



## **ACADEMY STANDARDS BOARD PROCEDURES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF AMERICAN NATIONAL STANDARDS**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

The American Academy of Forensic Sciences (AAFS) is a not-for-profit organization that provides leadership to advance science and its application to the legal system. The objectives of the Academy are to promote professionalism, integrity, competency, and education; foster research; improve practice; and encourage collaboration in the forensic sciences.

The AAFS Standards Board is a subsidiary of AAFS, within this document it is called “Standards Board”. Standards developed by the American Academy of Forensic Sciences Standards Board, LLC address specific standardization needs of the national and international forensic communities that supplement standards promulgated by existing accredited Standards Developing Organizations.

AAFS operates its standards activities through the Standards Board in accordance with procedures outlined in the *ANSI Essential Requirements: Due Process Requirements for American National Standards (ANSI Essential Requirements)*. Developed in accord with ANSI’s due process requirements of openness, balance, and consensus, the Standards Board’s standards serve and protect the public.

The Academy Standards Board (ASB) provides policy and procedural oversight for the Standards Board. The ASB is made up of individuals appointed by the AAFS Board of Directors. The Secretariat and staff (“Secretariat” within this document) direct the operations of the Standards Board.

### **2. NOTIFICATION OF STANDARD DEVELOPMENT AND COORDINATION**

In addition to notification of Standards Board standards activity in ANSI’s *Standards Action*, notification of standards development activity shall be announced in suitable media as appropriate to allow for participation by all directly and materially affected persons who wish to contribute.

Prompt consideration shall be given to the written views and objections of all commenters.

Notification of standards development, including response to comments received from the filing of Project Initiation Notifications (PINS) and the Board of Standards Review BSR-8 forms with ANSI, and from coordination, shall comply with the requirements in Clauses 2.5 and 2.6 of the *ANSI Essential Requirements*.

#### **2.1 Project Initiation**

ASB approves the initiation of a proposed new standard, a revision or reaffirmation of a standard, or the discontinuance of a standard. Following approval, the Secretariat submits

a PINS for proposed new, revised, and national adoptions; a PINS is optional for reaffirmations and withdrawals (discontinuance) of an existing ANS. For the purpose of this document, Best Practice Recommendations are considered Standards. Technical Reports do not require notifications to ANSI, though they will follow the same internal ASB procedures.

In addition to the Standards Board's public notice of standards development activities, at the start of each project intended for approval as an American National Standard (ANS), a PINS form shall be submitted to ANSI by the Secretariat for publication in *ANSI Standards Action*. The information supplied to ANSI by the Secretariat shall include all relevant material as required by the *ANSI Essential Requirements*.

If the Standards Board receives written comments within 30 days from the publication date of a PINS announcement in *ANSI Standards Action* and said comments assert that a proposed standard duplicates or conflicts with an existing ANS or candidate ANS previously announced, a mandatory deliberation of stakeholders shall be held within 90 days and a related PINS Deliberation Report(s) shall be submitted to ANSI subject to the relevant provisions in the *ANSI Essential Requirements*. Such a deliberation shall be organized by the Standards Board and the commenter and such deliberation shall be concluded before the Standards Board may submit a proposed standard to the ASB for approval and subsequent public review.

## 2.2 Public Review

In addition, each proposed new ANS and proposal to revise, reaffirm, or withdraw approval of an existing ANS shall be transmitted to ANSI using the BSR-8 form for listing in *ANSI Standards Action* in order to provide an opportunity for public comment on the standard. If it is the case, then a statement of intent to submit the standard for consideration as an ISO, IEC, or ISO/IEC JTC-1 standard shall be included as part of the description of the scope summary that is published in *ANSI Standards Action*. The comment period shall be one of the following:

- a minimum of thirty days if the full text of the revision(s) can be published in *ANSI Standards Action*;
- a minimum of forty-five days if the document is available in an electronic format, deliverable within one day of a request, and the source (*e.g.*, URL or an e-mail address) from which it can be obtained by the public is provided to ANSI for announcement in *ANSI Standards Action*; or
- a minimum of sixty days, if neither of the aforementioned options is applicable.

Such listing may be requested at any stage in the development of the proposal and may be concurrent with final balloting. However, any substantive change subsequently made in a proposed ANS requires listing of the change in *ANSI Standards Action*.

See also Clause 9 for consideration of views and objections.

### **3. ORGANIZATION OF THE ACADEMY STANDARDS BOARD AND CONSENSUS BODIES**

The ASB shall consist of members appointed by the AAFS Board of Directors with oversight from the AAFS Executive Director. The ASB is responsible for determining the membership of the Consensus Bodies for proposed standards development. The ASB will strive for balance so that no single interest category constitutes more than one-third of the membership of a consensus body. Each consensus body shall be sufficiently diverse to ensure reasonable balance in accordance with *ANSI's Essential Requirements*. In order to establish balance and diversity the ASB shall reach out to organizations and groups who may have an interest in serving on the consensus body.

Appointments to the Academy Standards Board are for terms of three (3) years. Appointments are staggered so that no more than three (3) membership terms expire annually. Each voting member may serve for a maximum of two consecutive terms. Any member may resign his or her service at any time upon written notice to the Academy Standards Board. Any vacancy shall be filled for the remainder of the vacant term. A term of less than three years (including any partial term resulting from filling a vacancy) shall count toward the term limit unless the initial term was held for less than one (1) year.

#### **3.1 Responsibilities of the ASB**

- a) Selection and removal of members of the consensus bodies.
- b) Reviewing and, when appropriate, approving by two-thirds majority: proposals for standards or standards-related projects, revision of standards, discontinuance of standards or standards-related projects, or other projects within the scope of the Standards Board.
- c) Adopting policies and procedures for interpretations of the standards developed by the consensus bodies (See Section 17).
- d) Approval by two-thirds majority changes to ASB procedures.
- e) If there is an appeal and if the appellant and respondent cannot agree on the composition of the appeals panel, the ASB shall appoint the panel (see Section 11 for additional details on the appeal process).
- f) Other actions as needed to maintain and uphold ANSI accreditation based on compliance with *ANSI Essential Requirements*.

#### **3.2 Responsibilities of the Secretariat**

- a) Overseeing each consensus body's compliance with ANSI procedures.
- b) Maintaining a roster of each consensus body and a list of standards for which the consensus body is responsible.

- c) Providing for administrative work, including secretarial services; preparation of meeting notices and the handling of meeting arrangements; maintenance of adequate records and documentation.
- d) Submitting to the ASB candidate PINS notifications based on new work proposals developed and approved by each consensus body.
- e) Performing other administrative functions as required by these procedures and the Operating Agreement.

### **3.3 Responsibilities of the Consensus Body**

- a) Creating and approving consensus standards.
- b) Electing a chair, vice chair, and secretary of the consensus body by simple majority (defined as half plus one of eligible voting members).
- c) Conducting standards development in accordance with the requirements of *ANSI Essential Requirements* for balance, lack of dominance, due process, consensus, and right of appeal.
- d) Considering comments, views, and objections, and resolving all negative comments.
- e) Responding to requests for interpretations of Standards Board standards.
- f) Other matters requiring consensus body action as provided in these procedures.

## **4. CONSENSUS BODY OFFICERS**

Each consensus body, in consultation with the Secretariat shall appoint a chair, vice chair(s) and secretary(ies) from their membership subject to the approval by majority vote of the consensus body (defined as half plus one of eligible voting members). The chair and vice chair(s) shall be responsible for developing agendas, conducting meetings, establishing timeframes for the development and completion of standards, appointing subgroups as needed, upholding voting procedures, leading the body toward consensus, communicating with the Secretariat, and other actions as needed to bring standards activities to successful completion.

The chair, vice chair, and secretary shall each serve 1-year renewable terms, subject to approval by the consensus body.

## **5. CONSENSUS BODY MEMBERSHIP**

Consensus Body members are volunteers. Interested parties shall submit an application for membership on a consensus body. Members of a consensus body shall consist of organizations, companies, government agencies, and individuals having a direct and material interest in the activities of the Standards Board, forensic sciences, law enforcement, legal and other actions impacted by forensics and forensic standards. The ASB shall oversee the initial establishment of each consensus body, striving to achieve balance in the process.

The selection and addition of members following the establishment of the initial consensus body shall be subject to the review of the Secretariat and a majority vote of the total number of voting members of the ASB. The termination of any member of a consensus body shall be subject to the review of the Secretariat and majority vote of the voting members of the ASB.

A membership may be at an organizational or individual level. Certain interest categories require the membership be either organizational or individual. If a membership is organizational, the organization may designate a primary and an alternate voting member.

Each consensus body shall strive to consist of no fewer than 7 and no more than 25 members and shall be constituted to ensure compliance with *ANSI Essential Requirements*.

## **5.1 Application**

A request for membership on a consensus body shall be addressed to the Secretariat and shall indicate the applicant's direct and material interest in ASB, the applicant's supporting organization, qualifications, and willingness to participate actively. If the applicant is an organization, company, or government agency, it shall identify a representative and, if desired, an alternate.

In recommending the consensus body, the Secretariat, prior to making a recommendation to the ASB, shall consider the following:

- a) need for active participation by each interest category;
- b) potential for achieving or maintaining balance;
- c) extent of interest expressed by the applicant and the applicant's willingness to participate actively;
- d) commitment of the representative identified by the applicant organization, company or government agency; and
- e) relevance of supporting documentation supplied by applicants identified as subject matter experts; documentation should include academic or other relevant information.

## **5.2 Review of Membership**

The Secretariat shall review each consensus body membership list at least annually with respect to the criteria of Clause 5.1. Members are expected to fulfill obligations of active participation and respect for consensus. Where a member is found in habitual default of these obligations, the chair, and/or the officers on the chair's behalf, of the consensus body shall direct the matter to the ASB for appropriate action, which may include termination of the membership on the consensus body.

### **5.3 Consideration of Removal of Consensus Body Membership**

Consensus Body members may be removed for the following, but not necessarily all inclusive, reasons:

- a) failure to attend three consecutive meetings, where attendance includes in-person, telephonically, or electronically; or
- b) failure to return three consecutive ballots;
- c) obstructive behavior that inhibits or prevents the mission or processes of the consensus body.

In the first two cases, the Chair or Secretary of the Consensus Body shall correspond with the member to ask if the member is interested in continuing membership and forward the response (if any) to the Secretariat. The member shall be placed in non-voting status and only regain voting status upon attendance at two consecutive meetings. If the member does not attend both of the consecutive meetings of the Consensus Body following notification by the Chair, the Academy Standards Board shall act to remove the member from the Consensus Body.

In the case of disruptive behavior, the Consensus Body chair, with a majority vote by the Consensus Body members, can request that the ASB remove the member for cause.

### **5.4 Observers and Individual Experts**

Observers and individual experts shall be advised of the consensus body activities, may attend meetings, and may submit comments for consideration, but shall have no vote.

#### **5.4.1 Observers**

An observer is a party or organization with interest in the activities of a consensus body.

#### **5.4.2 Individual Experts**

A consensus body may select individual experts to assist it; they are invited to be participants only in the subject area in which they have been invited to participate. Individual experts are subject to approval by a simple majority vote of the consensus body.

### **5.5 Interest Categories**

**5.5.1** All appropriate interests that are directly and materially affected by the standards activity of the Standards Board have the opportunity for fair and equitable participation. Interest categories shall be discretely defined, cover all materially affected parties, and differentiate each category from the others. Such definitions are available upon request. Each member shall propose its own interest category as appropriate and in accordance with the established categories. The interest categories are established or revised by a vote of the ASB. The rationale for the selection of categories shall be included in the ASB ballot and submitted to ANSI as part of the accreditation requirements.

### 5.5.2 Interest categories include the following:

- a) user/government;
- b) user/industry;
- c) producers;
- d) laboratories and/or testing facilities;
- e) consumer groups;
- f) academia;
- g) subject matter experts;
- h) general interest.

The ASB may vote to change these according to need as long as the *ANSI Essential Requirements* for openness, balance, and due process are upheld.

### 5.6 Membership rosters

The Secretariat shall maintain a current and accurate consensus body roster and shall distribute it to the members and their consensus body representatives upon request. The roster shall include the following:

- a) title of consensus body;
- b) scope of the consensus body;
- c) officers: chair, vice chair, and secretary;
- d) members: name of person, organization, or agency, its representative and alternate as applicable, and business affiliations; or name and business affiliation of each member;
- e) interest category of each member;
- f) tally of interest categories: total of voting members and subtotals for each interest category; and
- g) for each subgroup: title, chair, and names and affiliations of all members.

## 6. SUBGROUPS CREATED BY THE CONSENSUS BODY

Subgroups (also called “working groups”) may be formed to expedite the work of the consensus body. Subgroups serve an advisory function and the final approval of a document as an ANS rests with the relevant consensus body. Their formation and later disbandment requires approval by a majority vote of the consensus body. The duties

delegated to the subgroup shall be approved at the time it is formed, and subsequent changes shall also require approval by the consensus body. Subgroups may elect their own chairs and vice chairs as appropriate and in consultation with the consensus body chair and the Secretariat. Subgroups may be made up of members of the consensus body and/or other experts from outside the consensus body, if the chairs and vice chairs so choose.

Subgroup meetings may be scheduled by the officers of the subgroup at any time. The meetings are not required to be posted on the public calendar and are not open to the public.

## **7. MEETINGS – Consensus Body**

Consensus body meetings shall be held as decided upon by the consensus body, the chair, the Secretariat, or by petition by a majority of members, to conduct business, such as making assignments, receiving reports of work, considering draft standards, resolving differences among subgroups, and considering views and objections from any source. Meetings may be held as decided upon by the consensus body members. Meetings may be in-person, telephonic, or electronic.

Standards Board consensus body meetings are run in accordance with Roberts Rules of Order (see *ASB Standing Document 08*).

### **7.1 Open Meetings**

Meetings of the consensus body shall be open to all members and others having a direct and material interest. At least three weeks' notice of regularly scheduled meetings of the consensus body shall be given by the Secretariat in media designed to reach directly and materially affected interests. The notice shall describe the purpose of the meeting and shall identify a readily available source for further information.

All attendees shall identify themselves during roll call and if making a comment. Non-voting observers can participate by indicating a desire to speak and then being recognized by the chair.

### **7.2 Quorum**

A majority of the members of the consensus body shall constitute a quorum (half plus one of eligible voting members) for conducting business at a meeting. If a quorum is not present, actions shall only be taken subject to subsequent confirmation by letter ballot—electronically is acceptable—or vote at a future meeting.

## **8. VOTING – Consensus Bodies**

Votes may be obtained by letter, recorded votes at a meeting, or electronic means. All eligible members have the right to vote on ANSI-related actions regardless of attendance at meetings.

## **8.1 Vote**

Except in regard to votes on membership and officer-related issues, each eligible member shall vote one of the following positions:

- a) affirmative;
- b) affirmative, with comment;
- c) negative, with reason(s); the reason(s) for a negative vote shall be given and, if possible, include specific wording or actions that would resolve the objection; or
- d) abstain, with reason(s); the reason(s) for an abstention shall be given.

For votes on membership and officer-related issues, the yes/no/abstain method of voting shall be followed.

### **8.1.1 Vote of Alternate**

An alternate's vote may be counted only if the primary representative does not vote.

### **8.1.2 Single Vote**

No representative shall have more than one vote.

### **8.1.3 Voting Period**

The voting period for letter ballots shall end 30 days from the date of issue (14 days for recirculation votes) or as soon as all ballots are returned, whichever comes earlier. An extension may be granted at the chair's option when warranted.

### **8.1.4 Communication for Ballots**

A follow-up communication, including letter and/or email, requesting immediate return of the ballot shall be sent, as appropriate, to members and alternate members whose votes have not been received within 10 working days before the ballot closes.

## **8.2 Actions Requiring Approval by a Majority, Excluding Abstentions**

The following actions require approval by a majority of the membership of the consensus body either at a meeting or by letter ballot, fax, or email:

- a) approval of consensus body officers;
- b) formation of a subgroup, including its procedures, scope, and duties;
- c) disbandment of a subgroup;
- d) approval of withdrawal by formal recorded vote of an existing standard; and
- e) recommendation to the ASB for removal of a member for cause.

### **8.3 Actions Requiring Approval by a Two-Thirds Majority, Excluding Abstentions**

The following actions require approval by a two-thirds majority of the membership of the consensus body either at a meeting or by letter ballot, or email:

- a) approval of a new standard;
- b) approval of a revision or addendum to part or all of a standard; and
- c) issuance of an interpretation to a standard.

### **8.4 Authorization of Letter Ballots**

Letter balloting may take place electronically, and/or by postal mail. A letter ballot may be authorized by any of the following:

- a) majority vote of those present at a consensus body meeting;
- b) the chair (or vice chair in the absence of the chair);
- c) the Secretariat; or
- d) petition of the majority of the consensus body.

### **8.5 Report of Final Review**

The final report of the voting shall be reported, by interest categories, to the consensus body. For standards intended to become an ANS, the final report shall also be provided to ANSI in the BSR-9 form.

## **9. DISPOSITION OF VIEWS AND OBJECTIONS**

**9.1** Upon close of public review period and/or balloting, prompt consideration shall be given to all written views and objections, including those resulting from the public review announcement in *ANSI Standards Action*.

**9.2** Objections shall be reviewed with the consensus body voters and good faith efforts made to resolve the objections.

**9.3** The objector(s) will be advised in writing (including electronic communications) of the disposition of the objection(s) and the reasons therefore.

**9.4** All unresolved objectors shall be informed in writing (including electronic communications) that a procedural appeals process exists within procedures used by the ASB. If an item has had prior discussion, with substantially the same comment being repeated that was previously made on the same issue within the same revision cycle of a particular standard, it shall not be necessary to reconsider it unless new information has been introduced. If no new information is introduced, the previous decision of the consensus body shall stand, and the objector(s) so advised.

**9.5** If clear instruction is provided on the ballot, and a negative vote unaccompanied by reasons/comments related to the proposal is received notwithstanding, no further resolution shall be required, the vote shall be counted and recorded as “negative without reason”, and the vote shall count for the purposes of establishing a quorum.

**9.6** Negative votes accompanied by reasons not related to the proposal under consideration need not be resolved, and the vote shall count for the purposes of establishing quorum.

**9.7** If comments not related to the proposal are submitted, the comments shall be documented and considered in the same manner as submittal of a new proposal. Such votes (*i.e.*, negative vote without reasons/comments or negative vote accompanied by reasons/comment not related to the proposal) shall not be factored into the numerical requirements for consensus. The consensus body is not required to solicit any reasons/comment from a negative voter. The consensus body is not required to conduct a recirculation ballot of a negative vote submitted without reasons/comment or with reasons/comments not related to the proposal.

**9.8** Unresolved objections, attempts at resolution, and any substantive change made in a proposed standard shall be reported to the entire consensus body within 30 days in order to afford all voting members of the consensus body an opportunity to respond, reaffirm, or change their vote. Any substantive change shall also be announced for public comment in *ANSI Standards Action*. Each negative vote and objection submitted by a voting member of the consensus body and/or public review objector that is not resolved must be reported to the ANSI Board of Standards Review (BSR) as part of the final BSR-9 submittal to ANSI after the appeals process has concluded.

**9.9** If resolution is not achieved, the consensus body and/or public review objector will be informed in writing (including electronic communications) of the right to file a procedural appeal with ASB.

## **10. COMMUNICATIONS**

Standards-related correspondence of ASB, the Secretariat, and consensus body chairs should be on AAFS Standards Board LLC letterhead or, if by electronic means not in the format of a letter or memorandum, it must be clear that the writer is communicating in the role of an officer of the ASB or as a member of the ASB, the Secretariat, or a member of the consensus body.

### **10.1 Formal Internal Communication**

If correspondence between consensus bodies or subgroups involves issues or decisions on non-routine matters and affecting other consensus bodies or subgroups, copies shall be sent to all affected chairs, the Secretariat, and the ASB.

## **10.2 External Communications**

Inquiries relating to the activities of the Standards Board and its consensus body or bodies shall be directed to the Secretariat and/or consensus body officers. All replies to inquiries shall be made through the Secretariat within 30 days.

## **11. APPEALS**

Persons who have directly and materially affected interests and who have been or might be adversely affected by a procedural action or inaction of the consensus body or the Secretariat shall have the right to appeal.

### **11.1 Complaint**

The appellant shall file a written complaint with the Secretariat within thirty days after the date of notification of action or at any time with respect to inaction. The complaint shall state the nature of the objection(s) including:

- a) any adverse effect;
- b) the Clause(s) of these procedures or the standard that is at issue; and
- c) actions or inactions that are at issue, and the specific remedial action(s) that would satisfy the appellant's concerns.

Previous efforts to resolve the objection(s) and the outcome of each shall be noted.

### **11.2 Response**

Within thirty days after receipt of the complaint, the Secretariat, given the consensus body response, shall respond in writing to the appellant, specifically addressing each allegation of fact in the complaint.

### **11.3 Hearing**

If the appellant and the respondent (the consensus body via its working group) are unable to resolve the written complaint informally in a manner consistent with these procedures, the Secretariat shall schedule a hearing with an appeals panel on a date established by the Secretariat, giving at least fourteen days notice. The Secretariat shall strive to accommodate any extraordinary circumstances impacting the objector and the respondent that impact selection of a date.

### **11.4 Appeals Panel**

The appeals panel shall consist of three individuals, selected by the Secretariat, who have not been directly involved in the matter in dispute, and who will not be materially or directly affected by any decision made or to be made in the dispute. At least two members shall be acceptable to the appellant and at least one shall be acceptable to the respondent. If the appellant and respondent cannot agree on the composition of the appeals panel, the ASB shall appoint the panel.

## **11.5 Conduct of the Hearing**

The chair of the appeals panel will conduct the hearing. The appellant has the burden of demonstrating adverse effects, improper actions or inactions, and the efficacy of the requested remedial action. The respondent (generally represented by the Secretariat and/or consensus body chair) has the burden of demonstrating that the consensus body and the Secretariat took all actions in compliance with these procedures and that the requested remedial action would be ineffective or detrimental. Technical content of a standard is not the subject of an appeal but rather the procedural actions or inactions of the consensus body.

## **11.6 Decision**

The appeals panel shall render its decision in writing within thirty days, stating findings of fact and conclusions, with reasons therefore, based on a prevalence of the evidence presented to the appeals panel. Consideration may be given to the following positions, among others, in formulating the decision:

- a) finding for the appellant, remanding the action to the consensus body or the Secretariat with a specific statement of the issues and facts in regard to which fair and equitable action was not taken;
- b) finding for the respondent, with a specific statement of the facts that demonstrate fair and equitable treatment of the appellant and the appellant's objection(s); or
- c) finding that new, substantive evidence has been introduced, and remanding the entire action to the consensus body or the Secretariat for appropriate reconsideration.

## **11.7 Notification**

The Secretariat shall notify the appellant, the ASB, and the consensus body of the decision of the appeals panel. The appellant has the right to seek a further appeal by submitting a request directly to ANSI.

## **12. RECORDS**

All records related to the approval of a standard as an ANS, including minutes, ballots, correspondence, consensus body membership, and other relevant material shall be filed with the Secretariat. Records shall be accessible to directly and materially interested parties, subject to reasonable conditions of time, location, cost, and convenience. Records will be maintained, at a minimum, until the next scheduled ANSI audit.

**12.1** Records concerning new, reaffirmed, or revised standards shall be retained for at least one complete cycle (until the standard is reaffirmed, revised, or withdrawn).

**12.2** Records concerning withdrawn standards shall be retained for at least five years from the date of withdrawal.

### **13. METRIC POLICY**

**13.1** Metric (SI) units shall be the preferred unit of measure in all standards developed by the consensus bodies of the Standards Board.

**13.2** Non-SI units may be indicated in parentheses following the SI units, or may be provided in a table of equivalent values in an informative annex;

**13.3** When non-SI units are those used throughout the U.S. industry for the specific application, the non-SI units may be used in the standard. SI units may be indicated, if appropriate, in parentheses following the non-SI units, or may be provided in an informative annex.

### **14. COMMERCIAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

The Standards Board will follow the ANSI procedures for and will strictly adhere to ANSI's Commercial Terms and Conditions as it is stated in Item 3.2 of *ANSI Essential Requirements*.

### **15. PATENT POLICY – Inclusion of Patents in American National Standards**

The Standards Board shall be in compliance with ANSI's patent policy as stated in Item 3.1 of *ANSI Essential Requirements*.

### **16. ANTITRUST POLICY**

Each Standards Board sponsored ANS shall be developed in accordance with applicable antitrust and competition laws and meetings amongst competitors to develop an ANS are to be conducted in accordance with these laws.

### **17. INTERPRETATIONS**

**17.1** Formal interpretations are for the purpose of providing formal explanations of the meaning or intent of the Standards Board consensus body on any specific provision or provisions of any document.

**17.2** A statement, written or oral, that is not processed in accordance with these procedures shall not be considered the official position of the Standards Board or any of its consensus bodies or subgroups, and shall not be considered to be, nor relied upon, as a formal interpretation.

**17.3** All requests for interpretation or clarification shall be submitted in writing to the Secretariat who will register and review the request before action by any consensus body or subgroup is initiated. The Secretariat shall issue an interim acknowledgement of the inquiry within seven days of receipt.

**17.4** Simple requests for information about a standard shall be answered by the Secretariat, in consultation with the relevant consensus body chair, as appropriate.

**17.5** Other requests shall be forwarded by the Secretariat to the chair of the consensus body or subgroup that developed the standard with a notification to the ASB. The

consensus body chair shall appoint an *ad hoc* advisory group to draft a recommended response for review by the consensus body or subgroup. If the consensus body is no longer active, the Secretariat shall request not less than four members or former members of the originating consensus body or subgroup or other available experts to serve as an *ad hoc* advisory group to consider the request.

**17.6** The consensus body, subgroup chair, or the Secretariat shall immediately take the following actions on the request:

- a) schedule the request on the agenda for the next meeting of the consensus body, or subgroup, or *ad hoc* advisory group;
- b) invite the originator to the meeting at which the inquiry will be discussed along with the recommended response. The Secretariat or chair will circulate the request and draft response to the members of the consensus body, subgroup, or *ad hoc* advisory group before the meeting.

**17.7** After appropriate discussion, approval of the technical recommended response shall be by formal motion. This consensus body, subgroup, or *ad hoc* advisory group motion must be approved by at least two-thirds of the eligible voting members of the consensus body taken on a rollcall (recorded) vote.

**17.8** The consensus body chair shall return the recommended response to the Secretariat with the following documentation:

- a) transmittal letter summarizing the Standards Board consensus body, subgroup, or *ad hoc* advisory group;
- b) debate, if any (including minority views);
- c) resulting motions;
- d) response to the technical question(s); and
- e) a record of the vote by member interest category.

**17.9** The Secretariat shall review the response and issue a 14 day letter ballot for approval of the response. The consensus body and relevant subgroups or the *ad hoc* advisory group(s) shall be included. The necessary votes for approval and procedures for resolution of negative votes shall be the same as for ballots on approval of a proposed standard.

**17.10** Upon completion of the previous step, the Secretariat shall transmit a copy of the interpretation to the originator of the request. The Secretariat shall also publish the interpretation to the general public.

## **18. Submittal of Evidence of Procedural Compliance to ANSI for Approval as an ANS**

Upon conclusion of the consensus process, including the appeals process, evidence of procedural compliance in accordance with the *ANSI Essential Requirements* shall be

submitted to ANSI using the BSR-9 form, within 1 year of the close of the final public comment period, unless an extension has been granted by ANSI.

### **19. Maintenance and Publication of ANSs**

Each Standards Board standard approved as ANS shall be published within six months of approval as such, unless an extension has been granted by ANSI. Each ANS shall be kept current by means of timely revision or reaffirmation in accordance with the *ANSI Essential Requirements*. Obsolete standards shall be withdrawn.

If an ANS is no longer supported by Standards Board, the Secretariat shall notify ANSI immediately and the standard will be withdrawn as an ANS and announced as such in *ANSI Standards Action*.

If the ASB, at its own discretion and without a vote of the relevant consensus body, decides to abandon the processing of a proposed new or revised ANS or portion thereof, it shall notify ANSI immediately and an announcement shall be placed in *ANSI Standards Action*.