profession and/or industry.
- 1.3 The SDO shall have a knowledge of the interests and the issues impacting its business sector, profession and/or industry.
- 1.4 The SDO shall achieve effective engagement with all key stakeholders in its business sector, profession and/or industry.
- 1.5 If the SDO undertakes certification, accreditation or similar activities, the SDO shall maintain a clear separation of the policy-making and governance functions of such activities from those of standards development.

NOTE: Compliance with this requirement can be demonstrated by reference to policy, organizational structure and procedural documents.

- 1.6 The SDO shall be a registered legal entity.

#### 2 RESOURCES

- 2.1 The SDO shall have a structure and resources to support and maintain its Standards development operations. Resources shall include adequate ongoing funding, facilities and staff.
- 2.2 There shall be a commitment to, and information on, the future program for the development and maintenance of standards.
- 2.3 The SDO shall have sufficient and competent staff to manage and support its Standards activities.
- 2.4 For each standard being developed, the SDO shall appoint a person who is responsible for managing the development project. This person shall be provided with the necessary authority and resources to enable the project to be completed within a reasonable timeframe.

NOTES:

1. The person may have other duties in the organisation, or could be handling a number of standards projects.
2. Reasonable timeframe would generally mean a time acceptable to the Standards Reference Body.

- 2.5 The Project Management role shall be clearly separated from any technical representation the SDO may have on the Standards Reference Body.

NOTE: This is best achieved by having the Project Manager a separate person to the SDO's technical representative.

- 2.6 The SDO shall notify the SDAC of any significant changes that could materially affect the organisation's capacity to be an accredited SDO.

NOTE: This could include change of CEO, loss of Quality Management System (ISO 9001) certification, changes to financial status such as amalgamation or split-up of the organisation, changes to the governance structure.

### **3 ACCREDITATION**

3.1 In order to achieve and maintain accreditation the SDO shall—

- a) comply with the requirements in this document;
- b) comply with any additional policies or procedures as required by SDAC from time to time;
- c) facilitate auditing to determine ongoing compliance;
- d) submit to the SDAC's determination where there is a conflict in the scope of areas of accreditation; and
- e) pay all relevant fees to SA to achieve and maintain accreditation.



## SECTION 2 OPERATIONS

### 4 INTERNATIONAL ALIGNMENT

- 4.1 Staff responsible for managing the standards development process shall be familiar with the World Trade Organization (WTO) Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade (commonly referred to as the TBT Agreement) and particularly Annex 3.

NOTES :

1. Compliance with the TBT is particularly important for those standards that are likely to be called up in Government regulations.
2. It is not necessary for an SDO to officially accept Annex 3 of the WTO TBT Agreement, the Code of Good Practice for the Preparation, Adoption and Application of Standards. Compliance with the Requirements for Accreditation of SDOs will ensure that the SDO complies with the terms of the TBT Agreement. Also, Standards Australia (as the accrediting body for SDOs within Australia) has formally advised its acceptance of the Code.

- 4.2 The provisions of the TBT agreement shall be communicated to Standards Reference Bodies. Where appropriate, the development processes and content shall be adjusted accordingly to meet the requirements of the TBT.

NOTE : Such changes could include the notification of new projects that may be intended for use in regulations; adoption of an international standard rather than developing an Australian document; a minimum public comment period of 60 days; or avoiding barriers to imported products.

- 4.3 Where an International Standard is being adopted as an AS, the requirements of ISO/IEC Guide 21.1 *Regional or national adoption of International Standards and other International Deliverables — Part 1: Adoption of International Standards* shall be complied with.

NOTE : If unsure of the requirements for adopting international standards the SDO should contact Standards Australia's International Development Manager.

### 5 IMPARTIAL FACILITATION

- 5.1 The SDO shall maintain impartiality and neutrality throughout the Standards development process including safeguarding the objectivity and impartiality of the individuals or groups responsible for Standards development.

NOTE : The requirement for impartiality and neutrality does not preclude the organisation from having an interest in the subject matter of the Standard, or from being represented on a Standards Reference Body. However, the organisation will need to comply with the intent of Clause 17.5.

- 5.2 Senior Management of the SDO shall not influence, or direct, the Standards Reference Body on the technical content of the final document.

### 6 PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES

- 6.1 The organisation shall have appropriately documented procedures to support its Standards management and development processes.

- 6.2 The Standards development procedures shall include, but not necessarily be limited to—

- a) the evaluation of new work items;
- b) establishing a balanced Standards Reference Body;
- c) public review, including reviews of stakeholder feedback;
- d) achieving and demonstrating consensus; and
- e) final process/publishing approval.

NOTE : The required content these procedures are to address is given in Section 3.

- 6.3 The Standards management and development processes and any associated procedures shall be regularly reviewed and, if appropriate, updated to ensure continuing effectiveness.

- 6.4 Procedures shall incorporate suitable privacy protection measures, including maintaining confidentiality of SRB deliberations.

NOTE: SRB confidentiality usually means ensuring SRB members as well as the SDO and its staff are aware of the need not to disseminate SRB discussions or decisions to outside bodies (including the press) without the agreement of the SRB and the SDO. SRB members may discuss SRB deliberations with their representative organisations but these organisations also need to be made aware (by the SRB member) of the need to retain SRB confidentiality.

- 6.5 The documented Standards development procedures shall be freely available to any interested party.
- 6.6 The SDO shall record any significant changes in the organisation's Standards development processes and make these available for audit.

## **7 RECORDS**

- 7.1 The organisation shall keep and maintain adequate records of its standards development and management activities in order to demonstrate compliance with this SDO requirements document.

- 7.2 There shall be a records management policy that specifies the records to be kept, by whom and for how long.

NOTE: Records may be physical or electronic.

- 7.3 The Standards development records for each published standard shall include, but not necessarily be limited to—

- a) net benefit and project approval;
- b) Standards Reference Body (SRB) or work group composition (interest groups);
- c) public comment document ;
- d) comments and their disposition;
- e) document approved by the SRB;
- f) SRB approval, including compliance with consensus procedures; and
- g) final process/publication approval.

- 7.4 The standards development records shall be retained for at least ten years from the date of publication of a Standard or two review cycles whichever is the greater.

- 7.5 The SDO shall have a policy on making the records relating to a standards development project available to industry, government and the community where requested. This policy shall take into account the principles of openness and transparency but recognise the needs of privacy and SRB confidentiality.

## **8 MAINTAIN STANDARDS**

- 8.1 Standards within the scope of accreditation shall be regularly reviewed to ensure that they are up-to-date and current. This review period shall not be greater than seven years.

NOTE: Options from the review could include revising, reconfirming or withdrawing the standard.

## **9 INQUIRIES AND DISPUTES**

- 9.1 The SDO shall have a formal process to accept and respond to public enquires regarding the technical content of a published standard.

NOTE: This may include interpretations and rulings on the meaning or applicability of the standard.

- 9.2 The SDO shall have a procedure for hearing complaints and handling appeals arising out of the Standards development process.

NOTE: Complaints may be either of a substantive (technical) or procedural nature. Appeals are procedural in nature, and are launched as a result of decisions which the appellant considers to be procedurally in error. Procedural appeals can include whether a technical issue was afforded due process.

- 9.3 The complaints and appeals procedure shall—

- a) be fair and unbiased;
- b) not impose an undue burden on any party;
- c) provide for the timely hearing of complaints, and
- d) ensure each complaint is fully addressed.

Records of each complaint or appeal, and the outcome, shall be kept.

- 9.4 The procedure for hearing complaints and appeals shall be reviewed regularly and, if appropriate, updated to ensure effectiveness.

## 10 IP AND COPYRIGHT

- 10.1 The SDO shall ensure that it owns all intellectual property rights in, or is duly licensed to incorporate any third party material into, the Standard(s) developed by it.
- 10.2 The SDO shall have a patent policy that restricts the inclusion of patented items in a standard unless the use of a patented item is justifiable for technical reasons and the rights holder agrees to negotiate licenses with interested applicants, wherever located, on reasonable terms and conditions.
- 10.3 Where an SDO is assuming responsibility for standards developed by another organisation (including an SDO), the SDO shall ensure all existing rights and obligations related to these Standards have been negotiated and agreed with the organisation.

NOTE: At audit, negotiations need not have been completed; however there should be evidence of a bona fide intention on the part of organisation and the SDO to reach such an agreement.

## 11 TRADEMARK LICENCE

- 11.1 The SDO shall enter into a licensing agreement with Standards Australia regarding the use of the 'Australian Standard®' trademark, logo and any associated graphics.
- 11.2 The SDO shall comply with the [Style Manual for Accredited SDOs \(SDAC-004\)](#) including any requirements relating to the use of the word mark, logo and text required to be included in published standards.

## 12 INTERNATIONAL PARTICIPATION

- 12.1 The SDO shall recognise, through a policy or similar statement, that Standards Australia is the Australian member of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC). Participation in the standardisation activities of these two bodies shall be through SA.

### NOTES:

1. SDOs need to be aware of this policy even if they are not participating. Further information can be found in SA's Standardisation Guide 015 – *Australian Involvement in International Standardisation*.
2. Participation by the SDO in other international standardisation activities, such as the ITU or Codex, is the responsibility of the SDO.

- 12.2 Where an SDO wants to, or is, participating in IEC or ISO activities they shall comply with the appropriate SDAC procedures and any necessary directions from Standards Australia's International Development Manager.

NOTE: Such procedures include but are not limited to:

1. Membership of ISO or IEC technical committees.
2. Participating in the technical work of ISO or IEC committees including the use of mirror committees.
3. Commenting on and voting on ISO or IEC documents.
4. Attending international meetings, including applications for funding.

### **13 CO-OPERATION AND LIAISON**

- 13.1 Where appropriate, or as requested, the SDO shall cooperate with other SDOs, including Standards Australia, regarding activities of mutual interest and with the intent of enhancing communication and co-ordination of Standards development activities across industry and government.

### **14 TERMINATION**

- 14.1 The SDO shall have a procedure(s) covering the eventuality of the SDO either becoming insolvent and winding up, or deciding to no longer retain its accreditation.

NOTE: The intent of these clauses is to make the SDO think about the steps to be taken should they decide to give up accreditation or otherwise cease operations. It is part of a responsible approach to managing standardisation activities. In practice, apart from notifying stakeholders and the SRB(s), the most likely scenario will be a series of discussions with SA and any other relevant SDO.

- 14.2 This procedure(s) shall relate to the standards development and management activities of the SDO (not financial or legal) and should include:

- a) Initial and ongoing advice to SDAC.
- b) Notification of stakeholders and particularly members of the Standards Reference Body(s).
- c) Transfer of the ownership and licensing of the copyright in published standards.
- d) Handover to Standards Australia of relevant information and records where an SDO's accreditation ceases, subject to compliance with relevant privacy requirements.

NOTE: Published standards may either be withdrawn, transferred to another accredited SDO, or transferred to SA.

## SECTION 3 STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

### 15 GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

- 15.1 A Standard shall be within the SDO's scope of accreditation.
- 15.2 A Standard shall not duplicate an existing Australian Standard. Where such duplication occurs, justification or explanation shall be included in the standard.

NOTES:

1. There may be alternative solutions or methods of assessment in different standards that meet the same performance outcome.
  2. This explanation should help users choose the most appropriate standard.
- 15.3 Standards developed for conformance assessment purposes (i.e. the basis of a certification scheme) shall comply with the principles in ISO/IEC 17007, *Conformity assessment - Guidance for drafting normative documents suitable for use for conformity assessment*.
- 15.4 All reasonable efforts shall be made to avoid the creation of conflicting requirements between Standards on the same or similar subjects.
- 15.5 A copy of the final published standard shall be supplied to Standards Australia.

NOTE: For internal use by SA and SDO committees.

- 15.6 The decisions of the SRB developing a Standard shall not be changed or over-ruled by the SDO unless there are special circumstances. The circumstances where such occurrences may apply shall be documented.

NOTE: Such special circumstances most often occur where there is irreconcilable conflict in the SRB, where there are serious concerns from a regulator, where there are sustained significant concerns from a key user stakeholder, or where the accredited standards development process has not been followed.

- 15.7 Where the SDO is proposing to overrule or change the decisions of the SRB, this shall be done in conjunction with the SRB. Communication between the SDO and the SRB concerning the changes shall be documented.

NOTE: E-mail is suitable.

### 16 STANDARDS REFERENCE BODY—OPENNESS

- 16.1 The development, and technical content, of each standard shall be the responsibility of a Standards Reference Body (SRB).

NOTE: This SRB may be established at the beginning of a project, or may already exist and just take on the development of another standard in a series.

- 16.2 Participation in an SRB shall be open to all stakeholders who are directly and materially affected by the proposed standard.
- 16.3 The SDO shall invite significant interests to participate in a Standards development project and become a member of the appropriate SRB.
- 16.4 No relevant interest group with a bona fide desire to participate shall be excluded from the SRB.
- 16.5 There shall be no undue financial barriers to participation.
- 16.6 Membership of the SRB shall not be conditional upon membership in any organisation, nor unreasonably restricted on the basis of technical qualifications or other such requirements.
- 16.7 Where a major sector does not accept the invitation to participate, the SDO shall determine the reason(s) why. The SDO should take steps to address the sector's concerns to encourage participation.

NOTE: Concerns could include: lack of interest in the subject; lack of resources; or lack of confidence in the structural or procedural aspects of the process.

- 16.8 Where consumer or public interest representation would provide the needed balance of interests, the SDO shall identify and make efforts to secure support for equal access and effective participation of such interests.

NOTE: This does not require the SDO to provide financial support from their operating budgets.

## **17 STANDARDS REFERENCE BODY—BALANCE**

17.1 The SRB shall comprise a balanced representation from all major interest categories relevant to the Standard.

NOTE: Relevant participants would be those materially and directly affected by the published Standard.

17.2 The interest categories shall be at least producer, user, and general interest. On an SRB, each interest category may cover a number of organisations or interest groups.

NOTES:

1. See definitions for description of these groups.
2. Further interest categories that may be used include the following: a) Consumer; b) Directly affected public; c) Distributor and retailer; d) Industrial/commercial; e) Insurance; f) Labour; g) Manufacturer; h) Professional society; i) Regulatory agency; j) Conformity assessment interests (e.g. testing laboratories, certification bodies); k) Industry association.

17.3 No one interest (category or organisation) shall have a disproportionate representation on the SRB.

NOTE: This would generally mean no one interest category would have more than 50% representation on the SRB, and preferably 1/3 for each of the three categories. Similarly, no one organisation may have more than 50% of the representatives on the SRB

17.4 The defined interest categories and their representation on the SRB shall be publically available on the organisation's website.

NOTE: When making public this information care should be taken to ensure individuals are not inadvertently identified (privacy). When describing the representation of a stakeholder interest group, this is generally limited to identifying the organisations the members of the SRB represent.

17.5 Where an SDO is a participant in an SRB the SDO's contribution shall be impartial, free from bias and avoid a conflict of interest between its role as a facilitator of the Standards Development process and as a participant in the process.

NOTE: Participant includes both a technical member or the SRB secretariat.

17.6 Any changes to the constitution of the SRB shall be recorded, including the rationale for the change. Any change shall maintain a balanced representation.

## **18 PROJECT PROPOSAL**

18.1 For each new or revised standard a Project Proposal shall be developed. This proposal shall cover—

- a) the scope and objective of the proposed standard;
- b) the need for the proposed Standard;
- c) a broad base of support for the development of the proposed Standard;
- d) the Net Benefit of the standard including:
  - i) the benefits of the proposed standard in terms of one or more of the following:
    - I. Support for innovation, trade and economic benefit.
    - II. Advancement of the health, safety and wellbeing of the community.
    - III. Protection of the natural environment.
    - IV. International competitiveness.
  - ii) potential or actual impacts of implementing the Standard.

NOTES:

1. This may be the responsibility of the SDO or an external proposer.
2. The net benefit may apply to a single standard or a series of standards dealing with the same topic.
3. Guidance is available on what should be included in the Net Benefit statement.
4. The standard may be a new standard or a revision of an existing standard(s).
5. The SDO may decide whether or not to require a net benefit case for an amendment to an existing standard.
6. As a result of SRB deliberations the Scope may vary over the development process although this should be avoided if possible.

Where a group of closely related standards are being considered, the Project Proposal may cover the group.

- 18.2 The project proposal shall address whether there are any International Standards on the same subject and the reasons why such International Standards were not being adopted or used as the basis for the proposed standard.
- 18.3 The proposal shall indicate, if appropriate, the nature of any likely conformity assessment activities (such as testing, inspection, and certification) that may be undertaken once the Standard is published, and the likely bodies that will undertake such activities.

NOTE: See also 15.3

## **19 APPROVAL OF PROJECTS**

- 19.1 The SDO shall approve (or otherwise) any proposed new project. Prior to approving any new project, the SDO shall review each project proposal to ensure—
  - a) the Standard is consistent with the national interest and demonstrates a net public benefit;
  - b) reasonable attempts have been made to achieve harmonization with existing national Standards; and
  - c) there has been adequate consideration of possible International Standards.

## **20 DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

- 20.1 Following project approval, the SDO shall prepare a development plan that includes—
  - d) the document being developed;
  - e) the SRB responsible for the project;
  - f) the person in the SDO responsible for the project;
  - g) the type of project i.e. new Standard, revision of an existing standard(s), or an amendment to an existing standard;
  - h) the anticipated timeframe for completion of the proposed Standard including key milestone dates such as commencement, public comment and ballot; and
  - i) any key factors that may impinge on completion of the project.

NOTES:

1. The development plan can form the basis for public information about the project.
2. The timeframe may not be able to be finalised until after the first meeting of the SRB since participant's commitments may not be known.
3. The timeframe should take into account the nature and complexity of the Standard, the needs of the specific user groups such as industry, government and the community, and the resources available.

- 20.2 The development plan shall be monitored and, if appropriate, updated at regular intervals throughout the development of the standard.

## **21 TRANSPARENCY**

- 21.1 For each new project the SDO shall publicly make available details of the Standard being developed. This information shall be readily accessible and shall include the work to be undertaken and the formation of any new Standards Reference Bodies. There shall be a process for receiving and, if appropriate, acting on, input from those with an interest in either the content of the proposed standard or in the constitution of the SRB.

NOTES:

1. The development plan could be the basis for this notification.
2. Publicity could include on a web site, through a newsletter, and/or a special notification to key stakeholders.

- 21.2 A draft of the Standard shall be made available for public comment. This draft shall be as complete as possible and its release is to have the objective of gaining feedback from potential users of the standard on the appropriateness, or otherwise, of the requirements. Release of the draft shall be agreed to by the SRB. Availability of the draft shall be advised in suitable media. A reasonable period shall be allowed for the receipt of feedback.

NOTES:

1. Suitable media could include a web site, through a newsletter, and/or a special notification to key stakeholders and potential users. There is no requirement for a paid advertisement although this could be used if appropriate.
2. 60 days is an acceptable minimum and complies with WTO requirements.

- 21.3 The SRB shall receive, review, consider and record the disposition of all public comment.

NOTES:

1. The SDO can decide which is the most appropriate method(s) of receiving comment, e.g. on-line form, via email, Word document.
2. There is no requirement to respond to individual public comments, including the result of the SRB's deliberations, although the SDO may choose to do so.

## **22 CONTENT APPROVAL AND CONSENSUS**

- 22.1 Procedures for standards development, as well as the technical content of the standard, shall be based on consensus.

- 22.2 The final technical content of the document shall be the result of a consensus agreement between members of the SRB. Evidence of consensus shall be a formal vote, with all members of the SRB being given the opportunity to vote.

- 22.3 If there is not a unanimous vote, and if the SRB has made all reasonable efforts but is still unable to resolve one or more negative votes, consensus shall be deemed to have been achieved if:

- a) a minimum 67% of those eligible to vote have voted affirmatively; and
- b) a minimum 80% of votes received are affirmative; and
- c) no major interest involved with the subject of the Standard has collectively maintained a negative vote.

NOTE: See Appendix A for an explanation of the voting rules.



## **23 PROCESS APPROVAL**

- 23.1 Once the SRB has achieved consensus and the technical content of the standard is finalised, Senior Management within the SDO shall finally approve the standard for publication. In giving this approval the SDO Management shall satisfy itself that the standard has been through, and complied with, the accredited processes specified in Section 3 of this document. (Clauses 15 to 22; see also Clause 5.2)

### NOTES:

1. Senior Management could be a governance committee of the SDO, a committee with the responsibility for oversight of standards activities, or a senior manager with delegated responsibility for ensuring process has been complied with.
2. Evidence that Senior Management may require before giving final process approval could include: the approved project proposal (is the scope of the document as was originally approved, was there a net benefit case), composition of the SRB (adequate balance and representation), details of the public comment process (were the public given sufficient opportunity to comment), and the final ballot results (was consensus reached, were there any negative votes and how were they resolved).

## APPENDIX A EXPLANATION OF THE VOTING RULES

### Informative

#### A.1 Background

These voting rules have been used by Standards Australia for over 20 years. They were originally brought in to replace a rule that required no outstanding negative votes before a standard could be published. This rule had led to situations where a standard that had received nearly complete support by the SRB was prevented from being published by a single self interested SRB member that continually voted no.

The objective of the rules was to allow a standard to proceed where there may have been one or a few outstanding negative votes, but where there was strong support from the remainder of the SRB. To avoid disadvantaging a particular sector the additional safeguard of not publishing the standard if a major interest involved with the subject of the Standard collectively maintained a negative vote was introduced.

These voting rules are quite restrictive but do ensure there is a high level of agreement within a SRB before the standard can be published. When looking at the votes the first check is the number of votes cast since a minimum 2/3 of the SRB must have voted. Where less than 2/3 of the SRB vote, it is not possible to claim consensus irrespective of the number of positive or negative votes. If 2/3 of the SRB have voted, and all these votes are affirmative then consensus can be claimed. If there are one or more negative votes in this batch then further votes will have to be submitted by the remaining 1/3 of members until such times as 80% of votes submitted are affirmative. Provided there is no significant interest group continuing to vote no, consensus can then be claimed.

The table below gives some examples of how these rules work for a hypothetical SRB of 20 members.

Members Voting	Voting YES	Voting NO	Consensus	
20	17	3	<b>Yes</b>	>67% of SRB vote yes >80% votes received are yes
20	15	5	<b>No</b>	>67% of SRB vote yes <80% votes received are yes
20	13	7	<b>No</b>	<67% of SRB vote yes <80% votes received are yes
18	15	3	<b>Yes</b>	>67% of SRB vote yes >80% votes received are yes
18	14	4	<b>No</b>	>67% of SRB vote yes <80% votes received are yes
16	13	3	<b>No</b>	<67% of SRB vote yes >80% votes received are yes
16	14	1	<b>Yes</b>	>67% of SRB vote yes >80% votes received are yes
14	12	2	<b>No</b>	<67% of SRB vote yes <80% votes received are yes
14	14	0	<b>Yes</b>	>67% of SRB vote yes >80% votes received are yes
10	9	1	<b>No</b>	<67% of SRB vote yes >80% votes received are yes

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## DOCUMENT HISTORY

Version	Date	Change Details
1.0	1 August 2014	New document. Amalgamation of <i>Requirements for Accreditation of Standards Development Organisations</i> (April 2013) and <i>Criteria for Designation as an Australian Standard</i> (April 2013), including removal of duplicate and non essential material, clarification of some requirements, and additional of new requirements to reflect recent trends in standardisation.
1.1	1 October 2014	No changes to requirements. Clarification and minor editing of some guidance material. Addition of a bibliography of documents referred to in the text. Extension of the time to 1 October 2015 by which SDOs have to comply.
2.0	15 December 2015	No changes to requirements. Replacement of 'ABSDO' with SDAC or SA as appropriate. Delete reference to Secretary ABSDO or replace with appropriate SA officer.
2.0	29 January 2016	First release on SA website (previously on ABSDO website)
2.1	29 January 2018	Section 4 International Alignment: Added Note. Section 17.4 SRB–Balance: SRB representation to be on website. Appendix A: Corrections to the worked example.
2.2	17 July 2019	Delete or replace references to SAI Global and related matters as appropriate.