AMERICAN NATIONAL STANDARDS INSTITUTE

Recommendations for Efficient Standards Development

American National Standards (www.ansi.org/ansvalue)

OPERATIONS

- Utilize technology efficiently and to the greatest extent practicable: webinars, teleconferences, collaborative authoring, document distribution, voting, electronic polling, drafting meeting reports/actions during meetings, etc.
- Ensure that electronic systems are designed to be accessible and usable by the greatest number of parties possible without presenting a financial or technical hardship. If your procedures require the use of online forms, then they should clearly state as much.
- Utilize electronic media and other means (e.g., trade press, press releases, newsletters, etc.) to advertise activities, solicit input, and increase participation.
- Utilize project management and tracking tools to monitor critical paths and ensure progress; know your final goal deadline and plan accordingly.
- Utilize "aging reports" to ensure that standards do not expire or exceed acceptable maintenance cycles.
- Establish and publish process and milestone deadlines and adhere to them.
- Ensure that a participation and membership application tracking system is in place; maintain a spreadsheet or other system for monitoring balance on consensus bodies.
- Read and utilize *Standards Action* (www.ansi.org/standardsaction) for specialized announcements, meeting notices and consensus body recruitment: submit requested announcement to psa@ansi.org.
- Review American National Standard (ANS)-related guidance documents available at www.ansi.org/asd.
- Submit all revisions to ANSI-accredited procedures in a timely manner for review and approval: submit in strike-through, underline format to psa@ansi.org with an explanation of the changes.
- Conduct self-audits using Annex B of the ANSI Auditing Policies and Procedures to ensure ongoing compliance with applicable procedures and to identify areas for improvement and efficiencies.
- Review your organization's most recent ANSI Audit annually to ensure that appropriate corrective actions have been fully and consistently implemented.
- When the Annual Compliance Form is issued in January of each year: 1) read the ANSI Essential Requirements in their entirety in comparison with your current accredited procedures to ensure appropriate and necessary changes are undertaken; 2) read the summary of revisions as a quick guide; and 3) read and update your organization's ANSI-accredited procedures accordingly in a timely manner.

PROCEDURES/PROCESSES

- Ensure that procedures provide for flexibility; for example, “meetings” can be broadly defined so as to allow for webinars and teleconferences, votes can close if all participants have submitted final positions prior to the established deadline rather than requiring that a deadline pass, the Chair can be allowed some judgment when needed, etc.

- Afford participants due process and address concerns and/or confusion during the development process rather than at its conclusion or thereafter via appeals.

- Engage representatives of all relevant stakeholder interests early in the process to facilitate consensus and meaningful participation.

- Maintain written and accessible system and process support documentation so that progress is not delayed due to staff absences or lack of familiarity with all aspects of a process.

- Eliminate excess layering, e.g., assess whether multiple levels of voting, review, and consideration are value added or simply time consuming or holdovers from another time/context.

- Undertake processes concurrently where it makes sense to do so, e.g., public review and voting.

- Ensure appropriate and effective outreach to materially affected and interested parties is undertaken and documented. Do your research to ensure that outreach is undertaken via appropriate channels, e.g., make sure to include the most commonly used publications and websites and engage relevant organizations. Retain evidence of outreach, general and targeted, as part of ANS records subject to audit.

- If potential conflicting or duplicative projects are likely or are identified, engage in early discussions with relevant parties to determine the most cooperative approach that maximizes the use and allocation of limited resources: consider joint projects, division of subject matter, establishment of liaisons, etc. Document in writing any Project Initiation Notification System (PINS) deliberations and submit to ANSI.

- Form joint working groups where it makes sense to do so to improve the efficient use of resources within and across organizations.

- If joint projects are undertaken, create written agreements that clearly delineate responsibilities, including identification of the lead administrative organization with respect to the ANS process.

- Create a mechanism for tracking proposals carried over from a prior revision or submitted as new proposals.

- Where appropriate, utilize the 30-day public review option to announce limited revisions to approved ANS. This is an option if the revisions are up to two pages in length and can be published in *Standards Action*. This option cannot be used for new standards.

- Ensure clear and accurate written notice of the right to appeal to the standards developer in accordance with deadlines and processes set forth in your organization’s ANSI-accredited procedures. Establish,

articulate, and adhere to filing and correspondence deadlines. Provide participants with the url to your organization's accredited procedures and/or excerpt appropriate text as part of the written notice.

- Include clear language in comment disposition letters sent to objectors resulting from public review. The language should indicate that if the commenter does not respond within "x" days, the developer will consider the comments resolved. (This applies to public review commenters only, not to consensus body voting members.)

- Interpretations policy: If interpretations of ANS are offered, then it is recommended that a developer's interpretations policy require the submission of written requests and that any interpretations be issued in writing. Retain a copy of all related documentation as part of ANS records subject to audit.

- If your organization wishes to utilize an expedited process for the national adoption of an International Organization for Standardization (ISO), International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC), or ISO/IEC Joint Technical Committee (JTC) 1 standard, then include a statement to this effect in your organization's ANSI-accredited procedures and submit for reaccreditation to psa@ansi.org.

FORMS/DOCUMENTATION

- Provide adequate, concise, and clear background information and instructions to participants and voters to minimize confusion and thus minimize delayed responses or non-responses.

- Format ballots clearly and so that deadlines and voting instructions are evident and simply communicated.

- Maintain voting membership roster electronically with all required details in a simple format.

- If only certain portions of a document are subject to review, clearly indicate this on all related communications and in the scope of the ANSI public review announcement (BSR-8 form) to minimize confusion and focus on the sections of the document that are eligible for comment.

- Develop standard e-mail notifications that are ready for routine use: confirmation of membership/participation; distribution of procedures; meeting schedule; staff resources; relevant web access points; ballot cover letters; appeals notifications; follow-up communications; closing communications.

- Develop and use templates for meeting reports, agendas, etc.

- Maintain adequate records to document procedural compliance; maintain records electronically and label them clearly and meaningfully. (See "ANSI Standards Developer Audit Guidance and Checklist" for ideas on naming, organizing, and retaining electronic records.)

- Ensure that key data elements, voting calculations and if feasible, project summaries, are maintained along with development records – electronically or in hard copy.

- Utilize available online forms: http://psawebforms.ansi.org/. Ensure that an e-mail confirmation from PSA (ANSI Procedures and Standards Administration – psa@ansi.org) is received and retained for

each submittal. If a receipt is not received, it is possible that an error occurred and the project may be delayed as a result. Contact psa@ansi.org immediately if this is the case.

- Utilize the current version of the BSR-9 form (final submittal checklist.) Read each item carefully. If you do not understand it, refer to the referenced clause in the *ANSI Essential Requirements* for details. Include a valid e-mail address for the person who is to be contacted regarding any related questions from ANSI staff or the ANSI BSR.

- Do not submit a copy of a draft standard with a BSR-9 form; in some instances, this delays processing. In all instances, it is not reviewed by anyone at ANSI.

HUMAN RESOURCES (STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS)

- Provide training to involved staff and volunteers. Maintain a basic training guide for new staff and for volunteers. Train for redundancy of skill set among staff to facilitate coverage and increase pool of knowledgeable staff.

- Recommend all involved visit www.standardslearn.org periodically to review free substantive courses and case studies.

- Consider implementing a mentor program, where experienced volunteers serve as mentors for new members to facilitate the indoctrination process.

- Provide all new consensus-body members with current procedures, and redistribute current procedures (or the URL at which they are posted) annually.

- Ensure that the staff of the standards developer maintains all ANS-related records instead of relying on volunteers (chairs, etc.) as the sole source of such documents. This will ensure the integrity and availability of records.

- Attend and actively participate in the ANSI Organizational Member Forum (OMF) and periodically consider attending an ANSI training course (www.ansi.org/education).

COMMENTS: psa@ansi.org