प्रमोद कुमार तिवारी, आई ए एस
PRAMOD KUMAR TIWARI, IAS
महानिदेशक
Director General
दूरभाष/Phone   : + 91-11-2323 7991, 2323 6980
ई–मेल/E-mail   : dg@bis.gov.in
वैबसाईट/Website : http://www.bis.gov.in

सत्यमेव जयते

भारतीय मानक ब्यूरो
(भारत सरकार)
मानक भवन, 9, बहादुरशाह ज़फर मार्ग,
नई दिल्ली - 110 002
Bureau of Indian Standards
(Government of India)
Manak Bhawan, 9, Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg,
9th November 2023

Our Ref: P&C/09/18/2023-PNC-BIS .

Dear Sir/ Madam,

BIS, as you may be aware, has 387 Sectional Committees (SCs), as on today, with about 19,000 domain area experts representing industry, Industry associations, academic institutions, research & development organisations, central and state governments, and civil society groups as members. In addition, there are hundreds of Working Panels (WPs) and Working Groups (WGs) created to assist the Sectional Committees under the overall supervision and guidance of 16 Divisional Councils (DCs). Details of the DCs, SCs, WPs and WGs (scope of work and composition) can be seen on the Standardisation Portal of eBIS (www.manakonline.in).

2.   There is no denying the significant role this institutional arrangement has played in the formulation of standards, but as is the case with any organisation or institution, this arrangement is also confronted with some challenges in the face of the ambition of the nation to see BIS reckoned as one of the best National Standards Bodies of the world. To name a few: static composition of the SCs, poor attendance in SC meetings, a large number of non-participating members, growing tendency of not commenting on the P Drafts and Wide Circulation Drafts, indifferent attitude to the ISO/IEC documents circulated for comment, negligible focus on R&D Projects necessary for evidence-based standardisation, unsatisfactory level of synergy with government, regulatory bodies and industry, narrow base of stakeholders involved in standard formulation, inadequate focus on sustainability issues and long-time taken in coming out with standards. Needless to say, we cannot realise the ambition of becoming one of the best in the business without addressing these challenges.

3.   I am happy to inform you that BIS has initiated a series of structural and process reforms to address each of these challenges in an efficacious manner, and the purpose of writing to you is to apprise you of these interventions, as their efficacy and success hinge substantially on their appreciation and ownership on our part.

4. Composition of Sectional Committees

4.1.   Search Committees in each of the DCs and a dedicated group under Standard Co-ordination & Monitoring Department (SCMD) have been created to scout for the best brains in the country to be inducted into the SCs. It is expected of every SC member to contribute by suggesting names of the experts and professionals they think can be associated with the SCs, WPs or WGs. All of them may not be accommodated in SCs, WPs or WGs, but it helps to expand the standards community in the country if we can establish regular communication with them on the ongoing standardization projects.

4.2.   MoUs with premier academic institutions imparting technical and professional education (List of institutions is available on the homepage of the   BIS Website) have motivating and empowering the faculty of these institutions to participate in the standard formulation process as one of the objectives. As you can see in the list, 15 of these institutions, mostly IITs, have established Chairs on Standardisation, and others have agreed to collaborate with the BIS on the project basis. Another important objective of the MoUs is to involve the faculty and research scholars in the R&D Projects approved by the Sectional Committees and encourage them to share the research work undertaken by them, if it is believed to have relevance for the formulation of a new standard or review of an existing one.

4.3.   It is also decided to invite Expression of Interest through open advertisement to fill the gap of experts in the SCs or WPs/WGs if the need is felt. SCs are expected to identify the gaps and convey them to the SCMD for necessary follow up action.

4.4.   Standardisation Cells in the Industry Associations and Ministries are also expected to get the right kind of experts and professionals to be inducted in the SCs, WPs and WGs. Details of the standardisation cells can be seen on the Standardisation Portal.

4.5   Majority of the experts/professionals in the SCs represent their organisations. It has been decided that the nomination of an expert/professional to a SC shall be sent by/with the approval of the Head of the Organisation concerned along with his/her CV. The DC reserves the right to examine if the nominated person has the requisite expertise and experience and accept or reject the nomination.

4.6   An expert or professional interested to join SC may also apply online through the Standardization Portal. It is necessary, however, that he should furnish NOC from the organisation if he/she is an employee thereof. One can always apply to be

inducted as a member in his/her individual capacity. DC reserves the right to accept or reject an application without communicating the grounds for rejection

5. Smart and efficient SCs

5.1.   For a SC to function at the optimal level of efficiency, it is imperative that all its members are fully conversant with its vision, scope, challenges, long, medium and short term goals, support systems, functional norms and procedures. The decision to organise an Onboarding Programme (OP) for every newly inducted member within three months of their induction is aimed at addressing this need as well as facilitating the unity of thought and a shared sense of purpose among the SC members. Attending the OP is a mandatory condition for the membership of SC.

5.2.   Each of the SC members are required to sign a Declaration, as prescribed by the BIS, affirming their commitment to carry out the responsibilities of a SC members with utmost sincerity. The Declaration does not have legal backing and it imposes no liability on a member. It is just an instrument of remembrance of the role and responsibilities of a TC member. Signing of the Declaration is, however a mandatory condition for the membership of SC.

5.3.   Attendance of the members in SC meetings is sine qua non for its effective and efficient functioning. A member remaining absent from two consecutive meetings of the SC and/or fifty percent or more meetings of the SC in a year shall automatically become disqualified to continue as the member of the SC; unless on receiving a representation to this effect, the DC decides upon the recommendation of the SC concerned to condone the absence in view of his/her valuable contribution to the SC.

5.4.   If member of the SC having incurred disqualification is representing an organisation, the membership of the organisation shall stand terminated. In the case of the Central Government Ministries/Departments or a government organisation, however, SC may decide to approach it to nominate a different expert/professional on the termination of the membership of its representative. All such correspondence shall be made, with the prior approval of DG, BIS.

5.5.   To ensure that the members and the organisations they represent do not miss out on the seriousness of this matter, an alert will be sent to them by the Member Secretary of the SC immediately after their failure to attend a SC meeting.

5.6.   Preliminary Draft stage of a standard is the occasion for the members of the SC to undertake a nuanced and in-depth analysis of the proposed standard. Abstaining

from commenting on the P Draft by a member, therefore, has serious implications for the quality of the draft. Members must either support or reject it or offer their comments for improvement. A member not commenting on two consecutive and/or one fourth of the P Drafts circulated by the SC in a year will automatically be disqualified to continue as a member.

5.7.   Comments on P or wide circulation Drafts shall be made only through the standardisation Portal. It not only helps in compiling and analysing the comments, but also helps in the documentation of the standard formulation/review process.

5.8.   Practice of preparing the Annual Calendar of SC meetings has been introduced to provide members enough time to adjust their calendar of engagements suitably and prepare for the meetings. The Annual calendar is available on the Standardization Portal. Through it is desired that every SC has quarterly meetings, it is for the SC to decide the number of meetings to be held in view of the work load and urgency of the standards under developments. At least two meetings must be held by a SC, nonetheless, in a year.

5.9.   To ensure that the SC meeting is held on the scheduled dates, it has been decided that the meeting should not be postponed for the inability of the chairperson to attend it for some unavoidable reason. It should, in his/her absence, be chaired by one of the members chosen by the members present, and the decisions taken in the meeting shall be deemed to have been taken by the SC for all purposes.

5.10   The SC meeting should as far as possible be held in the physical mode. The chairperson may decide, however, to hold them in the hybrid mode. It is also a good idea to organise SC meeting at prominent academic institutions or industries, as it may serve to spread awareness about the work and functioning of SCs.

5.11   Every member of a SC is entitled to requisition books and journals relevant for the work in progress through the Library Management System of the BIS by using the Log in Id created for this purpose. SCMD shall process the requisitions promptly.

5.12   Every member of a SC is authorised to submit the proposal for taking up an ARP or R&D Project commissioned by the BIS.

5.13.   Chairpersons of the SCs are entitled to a Sitting Allowance of Rs. Twenty thousand for a SC meeting.

6. Working Panels & Working Groups

6.1.   Working Panels (WPs) are created under a SC to have a smaller group of experts/professionals with the expertise and skill sets suitable for a standard or a set of standards under development, as the scope of the Sectional Committee may be too diffused at times to have each of the members interested or invested in that work. The WPs should have its members from amongst the SC members, but SC may decide to co-opt experts from outside. The convenor of the Working Panels should, however, essentially be a SC member, and the Member Secretary of the SC shall provide all the support to the WP, which he/she is expected to provide to the SC.

6.2.   The decision to create a WP must define the purpose of its creation, its scope and timeframe for the completion of the tasks. The SC must take a stock of its achievements before extending its tenure.

6.3.   Working Group (WG) is envisaged as a Special Purpose Vehicle to carry out a specific task: one particular subject or a set of related subjects for standardisation or an existing standard or a set of related standards for review. It should, therefore, have a well-articulated Scope of Work and Terms of Reference (ToR) with a fixed timeframe. No WG should be created without defining the Scope of Work, ToR and Timeframe.

6.4.   The Working Group should not normally have more than three domain area experts, and under no circumstances, more than five experts as members, either from amongst SC members or outside, nominated by the SC.

7.   Research as an integral part of the standard formulation

7.1.   As a matter of policy, no new standard should be formulated or existing standard reviewed without an ARP or R&D project, unless the SC takes a conscious call, to be recorded in the minutes of the SC meeting, that the data and information available is sufficient and does not warrant any further research.

7.2.   As per the guidelines for R&D projects approved by the Executive committee of BIS, small R&D projects (with financial involvement upto Rs 10 Lakh Only) can be awarded to the members of SC, WP, working groups and faculty or research scholars of the academic institutions having entered into MoU with BIS by inviting proposals from them.

7.3. SC is required to approve the Scope and ToR of the R&D Project. The project recommended by the SCs are examined and approved by a Project Approval committee, created for this purpose. The R&D project are made available on the Standardisation portal thereafter, and intimation regarding a new R&D project is also sent to the SC member and faculty and research scholars of the institutions through the portal. A database of around ten thousand faculty/research Scholars has been created for the purpose.

7.4. The proposals to undertake a R&D project has to be submitted online through the portal and are examined and approved by a Committee constituted for this purpose.

7.5. Detailed guidelines and FAQs on R&D projects can be seen on the Standardization Portal.

8. Standard Formulation

8.1. Each of the SCs are required to prepare the Rolling Annual Plan for Standardisation based on the inputs from the Standard National Action Plan (SNAP), Annual Programme for Standardisation from Ministries, NWIPs received from diverse sources, ISO/IEC standards/drafts and standards due for review. Provision has been made on the Standardisation Portal to prepare the Annual Plan online.

8.2. Policy of Archiving has been adopted to help the SCs priortise the review of standards. The standards, which cannot be withdrawn, but have lost relevance due to diminishing use in the wake of onset of new products, processes or test methods, can be archived, and a mention to this effect shall be made against that standard in the database of the Published standards. This will not only enable the SCs to focus on more important standards, but will also keep the window open for the stakeholders to point out if the review is required.

8.3. It has been decided to institutionalise the practice of recording Resolution, containing the decisions/ action points, immediately after the SC meeting. Detailed minutes of the meeting is to be finalised within a month of the meeting.

8.4. The practice of reaffirming a standard due for review without following due process of review is done away with. The preparation for the examination of the standards due for review should, therefore, start well in advance, so that reaffirmation with examination does not become unavoidable for the constraint of time.

9. Working with ISO/IEC

9.1.   The process of briefing of and debriefing by the experts nominated to the meetings of the ISO or IEC has been made compulsory. This will ensure that our experts are fully prepared to represent the country's interests. This, in turn, will ensure that the ISO/IEC standards are already aligned to the needs of our stakeholders in the country and can be adopted without a time lag.

9.2.   Process of adoption of ISO/IEC standard shall be same as the review of an indigenous standards.

9.3.   SCs are expected to identify Indian Standards to be proposed as NWIPs at the ISO/IEC level.

9.4.   A new portal for International Relations is under development to streamline the sharing of ISO/IEC documents with the SC members, compiling their comments and sharing our stand with the ISO/IEC.

10. Advance Dashboard on Standardisation

10.1   The Dashboard has analytical reports on various aspects of the functioning of Technical Committees and the progress of standards under development. It also has the Efficiency Index that ranks the Sectional Committees on the basis of their performance against the given parameters for every quarter of the year. Member Secretaries are required to give a demo of the Dashboard in the SC meetings.

I hope, the reform measures detailed above find a positive and enthusiastic response from you, and look forward to your suggestions to strengthen the standardisation ecosystem in the country further to meet the needs and expectations of the fast changing economy and society.

With regards,

Yours sincerely,

(Pramod Kumar Tiwari)

All the members of Division Council
All the members of Sectional Committees
Heads of Technical Departments
Member Secretaries of Sectional Committees