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Organisation internationale de normalisation
International Organization for Standardization
Международная Организация по Стандартизации

**TO THE ISO MEMBER BODIES**

Your ref.
Our ref. ISO 26000 SR

Date 2013-10-15

ISO 26000 Systematic review

Dear Sir or Madam,

The systematic review for ISO 26000 *Social responsibility* has been launched today. Although the timing for the systematic review of an ISO standard is now five years, the period for this standard is shortened to three years as it was announced in the Working Group (WG) on Social Responsibility, before being disbanded.

A Post Publication Organization (PPO) was formed after the WG was disbanded. The PPO conducts an annual survey for ISO 26000 which this time will be launched shortly after the systematic review. The ISO 26000 survey is a useful tool to gather additional information regarding the use and implementation of the standard. All ISO members are therefore encouraged to vote on the systematic review but also to respond to the survey. In addition, international organizations that were in liaison with the previous WG are being invited to submit comments on the systematic review for ISO 26000.

In order to assist you with any questions regarding the ISO 26000 systematic review process, we invite you to consult the attached Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document. A more general [FAQ document](#) also exists for the systematic review process on the electronic balloting portal.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kevin McKinley'.

Kevin McKinley
Deputy Secretary-General

Enclosure: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) on ISO 26000 Systematic review



ISO 26000

Social responsibility Systematic review FAQ

What is a systematic review?

A systematic review is a process that takes place for the maintenance of ISO standards after a given timeframe. In ISO, every International Standard or other deliverable that is published is subject to a systematic review to determine if the standard should be:

- Confirmed
- Revised/amended
- Converted¹ into another form of deliverable, or
- Withdrawn.

The table below provides an overview of the typical timing involved for the systematic review of different deliverables. For more detailed information, please consult the [ISO/IEC Directives Part 1 and Consolidated ISO Supplement, Clause 2.9.1](#).

What is the process and purpose for a systematic review?

The systematic review is a process that lasts 5 months and is administered electronically by the ISO Central Secretariat. All ISO member bodies are invited to respond to these reviews through a series of questions designed to determine if the standard has been adopted (with or without changes), is being used and whether it relates to any national regulations (see the next question below). Any proposed changes in the standard are to be taken into account by committees to see if the global relevance of the standard could be improved by taking these modifications into account. For additional information on how to interpret the ballot results, please refer to [Clause 2.9.3 of the Directives Part 1](#).

It is important to remember, however, that the final decision to confirm, revise or withdraw a standard remains with the P-members of the responsible committee (when existing).

Typical timing involved for the systematic review of different deliverables

Deliverable	Max. elapsed time before systematic review	Max. number of times deliverable may be confirmed	Max. life
International Standard	5 years	Not limited	Not limited
Technical Specification (see 3.1.3)	3 years	Once recommended	6 years recommended
Publicly Available Specification (see 3.2.4)	3 years - no default action by ISO Central Secretariat	Once	6 years (If not converted after this period, the deliverable is proposed for withdrawal)
Technical Report (see 3.3.3)	Not specified	Not specified	Not specified

¹ Conversion doesn't apply in this case and is not covered in this FAQ. Please refer to Clause 2.9.3.3 of the ISO/IEC Directives Part 1 and Consolidated ISO Supplement for information on this process.

How will it work for ISO 26000?

ISO 26000 was developed by a working group which as, since publication, been disbanded. The leadership of the working group, called the **Post Publication Organization (PPO)** was retained to provide support and expertise for users. Normally a systematic review would now take place 5 years after the publication of a standard. However, the ISO 26000 will have a systematic review after 3 years of publication, following the rule in existence at the time of development of this standard and communicated widely.

IMPORTANT In the case of the ISO 26000 systematic review, all feedback and comments will be reviewed by the PPO, who will provide a recommendation to the ISO Technical Management Board (TMB) for final decision.

What questions are asked in a systematic review ballot?

Systematic review ballots ask the following questions:

1. “Recommended action”

Answers: (1) Confirm; (2) Confirm with correction of errors, (3) Revise/amend, (4) Withdraw, (5) Abstain, (6) Abstain with survey replies.

2. “Has the International Standard been adopted or is it intended to be adopted in the future as a national standard or other publication?”

Answers: (1) Yes, (2) No.

3. “Is the national publication identical, or proposed to be identical, to the International Standard or modified?”

Answers: (1) Identical, (2) Modified.

4. “Is this International Standard used in your country without national adoption or are products used in your country based on this standard?”

Answers: (1) Yes, (2) No.

5. “Is this International Standard, or its national adoption, referenced in regulations in your country?”

Answers: (1) Yes, (2) No.

What happens if a standard is confirmed, revised, amended or withdrawn?

- **Confirmed (retention without technical change):** Where it has been verified that the standard is used, that it should continue to be made available, and that no technical changes are needed, the standard may be confirmed.
- **Amendment/revision (retention with change(s)):** Where it has been verified that the standard is used, that it should be continued to be made available, but that technical changes are needed, a deliverable may be proposed for amendment or revision.

IMPORTANT As stated, the PPO would review votes and comments. If the PPO recommends to the TMB that the standard be revised, the TMB will then study the proposal and, if needed, decide on the proper structure to conduct the technical work.

- **Withdrawal:** In the case of the proposed withdrawal of an International Standard, the national bodies shall be informed by the CEO of the decision of the technical committee or subcommittee, with an invitation to inform the office of the CEO within 3 months if they object to that decision. This 3 month period may be extended to 5 months at the request of one or more national bodies. Any objection received shall be referred to the TMB for consideration.

If I vote for a revision of the standard, can I request a modification of the scope of ISO 26000 such as to become a requirements standard or a Management System Standard (MSS) or both?

No modification to the current scope (Clause 1) of ISO 26000 is possible. Any changes to the scope of the standard will require a new proposal to be drafted.

ISO 26000 was deliberately created without requirements and is not suited to certification. It was also developed in a way that it cannot be considered a MSS. These aspects cannot change, even if the majority of comments express a need for such a change during the systematic review. However, if the majority of voters indicate a need for a requirement MSS based on ISO 26000, or any other modification enlarging the current scope, the PPO will

liaise with ISO Central Secretariat to approach one of the members requesting this change, so that Form 4 (New Work Item Proposal) can be prepared. In case it is a MSS, the proposer would need to provide a Justification Study (JS)² detailing further market information on the proposal.

Before submitting the New Work Item Proposal for vote among member bodies, the JS would be submitted to a Management System Standards Task Force (MSS TF), under the TMB, for review. If approved by the MSS TF, the JS would then be circulated together with the Proposal ([Form 4](#)) for a 3 month member body ballot.

Why is a survey on use of ISO 26000:2010 being issued in parallel with the systematic review?

The systematic review is a brief, automated survey that applies to all deliverables developed in ISO committees. This process aims to determine if a standard can be confirmed or if it needs to be revised or withdrawn. The ISO 26000 survey is a tool that was developed by the PPO expressly for the standard due to its very specific nature and is circulated to ISO Members by the Central Secretariat. This survey has been circulated in November of each year since 2011, and aims to obtain additional information regarding the use and implementation of the standard as well as identify related activities by ISO Members. This year the ISO 26000 survey will be circulated at the end of October rather than in November so that it can coincide with the beginning of the systematic review. Although some questions from the survey may appear identical to those in the systematic review, there is more information requested in the survey that is directly linked to ISO 26000.

For more information:

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² For the preparation of a Justification Study (JS), please refer to Annex SL (normative) of the ISO/IEC Directives Part 1 and Consolidated ISO Supplement.