

Future ISO 26000 standard on social responsibility reaches positive turning point

The development of the future ISO 26000 standard giving guidance on social responsibility has reached a positive "turning point" in terms of consensus and trust among the broad base of participating stakeholders.

This was the opinion of the leadership of the ISO Working Group on Social Responsibility (ISO/WG SR) at the end of its fourth plenary on 29 January-2 February 2007 in Sydney, Australia.



Members of the ISO WG SR leadership team at the Sydney 2007 plenary, from left: Staffan Söderberg, WG Vice Chair; Eduardo Campos de São Thiago, WG Co-Secretary; Kristina Sandberg, WG Secretary.; Jorge E.R. Cajazeira, WG Chair; Marcus Ihre, WG Assistant Secretary; Sophie Clivio, ISO/CS.

Some 275 people from 54 ISO member countries and 28 international organizations attended, representing the following interests: industry; government; labour; consumers;

nongovernmental organizations; and service, support, research and others. Notable at the Sydney meeting was increased participation by experts from developing countries and the programme included a developing countries workshop.

Among the main activities was work on the key topics which had been identified among the 5,176 comments received from the WG SR's experts on the second working draft of ISO 26000 circulated in October 2006.

SR Core issues were agreed at Sydney as follows:

- Environment,
- Human Rights,
- Labour Practices,
- Organizational Governance,
- Fair Operating Practices,
- Consumer Issues, and
- Community Involvement / Society Development.

The work is now continuing in order to produce a third working draft for circulation and comment before the fifth WG SR meeting in November 2007.

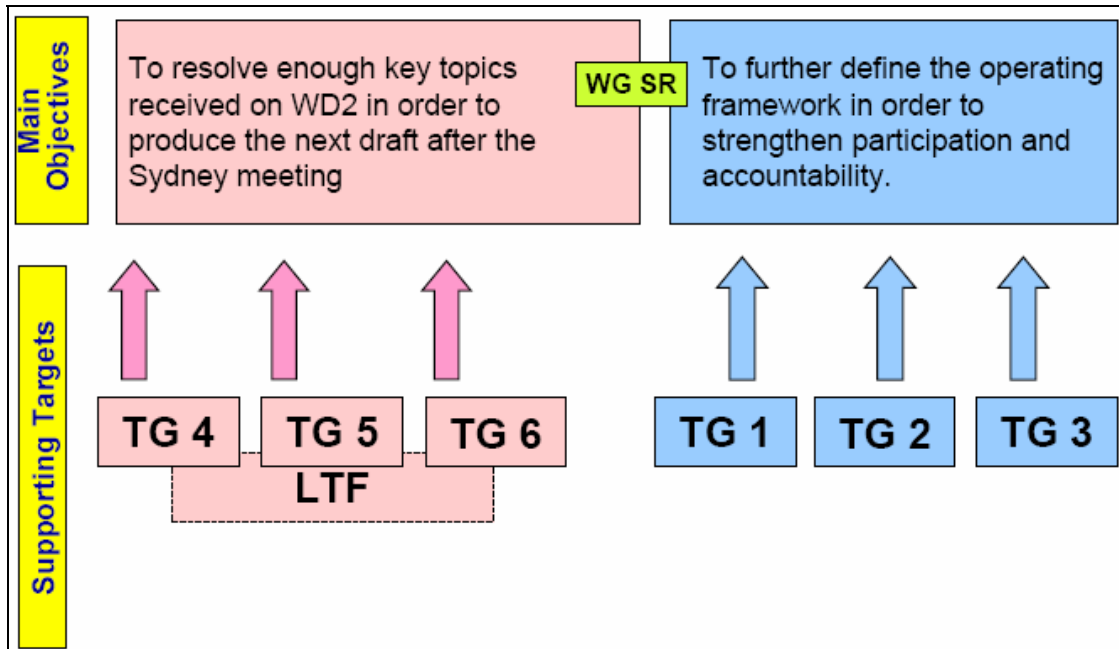
Vice-Chair Staffan Söderberg, nominated by the ISO member for Sweden, SIS, commented: "Building trust was an important accomplishment during this meeting. The Sydney meeting will be the one remembered as the turning point that put us on the right road."

The Sydney meeting was hosted by Standards Australia whose Chair, John Castles, officially welcomed the WG SR. Among the objectives of the meeting were to increase the accountability of its processes, to clarify its procedures and to increase participation. In line with this last objective, the WG SR welcomed the decision of the UN Global Compact – with whom it recently signed a memorandum of understanding for enhanced cooperation – and its networks to collaborate by establishing links with WG SR national "mirror" committees.

Chair, Mr. Jorge E.R. Cajazeira, nominated by the ISO member for Brazil, ABNT, commented: "A growing number of global leaders, many countries and related stakeholders have added their voices to those urging organizations to remember their obligations to their workforces, communities, and the environment. After Sydney, I am even more confident that ISO 26000 will contribute to helping all kinds of organizations to improve in socially responsible behaviour."

Additional information, presentations, and resolutions taken at the 4th WG SR meeting can

Objectives and Supporting Targets of the Sydney Meeting



Principal achievements of the Sydney meeting

Task Group 1 (TG 1), *Funding and Stakeholder Engagement*

At the Sydney meeting, TG 1 agreed on statutory and operational issues for a short-term funding mechanism within the WG.

ISO Council approved the proposal from the WG SR leadership to establish a long-term ISO SR Trust Fund, under the condition that:

- the secretariat of the ISO Trust Fund would be under the responsibility of WG secretariat, SIS, Sweden
- the Trust Fund is operated on a pilot basis until the publication of ISO 26000

The ISO/WG SR finalized the establishment of the ISO SR Trust Fund which is now accepting donations to support the group's work.

An ISO SR Trust Fund Committee was established and the roles and functions detailed as follows:

- Establish, review and monitor sponsorship criteria;
- Allocate funding;

- Accept donations;
- Act as a forum to keep communications open between the venues partners involved in the Trust Fund.

The Committee is comprised of:

- ISO/TMB/WG SR chair
- Six stakeholder representative, nominated by the stakeholder groups
- TG 2 Convenors
- TG 1 Convenor and secretary
- DEVCO secretary

Task Group 2 (TG 2), *Communication*

TG2 targets for Sydney meeting were to further define the operating framework in order to strengthen participation and accountability by:

- Setting a plan to implement the ISO media policy in this WG SR
- Continue to improve mechanisms for promotion of communication activities through use of many languages

Three principle TG2 outcomes in Sydney included:

- 1) Improvement of communication materials
- 2) Approval of the Media Participation Policy
- 3) Agreement on the development of Model Communication Action Plan

TG2 agreed to develop an ISO 26000 Communication Action Plan Model. The intent of the Model will be to provide guidance on communicating with stakeholders and the general public, focusing on:

- Awareness raising,
- Increase effective participation,
- Preparedness for adoption of ISO 26000,
- Strategies for communicating with decision makers.

The Draft Action Plan Framework will include:

- Objectives for pre-and post-publication
- Identifying target audiences–Students, SMEs, decision makers
- Highlighting the benefits for different audiences
- Approaches to communicating with various target audiences
- Special considerations for developing countries

Task Group 3 (TG 3), *Operational Procedures*

At the Sydney Meeting, TG3 approved Operating Procedure on Liaison Bodies and

Operating Procedure on NSB participation.

Decisions of TG3 included:

- Status of TG Convenors and Secretaries
- Role of experts
- Participation of Researchers

TG3 Next Steps include:

- Drafting of single reference document of WG/SR procedures
- Discuss voting on CD, DIS and FDIS
- Discuss "participation of researchers"
- Template for comments on WD3

Task Group 4 (TG 4), *Scope, SR Context, and SR Principles*

All TG4 Sydney targets were achieved and include:

- To review the decisions on Liaison Key Topics and if necessary consider these further
- To consider the TG4 Key Topics
- To agree revised text on Introduction, Scope, SR Definition, and(if possible) SR Principles
- To provide guidance for future drafting on SR Context and (if necessary) SR Principles
- To agree elements of a drafting plan for TG4 text after the Sydney meeting

Task Group 5 (TG 5), *Guidance on Core SR Subjects/Issues*

The main target for TG5 was to address the 44 TG5 key topics during the Sydney meeting. TG5 was successful in resolving enough of its key topics to continue the drafting process.

To move forward with drafting, TG5 agreed on the following set of 7 "SR core issues":

- Environment
- Organizational governance
- Human rights
- Labour practices
- Fair operating practices
- Consumer issues
- Community involvement society development

In response to numerous comments made on WD .2, TG 5 also developed and agreed on a common framework for drafting the text of these seven sub-clauses.

To prepare the next version of its contribution to ISO 26000, and to improve consistency

between the different clauses of ISO 26000, TG5 established four drafting teams in charge of dealing with one or two "SR core issues":

- Environment
- Organizational governance and fair operating practices
- Human rights and labour practices
- Consumer issues and community involvement/society development

Task Group 6 (TG 6), *Guidance for Organization on Implementing SR*

TG 6 developed guidance for drafters on key issues identified from the comments on WD 2 for Clause 7 "implementation and communication". TG6 established a drafting team for work on the generic topics within TG 6. An ad hoc group on stakeholder engagement was also created, which will work within TG 6 on this key issue for the duration of the standard development process.

Highlights from the Sydney Meeting

Highlights from the Sydney Meeting included:

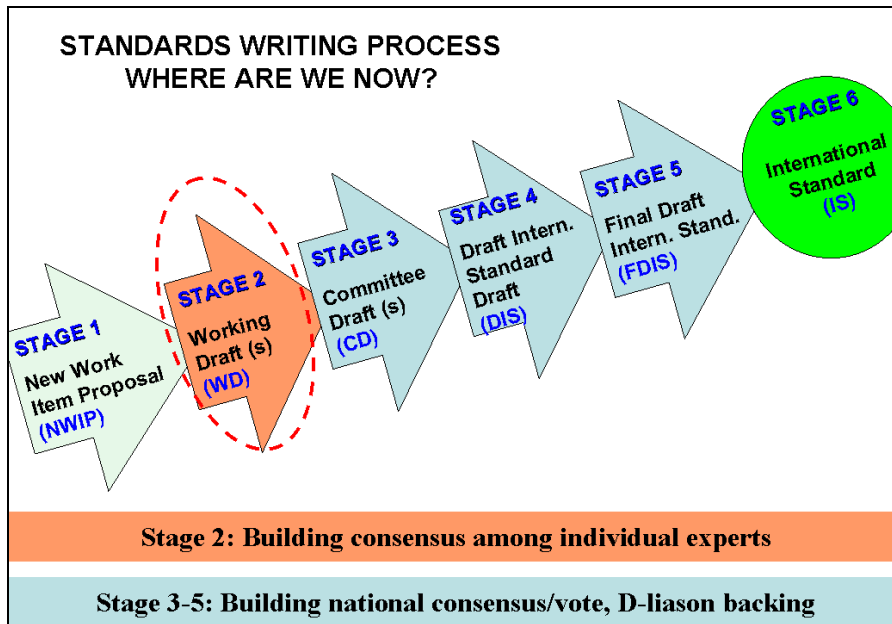
- Improved participation from the developing countries' experts
- TG conveners delivered and reach consensus, in spite of the language and time challenge
- Joint TG 4, 5, 6 meeting was a success and agreed on the Sydney Liaison Key Topics
- Core issues were agreed upon and grouped
- Drafting plan was proposed and agreed
- Project plan updated

A Drafting Plan was developed by the Liaison Task Force (LTF) and agreed upon by WG SR after consultation with CAG.

The Project Plan was reviewed and revised to include a third Working Draft. It was determined that WG SR requires a new target date for publication.

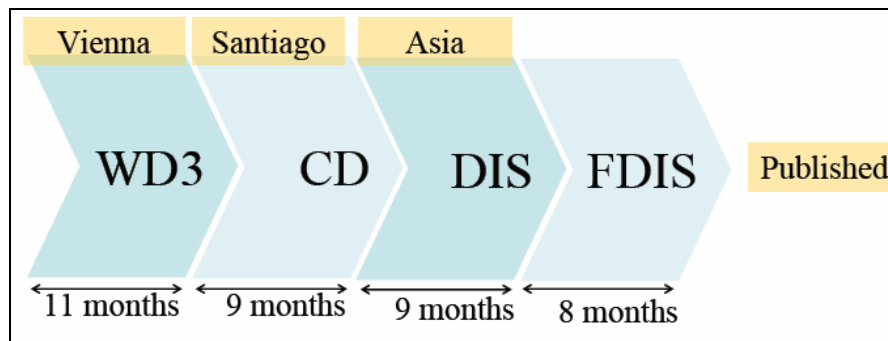
Moving Ahead

The WG SR is currently at the working draft stage. The need at this stage is to build consensus among individual experts, while the next stage where the developing standard progresses to committee draft status will aim to build consensus among the national standards bodies.



The next meetings of the ISO/WG SR are:

- 5-9 November 2007, in Vienna, Austria, hosted by the Austrian Standards Institute (ON) with the support of the Austrian Government and Austrian Development Agency (ADA), together with the UN Global Compact and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).
- 2008, in Santiago, Chile, hosted by the national standards body, INN.



New Members

We welcome new WG SR ISO member body participating members and observers:

- Barbados (BNSI)
- Cameroun (CDNQ)
- Cuba (NC)
- Ecuador (INEM)
- Egypt (EOS)
- Guatemala (COGUANDOR)

- Hongkong, China (ITCHKSAR)
- Serbia (ISS)
- Trinidad and Tobago (TTBS)
- Vietnam (TCVN)

New participating and observer D-liaison organizations are:

- BIAC (The Business and Industry Advisory Committee to the OECD)
- NORMAPME (European Office of Crafts, Trades and SME for Standardisation)
- IABC (International Association of Business Communicators)

ISO/TMB/WG on Social Responsibility

- You will find MORE at <http://www.iso.org/sr>
- To learn more about participating, please consult with your National Standardization body, which can be found at “Member bodies”
<http://www.iso.org/iso/en/aboutiso/isomembers/index.html>
- You will also find organizations participating in the WG under “Organization” at
<http://www.iso.org/sr>
- For a free subscription to the ISO/SR Newsletter, please contact Nicki Islic,
Co-Secretariat of ISO/TMB/WG/SR TG 2 Communication by e-mail at:
SRnewsletter@csa.ca