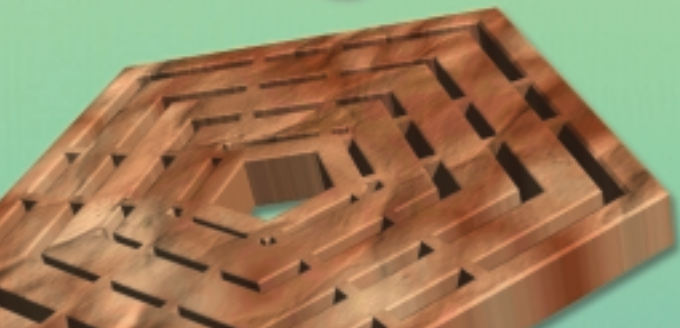
Pocket Guide for DoD Participants

Materiel International Standardization Agreement (ISA) Committees

ABCA

COMBINED
COMMUNICATIONS-ELECTRONICS
BOARD (CCEB)



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Foreword

With the growing emphasis on interoperability between U.S. and allied forces, effective U.S. participation in groups that develop international standardization agreements (ISAs) is essential. Not only must such participation produce the optimum level of interoperability, it must also do so in a way that is consistent with good business practices and defense acquisition objectives.

This pocket guide provides some basic information about the ISA process and the responsibilities of participants on ISA committees, so that participants can best represent U.S. interests and ensure that the different steps in the process are implemented effectively. While it is primarily intended to address materiel ISAs used in acquisition, the basic principles and many of the procedures for development and implementation also apply to other types of ISAs.

We hope you find this guide useful as a ready pocket reference. If you have suggestions on how we can make it more useful, please send an e-mail via the "Feedback" feature on our website at http://www.dsp.dla.mil.

Introduction

This pocket guide will acquaint you with the basic elements of international standardization efforts and your responsibilities as a U.S. representative. It describes

- the purpose of materiel international standardization agreements,
- several major bodies that develop ISAs,
- the general process and principles of standardization,
- responsibilities of participants,
- guidance for participants,
- helpful tools for participants, and
- points of contact for questions and problems.

Purpose of Materiel ISAs

A materiel ISA is the record of an agreement among several or all member nations of a multinational treaty organization to adopt the same or similar military equipment, ammunition, supplies, and stores.

Importance of ISAs

ISAs are important for ensuring interoperability and sustaining readiness among our allies. ISAs are becoming more important for enabling the objectives of the Department of Defense (DoD) Joint Vision 2020 to increase joint and coalition operations, achieve information technology superiority, improve logistics support, and enhance technological sophistication. It is important to ensure that operational requirements critical to coalition warfare are identified, documented, and made widely visible and available to affected users.

Governing Directives

While many DoD directives and instructions deal with ISAs, two key policy documents relate to materiel ISAs:

- Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Instruction (CJCSI) 2700.01, "International Military Rationalization,

Standardization and Interoperability Between the United States and its Allies and Other Friendly Nations." This CJCSI and others can be found at http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/cjcsidirectives.htm.

- DoD Directive 2010.6, "Standardization and Interoperability of Weapons Systems and Equipment Within the North Atlantic Treaty Organization." The full text of this and other DoD directives is at http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives.

In addition, Chapter 6 of DoD 4120.24-M, "Defense Standardization Program Policies and Procedures," provides policies and procedures for participating in materiel ISA committees, and ratifying and implementing materiel ISAs. This document can be found at http://www.dsp.dla.mil.

Major ISA Bodies

Even though dozens of organizations develop ISAs, most such activity takes place within the five major organizations listed below. Further information can be found at the website address shown for each body.

NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION (NATO)

As of 2001, NATO consists of 19 member nations, 17 in Europe (including Turkey) as well as the United States and Canada. A number of other nations of Europe and the former Soviet Union compose the Partnership for Peace. NATO makes extensive efforts to improve cooperation and eliminate duplication in research, development, production, procurement, and support of defense systems.

The four major parts of NATO standardization activity are as follows:

- The NATO Standardization Agency (NSA) works mostly in operations-type standardization, including doctrine, tactics, techniques, and procedures.

Until its recent reorganization, the NSA was known as the Military Agency for Standardization (MAS). It has four boards: the Army Board, Navy Board, Air Board, and Joint Service Board.

- The Conference of National Armaments Directors (CNAD) is concerned more with standardization related to research, development, production, and acquisition of armaments.
- The Senior NATO Logisticians Conference (SNLC) is concerned with standardization related to logistics.
- The NATO C3 Board deals mostly with standardization related to command, control, and communications.

The types of ISAs that NATO develops are Standardization Agreements (STANAGs) and Allied Publications (APs).

NATO's web site is at http://www.nato.int.

AMERICAN, BRITISH, CANADIAN, AND AUSTRALIAN ARMIES (ABCA)

The ABCA is an international program that promotes interoperability and stan-

dardization among the armies of the United States, Britain, Canada, and Australia. New Zealand is an associate member.

The types of ISAs that the ABCA develops are Quadripartite Standardization Agreements (QSTAGs) and Quadripartite Advisory Publications (QAPs).

The ABCA's website is at http://www.abca.hqda.pentagon.mil.

AIR STANDARDIZATION COORDINATING COMMITTEE (ASCC)

The ASCC is an international air force organization representing Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States. It works to ensure interoperability in joint and combined operations.

The types of ISAs that the ASCC develops are Air Standards (AIR STDs), Advisory Publications (ADV PUBs), and Information Publications (INFO PUBs).

The ASCC's website (access controlled) is at http://www.xo.hq.af.mil/xor.xorg-iso/ascc.

COMBINED
COMMUNICATIONS-ELECTRONICS
BOARD (CCEB)

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The CCEB is a five-nation joint military communications-electronics organization composed of Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Its aim is to establish systems architecture, standards, and operational procedures.

The ISAs that the CCEB develops are Allied Communications Publications (ACPs).

The CCEB's website is at http://www.dtic.mil/jcs/j6/cceb.

AUSTRALIA CANADA NEW ZEALAND UNITED KINGDOM AND UNITED STATES NAVAL C4 ORGANIZATION (AUSCANNZUKUS)

AUSCANNZUKUS consists of the five nations of Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Its goal is to align naval communications policies.

A series of documents under the Network Working Group addresses concept of operations, standard operating procedures, and technical operating instructions.

The organization's website is at http://auscannzukus-navalc3.hq.navy.mil.

Standardization Process and Principles

The following are basic elements of standardization and the development of standardization agreements.

ISA Life Cycle

The steps in the evolution of an ISA are as follows:

- Develop a draft.
- Ratify the ISA (formal acceptance by a nation).
- Promulgate the ISA (enough nations ratify to make it official, and it is issued).
- Implement the ISA (each nation puts it into effect).
- Review the ISA (at least once every 2 years to determine its continuing validity).

Since ratification is a formal statement by the United States, it is mandatory that the U.S. delegate follow the agency's and department's ISA coordination policies and procedures. The United States will generally ratify ISAs that meet identified needs of the U.S. military.

U.S. delegates will consider the following criteria during ratification procedures:

- An ISA should not conflict with DoD acquisition policies.
- It should be substantive, technically correct, and adequate.
- It should not adversely affect the performance, quality, cost, or reliability of U.S. materiel.
- It should be consistent with existing U.S. standardization documents and U.S.-ratified ISAs.
- It should be accompanied by a viable U.S. implementation plan.

Principles and Practices

Establishing an ISA is not an end in itself. Interoperability is the primary aim of standardization agreements.

Participation in the development process is voluntary—but once ratified, some standards may be mandatory.

Defense-related ISAs should adopt civilian standards to the maximum practical extent.

Understanding the terminology of the subject matter and the standardization agreement process is a prerequisite for participating.

Levels of Standardization

Standardization can be achieved at several different levels:

- Compatibility—The suitability of products, processes, or services for use together under specific conditions to fulfill relevant requirements without causing unacceptable interactions.
- Interoperability—The ability of allied forces to train, exercise, and operate effectively together, in the execution of assigned missions and tasks.
- Interchangeability—The ability of one product, process, or service to be used in place of another to fulfill the same requirements.
- Commonality—The state achieved when the same doctrine, procedures, or equipment is used.

Note: NATO, ABCA, and ASCC all recently have stated that interoperability is the goal of standardization, and established three levels of standardization, in ascending order, as compatibility, interchangeability, and commonality.

Responsibilities of Participants

Participants in groups developing materiel ISAs must become familiar with "U.S. Participation in the Development and Ratification of International Standardization Agreements Intended for Use in Defense Acquisitions," Chapter 6 of DoD 4120.24-M. It establishes criteria for participation in the development, ratification, and implementation of ISAs, which are used by the acquisition workforce in the acquisition process. Several important participant responsibilities are described below.

- For all ISAs intended for use in acquisitions, participants must consult with their standardization executive on issues such as whether the United States should participate on specific ISA committees, ratify specific ISAs, or express reservations to specific ISAs.
- The United States should only participate in the development and ratification of ISAs that will improve the effectiveness of multinational forces when operating together, or that will ensure compatibility, interoperability, interchangeability, or commonality for U.S.-supplied materiel, and that will not conflict with acquisition policy.

- When these conditions are met, the participant needs to ensure the appropriate level of support and coordinate the proposed ISA following department and agency procedures to ensure that it is technically correct and adequate, and meets identified needs of the U.S. military.
- The participant will provide his or her standardization executive with recommendations on whether the United States should ratify, with or without reservations, an ISA intended for use in acquisitions. Recommendations must include a plan for implementing the ISA.
- The participant is responsible for ensuring periodic review of the ISA and for taking appropriate actions resulting from the review. These actions could include updating the ISA, withdrawing ratification, or maintaining the ISA in its present form.
- Soon after a U.S.-ratified ISA is promulgated, the participant must ensure that the proper office forwards the ISA to the DoD Single Stock Point in Philadelphia for indexing and entry into the database of the Acquisition Streamlining and Standardization Information System (ASSIST).

Guidance for Participants

Representing the position and interests of your agency or department requires knowledge, skill, and attention. The following advice, based on lessons learned, can help make your efforts more effective and worthwhile.

Planning for Participation

You must plan well in advance of your actual participation in standardization meetings. Here are some things that require your attention long before you first sit down at the discussion table.

Prepare your visit notification to the U.S. Mission to NATO and other applicable ISA bodies in plenty of time.

Make air travel reservations early, particularly during peak travel periods.

Be sure to attend your agency's or department's antiterrorist briefing.

Obtain or update your passport and/or military identification. It takes a while for the process, so get started at least several weeks before you'll need these credentials.

Review any guidelines for successful participation issued by your department or agency.

Preparing for Meetings

It takes a lot of groundwork and coordination to represent effectively the interests of your agency or department.

You will need to prepare statements and positions carefully, whether before discussions or in response to events, rather than improvise them as you go. This does not mean you aren't allowed any flexibility—in fact, it's a good idea to establish not only your primary goal but also a few alternatives. Yet these, too, require thorough consideration in advance.

Coordinate and obtain approval for U.S. positions. Review positions with the appropriate staff of the U.S. Mission and delegation (in the case of NATO).

Review and become familiar with the applicable U.S. policy directives, as well as the policies and procedures of the ISA body with which you'll be working.

Being Professional and Productive

The time you spend in meetings should be the culmination of your previous groundwork. Your focus and diligence during these meetings will determine how well your efforts pay off.

Dress appropriately for the meetings—determine the dress code beforehand, and

dress accordingly. When in doubt, err on the conservative side.

Focus on being an effective listener. Stay engaged and attentive in the meeting room. Translation issues demand careful listening and speaking in order to understand and to be understood. Speak when you can make a positive contribution, not for the sake of merely appearing involved.

It's important to participate in social occasions—they can add a significant dimension to your effectiveness. That means you can't be a "lone wolf." Issues often can be successfully dealt with over dinner or at other social events outside the formal meeting room.

Offer to help your colleagues—within the boundaries of ethics and confidentiality—when they are trying to get information and you are in a position to assist them. This helps solidify your role, and you may need their help later.

Behave graciously when encountering hostility, unfounded accusations, or misinformation targeting you as a representative of the United States or its defense sector. Do not allow protracted discussions of "good and evil" or "right and

wrong" to tie up group time or distract from the business at hand. Offer to continue the discussion elsewhere at another time, and try to understand the source of the hostility.

Following Up

As with so many other endeavors in life, the secret to success in standardization discussions is a good follow-through.

When meetings are over, take care of action items and other loose ends to sustain the momentum toward results. Review the meeting minutes or decision sheets and follow up—complete your assigned tasks.

Also remember to prepare your trip report and distribute it, in paper form or electronically, to the appropriate interested parties.

Helpful Tools for ISA Participants

Several DoD tools can assist participants in international standardization activities.

ISA PARTICIPANTS DATABASE

http://www.dsp.dla.mil/isa

To promote better communication of ISA activities, the Defense Standardization Program (DSP) provides and maintains a web-based list of DoD participants on ISA committees.

The database includes lists of the standardization bodies and their committees, the committees and their participants, and the participants and the committees they serve on.

This database enables DoD to disseminate information vital to the effective management and operation of ISA activities.

ASSIST

http://www.dodssp.daps.mil

The DSP maintains and provides two of the most widely recognized and used document indexes in DoD and the defense industry: ASSIST (the online Acquisition Streamlining and Standardization Information System) and the DoD Index of Specifications and Standards (DODISS), which is a paper index derived from ASSIST.

ASSIST and DODISS list ISAs and approved defense and federal specifications and standards, commercial item descriptions, DoD-adopted non-government standards, qualified products lists, and other types of standardization documents.

While DODISS is only an index, the ASSIST database provides much more information about ISAs. For U.S.-ratified ISAs, the ASSIST database identifies the U.S. point of contact, the implementing documents, and whether the United States has expressed reservations. The full text of more and more ISAs is on ASSIST, as well as most of their implementing documents. These can be downloaded, although a password may be needed for some of the ISAs.

IMS WMS

http://www.imswms.hq.af.mil

Another DoD electronic tool, developed and maintained by the Air Force, is the International Military Standardization (IMS) Work Management System (WMS).

The IMS WMS enables DoD personnel to conduct real-time communication and coordination over the Internet. It can be used for managing ISA activities by let-

ting users electronically develop, distribute, and coordinate documents. It can also be used to identify reservations and implementing documents; to allow users access to ISA instructions, forms, and guides; and to view the full text of many draft and promulgated ISAs.

Users around the world with access to the Internet select the subject of choice, select the applicable module, and then perform the specific business function by operating on the selected database using the database gateway software. This tool currently emulates processes that occur in developing, preparing, and ratifying ISAs among 19 countries of NATO and 5 countries in the ASCC. Use is not limited to the Air Force or Air Force groups, but users must be registered.

Points of Contact for Questions and Problems

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(for serious problems)
02/508-2111 during duty hours
0475/29-6932 after duty hours

Notes

Information current as of November 2001; updated information is available at http://www.dsp.dla.mil.

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