



**Requirements for
Accreditation of
Standards Development
Organisations**

26 September 2007

Level 13, 20 Bridge Street Sydney NSW 2000
P 02 9237 6114 F 02 9237 6030
www.absdo.org.au

Application of the Requirements

The following are minimum requirements for organisations seeking to be accredited as a Standards Development Organisation ('SDO').

Accreditation is granted for the development of Standards within a specified scope of accreditation, and particular conditions will also be prescribed in relation to each SDO's accreditation.

Accreditation of an organisation will be considered by the Accreditation Board for Standards Development Organisations on the basis of a submission by the Organisation committing itself to meeting the requirements of this document, 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 that satisfactory arrangements have been agreed regarding publication, distribution, royalty payments or any other necessary aspects. Accreditation will include the requirement that where potential for conflict in the area of coverage of documents produced by either party exists, whether covered by the accreditation or not, that the parties seek resolution of the issue.

Applications will be treated as being in the public domain to the extent that the Accreditation Board for Standards Development Organisations may, if thought relevant, invite public comment on the application to become an SDO. (Application documentation will reflect the above).

The term of accreditation will normally be three years but conditions may be applied by the Accreditation Board for Standards Development Organisations.

Surveillance audits to maintain accreditation will be conducted in accordance with an agreed schedule on the basis of audit established during accreditation, which will depend upon the level of standards writing activity of the Standards Development Organisation, but not more frequently than 6 monthly and at least annually. Audit team members will be acceptable to the Standards Development Organisation and act at all times impartially and maintain confidentiality.

Any proposed change to the terms of accreditation shall be advised to and approved by the Accreditation Board for Standards Development Organisations, and be verified at the surveillance audit.

In the event of default with compliance of the terms of accreditation by the Standards Development Organisation, at its discretion the Accreditation Board for Standards Development Organisations may require remedial action, or may suspend or cancel accreditation on such conditions or terms as the Accreditation Board for Standards Development Organisations may determine.

A schedule of fees, as amended from time to time, to cover the costs of application, assessment and surveillance audits will apply and will be published by the Accreditation Board for Standards Development Organisations.

PART A - Organisational Requirements

1. Standing

The organisation must be of good standing and suitable to undertake standardization in the area in which accreditation is sought.

- 1.1 The organisation must:
 - a. Have sufficient credibility and repute within industry to support its accreditation in the area of Standardization
 - b. Demonstrate a knowledge of the sector's interests and the issues impacting the sector sufficient to carry out the Standardization work
 - c. Demonstrate that they will be able to support and maintain Standards into the future; and
 - d. Be a registered legal entity.
- 1.2 The organisation seeking accreditation shall be representative of the sector of interest for which accreditation is sought and this may be tested by seeking the views of that sector of interest as part of consideration of the application.

2. Resources

The organisation must be appropriately resourced to carry out Standards development work within the scope of accreditation, and to do so in a reasonable time frame.

- 2.1 The organisation must have sufficient resources to comply with any reasonable request to develop a Standard within the proposed scope of accreditation.
- 2.2 The organisation must have:
 - a. The capacity to meet the cost of Standards development activities within the scope of accreditation
 - b. The capacity to achieve effective engagement with all key stakeholders
 - c. Adequate resources or access to such resources and staff who are competent to perform Standards development activities effectively
 - d. Sufficient resources available to participate in relevant international Standards development work; and
 - e. Resources to maintain Standards within the proposed scope of accreditation into the future.

3. Standards Development Processes

The organisation must have documented processes for Standards development which satisfy the *Criteria for Designation as an Australian Standard*.

- 3.1 The Standards development processes must address:
 - a. The evaluation of new work items (including evaluating the need and benefits of proposed Standards)
 - b. Submission of new work items to the National Standards Office
 - c. Establishing a balanced Standards Reference Body
 - d. Planning and management of the Standards development process
 - e. Public review, including reviews of stakeholder feedback
 - f. Achieving and demonstrating consensus; and
 - g. Regularly reviewing and maintaining Standards.

ABSDO

- 3.2 The organisation must retain records to demonstrate compliance with its own processes and the *Criteria for Designation as an Australian Standard* for at least 7 years from the date of publication of a Standard.
- 3.3 The Standards development processes must be regularly reviewed and any changes tracked.
- 3.4 The Standards development processes must be available for audit and to any other interested party.

4. Administrative Procedures

The organisation must have suitable written administrative procedures to support its Standards development processes.

- 4.1 The administrative procedures must include appropriate and effective record keeping systems and document management systems, including a records management policy.
- 4.2 The administrative procedures must be available for audit and regularly updated to ensure effectiveness.

5. Neutrality and Independence

The organisation must demonstrate independence and neutrality throughout the Standards development process.

- 5.1 The organisation must be operated so as to safeguard the objectivity and impartiality of the individuals or groups responsible for Standards development.
- 5.2 The decisions of Standards Reference Bodies developing Standards must not be able to be changed or over-ruled by the organisation without due process.
- 5.3 Communication concerning the content of a Standard between the governance structure of the organisation and the Standards Reference Body must be documented, open and available for audit.

Note: The requirement for 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 must be able to comply with the intent of Part B Criteria 1 – Independent Facilitation of *the Criteria for Designation as an Australian Standard*.

6. Complaints Procedure

The organisation must have a procedure for hearing complaints arising out of the Standards development process.

- 6.1 The complaints procedure must:
- a. Be fair, unbiased, accessible and not impose any undue burden on the complainant
 - b. Provide for the timely hearing of complaints, and must attempt to fully address each complaint; and
 - c. Be reviewed regularly to ensure its effectiveness.
- 6.4 A copy of the complaints procedure, all records related to the complaint and the outcome of each complaint must be available for audit, and to any other interested party.

7. Existing Rights and Obligations

The SDO must demonstrate that any existing rights and obligations related to current Standards within the scope of accreditation have been negotiated and agreed with the relevant SDO.

- 7.1 The organisation must provide details of any agreements reached in relation to current Standards within the relevant scope of accreditation.
- 7.2 Negotiations need not have been completed, however there must be evidence of a bona fide intention on the part of organisation and the existing SDO to reach such an agreement.

7A. Intellectual Property

The SDO will hold Intellectual Property Rights

- 7A.1 All intellectual property rights created by the SDO will be owned by the SDO (unless otherwise agreed between the parties).
- 7A.2 The SDO must ensure that it owns all intellectual property rights in, or is duly licensed to incorporate any third party material (including without limitation any content, concepts, tables, diagrams, formulae and photographs) into, the Standard(s) developed by it and that the Standard(s) developed by it do not infringe the rights of any third party (including without limitation any intellectual property rights).

PART B - On-Going Requirements

Continuing accreditation is dependent upon continued compliance with the following requirements.

8. Maintain Standards

The organisation must maintain and keep up to date Standards within the scope of its accreditation.

- 8.1 Standards within the area of accreditation must be regularly reviewed to ensure that they are up-to-date and current. This includes a commitment to revising Standards at intervals determined by the National Standards Office.
- 8.2 The organisation must address any reasonable enquiries about Standards within the scope of accreditation.

9. Co-operation and Liaison with the National Standards Office

The organisation must co-operate and liaise with the National Standards Office with the intent of enhancing communication and co-ordination of Standards development activities across industry and government.

- 9.1 The organisation must:
 - a. Register all new Standards development projects with the National Standards Office ('NSO') prior to commencing substantial work
 - b. Prepare and make available to the NSO an up to date Development Plan for each Standards development activity
 - c. Comply with all policies and procedures of the NSO and the Accreditation Board for Standards Development Organisations ('ABSDO'), including for the determination and funding of appeals
 - d. Comply with the NSO's administrative procedures, including badging and the format of documents
 - e. Make copies of draft and final documents available to the NSO as required
 - f. Notify the ABSDO of any significant changes in the organisation's Standards development processes and obtain any necessary approval of those processes
 - g. Submit to the ABSDO's determination where there is a conflict in the scope of areas of accreditation
 - h. Co-operate with the NSO and the ABSDO regarding hand-over of relevant information and records where an SDO's accreditation ceases;
 - i. Co-operate with the NSO regarding activities of mutual interest; and
 - j. Pay all relevant fees to the ABSDO to achieve and maintain accreditation.

10. Submit to Audits by the Accreditation Board for Standards Development Organisations

The organisation must submit to surveillance audits by the ABSDO to establish on-going compliance with the *Requirements for Accreditation* and the organisation's suitability for on-going accreditation.

Note: The scope and frequency of such audits will be as determined by the ABSDO and set out in the organisation's accreditation conditions. However, such audits will not exceed what is reasonable to establish on-going compliance and suitability for accreditation.

11. International Participation

The organisation may act as the Australian mirror committee for the purposes of participation in the technical work of ISO or IEC where that work falls within the scope of the organisation's accreditation

- 11.1 Where work in committees of ISO or IEC parallel the scope of work of the Standards Development Organisation, Standards Australia may assign that participation to the SDO. Participation will include commenting and voting on international drafts and briefing of delegates to international meetings in accordance with the policies set out in Standards Australia's Policy Guide on Australian Involvement in International Standardization .
- 11.2 All ISO and IEC communications shall be through Standards Australia, and Standards Australia shall accredit delegates for such matters as attendance at meetings. Requests for funding assistance by Standards Australia for delegates to attend international meetings will be in accordance with Standards Australia guidelines and shall include the recommendation of the SDO's Standards Reference Body.

PART C – Authority for Process Approval

The Accreditation Board for Standards Development Organisations may at its discretion grant authority to an SDO to provide process approval of its standards as Australian Standards without approval by the National Standards Office.

This authority will be granted at the discretion of the Accreditation Board for Standards Development Organisations and may be revoked at any time.

Conditions may be placed on this authority at the discretion of the Accreditation Board for Standards Development Organisations.

ABSDO Terminology

In addition to the following terms, the definitions in *ISO/IEC 17000 Conformity Assessment: Vocabulary and general principles* shall apply.

Standard means an Australian Standard developed in accordance with the *Criteria for Designation as an Australian Standard* and recognised by the National Standards Office as an Australian Standard.

Standards Development Organisation means an organisation accredited by the Accreditation Board for Standards Development Organisations (ABSDO) to develop Australian Standards.