

## What's New in Standards

presented by

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Standards had a reputation for being, amongst other things, dry, uninteresting and difficult to find. I am sure we can all add our own additional criticisms. Times have changed. Work done by BSI Standards over recent years has changed the whole user friendliness, bringing the standards industry on-line, easily accessible and easily referenced.

### ① Creating, developing and managing standards

The committee structure, in a simplistic form, has a classic high level, overarching **STANDARDS, POLICY & STRATEGY** committee to govern the 1,350 **TECHNICAL COMMITTEES**; each of these comprising **SUB-COMMITTEES** or **PANELS**.

#### Members within the technical committees

Members may not represent a company, but may represent the interests of a group. Each committee will have a **Chairman** and a **Secretary** with support typically from one or many of the following interested groups:

- \* **Trade Associations**
- \* **Government – local & central**
- \* **Academia Research Org**
- \* **Professional Organisations**
- \* **Test House Certification**
- \* **Charities Unions**
- \* **User/BSS**
- \* **Consumer**

In addition the group may decide to **co-opt experts** on a subject which may not exist already within the committee. For example, the committee on toys needed an expert on rope to help them at one point of the standard's development.

There may also be the need for a **liaison member** to keep another committee informed of activities. For example, the committee on central heating may need to keep in close contact with developments of the committee on pipes.

#### The work done by committees

Since the first Standard was produced by BSI in 1903, the emphasis of the work has changed away from drafting standards and more to providing a view from UK interests as to the content for International Standards. Today, only 5% of the committees are working on the drafting of national standards.

#### Rules for the committees to respect

In the same way that we have to answer the question *Quis custodiet ipsos custodes?* (Who audits the auditor?), there has to be a standard for the standards committee to respect; it is **BS ZERO**.

It provides the rules of governance, addresses policy issues, says how to appoint UK delegates, demands a consensual approach to standards (and not sustained opposition) and demands a public enquiry stage for standards.

## ② The Development of a Standard

### Stages in the life of a standard

1. The initial proposal can be made from:
  - \* Externally – a special interest group, government, idea from web site comment
  - \* Internally – an existing technical committee
  - \* International – another national standards body or ISO
2. The committee produce a draft of the standard, or UK view on content in an international standard. Prior to computerised documentation, this stage would typically take 10 years; today it is about 1½ years. This involves a lot of drafting and redrafting going backwards and forwards between members and secretary, until consensual agreement is reached by the committee.
3. The draft goes to public enquiry. Since the ability to make comment on-line, this receives more interest from the public. In the past, 80% of drafts have received no comment from the public. In contrast, recent amendments to electrical standards received a very high level of comment from practitioners.
4. The standard is published.

### How do we find out the status of a standard under development?

Since 2010, the following web sites have been available for the public to see:

- \* To see standards being proposed  
<http://standardsproposals.bsigroup.com/>
- \* To access all proposals for new standards, comment on them and submit ideas for new standards  
<http://standardsdevelopment.bsigroup.com/>  
To access the online commenting tool for Drafts for Public Comment  
<http://drafts.bsigroup.com/>
- \* BSI Newsletters relating to Quality  
<http://www.bsigroup.com/en/Standards-and-Publications/Newsletters--press/Newsletter-archive/ICT/>
- \* Archive of all BSI Newsletters  
<http://www.bsigroup.com/en/Standards-and-Publications/Newsletters--press/Newsletter-archive/>
- \* Description of the different types of Standards  
<http://www.bsigroup.com/en/Standards-and-Publications/About-standards/Product-definitions/>
- \* Different ways for people to get involved in standards development:  
<http://www.bsigroup.com/en/Standards-and-Publications/How-to-get-involved/>

... in less than 12 months, some 60,000 hits have been made on the web-site

## ③ Changes in the way we use standards

### The occasional user

<http://shop.bsigroup.com/>

Standards are available on-line at the above site (**BSI SHOP**). The ability to buy from a phone call still exists.

The on-line facility gives an overview of the standard, product details, status, publication date, cost and the ability to download in pdf format.

## The regular user: BSOL

<http://shop.bsigroup.com/Navigate-by/Assessment-Tools/>

The new British Standards on Line (**BSOL**). This is a set of tools by subscription service.

There are many groups / companies that need frequent access to a range of standards. The issues they have expressed in the past and are addressed by this site are:

- \* The need for frequent access to many standards
- \* The ability for many colleagues to access a range of standards
- \* Keeping up to date with changes
- \* Version control of standards
- \* Cost control; eliminating lots of people doing their own thing and buying standards when they already exist in the business.

This service allows the subscriber access to all interested standards, to search for relevant standards by subject matter, wording and also to the on-line self-assessment tool.

**The on-line self-assessment tool** is for 1<sup>st</sup> party auditing.

- \* It helps companies understand by a series of questions where improvement is required and their own level of compliance.
- \* It is structured by clause, with the ability to delegate responsibility for different clauses to specific colleagues.
- \* The help features take the user to specific help and to the relevant part of relevant standards.
- \* The tool links into the BSI reference library of standards to allow links to related standards.
- \* Each question has its own page with response and action required.
- \* By keeping the history, there is a record of progress.
- \* Multi-site companies can compare assessments
- \* A summary of the assessment (set of bar charts and text) shows management strengths and weaknesses.
- \* Information from the summary can be exported to spreadsheets, parts sent to colleagues, and comparisons made between sites.

*The presenters were quite adamant that this tool would not be used as a means of self-certification, nor evidence of internal auditing during a third party audit. Some in the audience saw one logic of this tool as being a first step to self-certification, now that many companies understood the bottom line advantages of having a strong foundation of a quality system and thus looked to certification as a means of improvement rather than the certificate on the wall.*

## Eurocodes plus.

This is a tool to help companies (predominantly construction industry at present) to use International Standards. Due to different local conditions, some aspects of a standard need to be different dependant upon where the construction/manufacture is taking place. The old standards ceased recently and were replaced by the Euro codes. The BSOL tool gives powerful search capabilities by clause, formula, figure and table. The tool has been developed to address issues of:

- \* Understanding transition to Eurocodes
- \* Searching and discovery
- \* Internal knowledge transfer
- \* Knowledge of standards' relationships
- \* Collaborative working on standards

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