



Standards Council of Canada
Conseil canadien des normes



Granting and Maintenance of Primary Responsibility for Subject Areas

CAN-P-1006C
November 2005

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Foreword

The Standards Council of Canada ("Council") is a Crown Corporation established by an Act of Parliament (*the Standards Council of Canada Act*) in 1970, to foster and promote voluntary standardization in Canada. It is independent of government in its policies and operations, although it is financed partially by Parliamentary appropriation. The Council consists of members from the government and private sector.

The mandate of the Council is to promote the participation of Canadians in voluntary standards activities, promote public-private sector cooperation in relation to voluntary standardization in Canada, coordinate and oversee the efforts of the persons and organizations involved in the National Standards System, foster quality, performance and technological innovation in Canadian goods and services through standards-related activities, and develop standards-related strategies and long-term objectives.

In essence, the Council promotes efficient and effective voluntary standardization in Canada in order to advance the national economy, support sustainable development, benefit the health, safety and welfare of workers and the public, assist and protect consumers, facilitate domestic and international trade and further international cooperation in relation to standardization.

In addition, the Council serves as governments' focal point for voluntary standardization and represents Canada in international standardization activities. It sets out policies and procedures for the development of National Standards of Canada and for the accreditation of standards development organizations, certification organizations, calibration and testing laboratories, quality and environmental management systems certification bodies, inspection bodies, personnel certification bodies and auditor course providers. The Council also promotes and supports the principle of mutual recognition and acceptance of Conformity Assessment results.

This document is one of several issued by the Standards Council of Canada to define the policies, plans, and procedures established by the Council to help achieve its mandate.

Requests for clarification and recommendations for amendment of this document, or requests for additional copies, should be addressed to the Manager, Standards Programs.

Introduction

This document has been prepared by a sub-committee of the Standards Council of Canada's (SCC) Standards Development Organizations Advisory Committee (SDOAC) as an update to a previous CAN-P on Subject Area Responsibility (SAR).

The concept of SAR was approved by SCC Council in 1974. One of the primary objectives of the initiative was to avoid duplication of efforts, thus ensuring the efficient use of limited resources. The concept of SAR was also designed to eliminate conflicting or confusing technical requirements for the benefit of standard users.

Because SAR has the effect of concentrating expertise within one Standards Development Organization (SDO), interested stakeholders can communicate at one table, making it more likely that a unified Canadian position will be reached. This supports more effective and credible Canadian participation at the international level.

The following are some of the fundamental principles of SAR:

- The SDOAC, an Advisory Committee of the SCC's Council which is comprised of representatives from each of the SCC-accredited SDOs, grants SAR and informs the SCC's Council of its decision.
- SAR is not designed to provide exclusivity to any one SDO, or to prevent a SDO from moving into a subject area already assigned to another organization.
- Standards may be submitted and approved as National Standards of Canada (NSCs), regardless of whether or not SAR exists in the subject area, recognizing that SCC's criteria for approval of NSCs might include conditions in cases where SAR exists.
- Communication among SDOs is encouraged in order to stay informed on current work and increase the possibility of achieving mutually satisfactory resolutions in disputed areas.

This CAN-P covers the issues surrounding SAR, and may reiterate certain aspects of the referenced CAN-Ps. The referenced CAN-Ps are intended for other purposes (CAN-P-1, Accreditation of SDOs; CAN-P-2, procedures for NSCs). Some of the criteria contained in these other documents may affect the ability of a SDO to apply for and maintain Recognition of Primary Responsibility for a Subject Area. It is therefore intended that this CAN-P document be used in conjunction with CAN-P-1 and CAN-P-2, which may be consulted as appropriate.

GRANTING AND MAINTENANCE OF PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY FOR SUBJECT AREAS

1. Scope

This document specifies the requirements and procedures for the Standards Council of Canada (SCC) recognition of accredited Standards Development Organizations (SDO) as having primary responsibility for the development of National Standards of Canada (NSCs) in specific subject areas.

Only SCC-accredited SDOs may submit a request for recognition of primary responsibility for a subject area.

References to the “Standard” throughout this document imply a National Standard of Canada (NSC).

Information marked “NOTE” is for guidance in understanding or clarifying the associated requirement.

2. Normative References

CAN-P-1 Accreditation of Standards Development Organizations.

CAN-P-2 Criteria and Procedures for the Preparation and Approval of National Standards of Canada.

3. Terms and Definitions

For the purpose of this document, the following definitions apply:

3.1 Accreditation

The formal recognition of the competence of an organization to carry out specific functions in accordance with established criteria. Where such accreditation has been accorded by the SCC, the organization so accredited is a component of the National Standards System (NSS).

3.2 Primary Responsibility

Recognition granted by the SDOAC to an accredited SDO to act as the lead organization in Standards development and maintenance of a subject area. The assignment of primary responsibility in a subject area to an SCC-accredited SDO does not give the SDO exclusivity in that area in terms of Standards Development.

3.3 Subject Area

A clearly defined field of standards development activity identifying the specific parameters to be covered.

NOTE The term Subject Area has been adopted throughout this document to encompass a family of closely related standards. A subject area should be sufficiently concise to reduce the possibility of broad subject, or horizontal area coverage. At the same time, the subject area should not be too narrow as to cover individual or a small group of Standards. For example, a subject area may be Industrial Trucks rather than the broad subject area of material handling or the narrow area of forklift trucks. In order to assist with the identification of potential subject areas, reference may be made to the International Classification of Standards (ICS) and the International Standardization Organization/International Electrotechnical Commission (ISO/IEC) Technical Committee structures, amongst other sources.

3.4 Industry Sector

An area of economic activity led by a partnership of representatives from business, labour, education, government and other professional groups. Refer to the International Classification of Standards, the Work Programs of the IEC/ISO Technical Committees and the North America Industry Classification System (NAICS) for examples of industry sectors.

3.5 Horizontal Area

An area of standards development activity that is generic and cuts across a number of subject areas. A horizontal area is not industry sector-specific, but rather, applies to many industry sectors.

3.6 Standards Development Organization (SDO)

An organization that has been accredited by the SCC to propose, publish and maintain standards in accordance with the Council's established criteria, procedures and requirements.

4. Granting of SAR

4.1 Request Submission

4.1.1 The SDO may submit a request for SAR to the Standards Branch of the SCC, including the information indicated in Annex A using the application form provided.

4.1.2 The SCC shall review the request for completeness using the guidance in Annex A within a reasonable period of time (not to exceed 60 calendar days). If the request is deemed incomplete or confusing, the SCC may ask that the SDO submit additional information or clarification within a reasonable period of time (not to exceed 30 calendar days).

NOTE SCC may provide comments and suggest that additional information be provided by the SDO.

4.2 Ballot

4.2.1 When the SCC deems the request is complete, it shall be circulated to the SDOAC with the ballot form in Annex B. This ballot form provides SDOAC members with four options as follows:

- a) Agree to the request as proposed;

- b) Agree not to grant the request;
- c) Agree to discuss it at the next regular SDOAC meeting; or
- d) Agree to convene a SDOAC Subject Area settlement meeting for further clarification, discussion of the request, negotiation if required and ultimately resolution of the request. Requesting such a settlement meeting shall be substantiated based on one or more criteria provided in Annex C.

4.2.2 The ballot reply period is normally 30 calendar days. If all replies are received prior to the end of the allotted time, the ballot period shall be considered closed at the end of the day on which the last reply was received.

4.2.3 Approval must be unanimous. When the ballot is unanimously approved by SDOAC, the request for the SAR shall be deemed granted to that SDO and the process continues on with Clause 4.5.1.

4.2.4 If there is a unanimous vote not to grant SAR (except for the requester, when there is only one requester), the matter will be deemed closed, but the requester may choose to ask the SDOAC Chair for a discussion at the next regularly scheduled SDOAC meeting.

4.3 Settlement Process

4.3.1 When a SDOAC settlement meeting is requested by at least two SDOAC members, the SDOAC chair, in consultation with all SDOAC members, shall arrange a meeting to deal with the issues as expeditiously and efficiently as possible. To that end, the following are examples of the types of meetings that may be arranged:

- a) The issue is included as an agenda item at the next regularly scheduled SDOAC meeting, if the meeting is scheduled within 60 calendar days of the meeting request; or
- b) An unscheduled meeting of SDOAC may be arranged (by teleconference, if appropriate) within 30 calendar days of the meeting request; or
- c) SDOAC may establish a Working Group (WG) consisting of member-appointed representatives to review the issues and agree on recommendations to SDOAC regarding the settlement. The meeting should be scheduled within 30 calendar days of the meeting request. Additional meetings may be held as required and agreed upon.

4.3.2 A settlement meeting notification package shall be prepared by the SCC and sent to all SDOAC members 14 days prior to the meeting date. The notification package shall include the following:

- a) A cover letter outlining the purpose of the settlement meeting;
- b) The SDO proposal for SAR for which the settlement meeting was requested;
- c) Any additional supporting information attached to the original proposal by the requesting SDO;
- d) A record of the votes on the proposal, including information on objections and supporting reasons or documentation;
- e) Any additional comments provided by other SDOs to the original proposal; and
- f) Any other documentation or guidance SCC deems appropriate to aid in the discussion.

4.3.3 SDOAC or WG members shall make every effort to reach expeditious settlement. Every avenue that may be available, including discussions, negotiations and additional information should be utilized. A final decision by SDOAC shall be provided within 90 days from the closure of the initial ballot due date. The SDOAC Chair may grant extensions at his/her discretion with appropriate justification and shall notify SDOAC. SDOAC and WG members are reminded that their positions on the issue shall remain consistent with the Annex C criteria.

4.3.4 When a settlement results from any of the processes described in 4.3.1, it shall be recorded in the SDOAC minutes and recognition to the requestor SDO shall be granted. In particular, when the original request has been split or modified in whatever manner, the exact nature and scope of the resulting subject area or areas and their resulting SDO allotments shall be recorded in those minutes. The process continues with Clause 4.5.1.

4.4 Request Rejection

4.4.1 Failing a settlement from SDOAC as described in clause 4.3.3, the SAR shall not be granted to the requester SDO.

4.4.2 Although such a situation as described in 4.4.1 indicates that the requested SAR does not lend itself to recognition, it is still up to any SDO to reiterate a request for this SAR or part of it at any time. A second request may be rejected without further consideration under the following conditions:

- a) If the request is similar in scope and there are no new contextual elements, the request may be rejected on that basis. SCC, as the recipient of the request, may make this determination or may consult with SDOAC as appropriate for confirmation; or
- b) If a second request is submitted within two years of the originally rejected one, the SDOAC Chair may reject it.

4.4.3 All rejection decisions shall be documented by SDOAC.

4.5 Request Notification

4.5.1 When a SAR is granted by SDOAC, the information shall be provided to SCC Council. SCC shall then notify the accredited SDOs in writing, update the SAR list, and publicize the recognition noting it is for primary responsibility.

4.5.2 At any time during this process, should additional supporting information be required, the requester shall be given the opportunity to provide it prior to any decision being taken.

5. Maintenance of SAR

5.1 General

Further to the CAN-P-1 requirements, a SDO recognized by SCC as having primary responsibility for a subject area is expected to:

NOTE Refer to CAN-P-1 for specifics regarding requirements.

5.1.1 Publish and maintain standards in the areas in which they have been granted SAR;

5.1.2 Monitor and/or participate in international and regional standards development activities in the granted subject area;

5.1.3 Give due consideration to all requests received for the development of an NSC in the granted subject area; and

5.1.4 Consult, as necessary, with other SDOs that have standards or are developing standards in closely related subject areas.

NOTE Refer to CAN-P-2 for specifics regarding a SDO developing standards, intended to be NSCs in another SDO's granted subject area.

5.2 Non-Compliance of Requirements of SAR

5.2.1 A SDO that has failed to carry out the responsibilities indicated in 5.1 shall be given notice by the SCC that it is not meeting these conditions and shall have 30 days to provide a satisfactory response.

5.2.2 One option is for the SDO to relinquish the subject area, in which case the SDO shall notify SCC in writing within 30 days so that SDOAC can be notified.

5.2.3 If a satisfactory response is not received, SCC shall notify SDOAC that SAR is being suspended as of 60 days from its initial notification. The determination of whether the conditions are being met or not is SCC's sole responsibility and authority.

5.2.4 The matter shall then be brought to SDOAC for discussion and possible withdrawal of SAR.

5.2.5 A SDO that has complied with the requirements of clauses 5.1.2, 5.1.3, 5.1.4, but has not initiated the development of a standard in that subject area (clause 5.1.1) within 24 months of the granting of SAR shall provide written justification to SDOAC for not initiating the development of a standard. SDOAC will then determine whether to continue recognition or withdrawal of recognition.

5.3 Relinquishment of SAR

5.3.1 Should a SDO choose to relinquish responsibility for a subject area, the following procedure applies:

- a) The SDO shall advise the SCC that it chooses to relinquish responsibility for a subject area;
- b) The SCC shall then withdraw the recognition and update the SAR list.

5.3.2 Direct transfer of SAR shall not be permitted between SDOs. The responsible SDO shall relinquish the subject area following the process in clause 5.3.1. Other SDOs may apply for this area following SCC notification of withdrawal, as per clause 4.1.

NOTE 1 When responsibility for a subject area is relinquished and reassigned, the associated standards are not transferred to the newly-recognized SDO due to copyright and liability issues. Instead, the originating SDO withdraws the standards and the new SDO develops original standards.

NOTE 2 The SDO has ownership of the standards in their published form. Original copyrighted materials used with permission, remains the property of the original copyright owner.

NOTE 3 Agreements regarding non-SAR assigned SDOs to work in SAR assigned subject areas do not imply relinquishment of SAR unless section 5.3 of this document is followed. Such agreements are the sole responsibility of the involved SDOs.

5.4 Withdrawal of SAR

5.4.1 For administrative withdrawal of SAR refer to clause 5.3.1 (a) (b).

5.4.2 Withdrawal of SAR due to non-compliance

5.4.2.1 Potential SDO non-compliance issues shall be dealt with by SDOAC.

5.4.2.2 Issues regarding SDO non-compliance to SAR requirements submitted to SCC shall be handled as follows:

- a) Related discussions and decisions shall take place within SDOAC and decisions made in accordance with the requirements of this document;

- b) A SDO may be required to show cause in order to retain the subject area in question;
- c) The outcome of the SDOAC discussion may lead to one of three actions:
 - Retention of the SAR by the SDO;
 - Relinquishment of the SAR by the SDO (see clause 5.3);
 - Withdrawal of the SAR by SDOAC (see clause 5.4).

5.4.2.3 SAR withdrawal appeals shall be submitted to SCC within 30 calendar days following the withdrawal decision and shall be handled according to established appeals procedures.

5.4.2.4 When some standards have been withdrawn within a SAR, the SAR recognized SDO retains the SAR unless the SDO relinquishes it.

5.4.2.5 If all standards have been withdrawn within a SAR, then the SDO action shall follow requirements of clause 5.2.5.

NOTE SAR comments, concerns or complaints should be directed to SCC.

6. Administration of SAR by SCC

6.1 General

6.1.1 The SCC shall effectively manage the requirements and procedures for the recognition of primary responsibility for subject areas by:

- Coordinating, documenting and monitoring the process; and
- Maintaining, publicizing and making readily available on request an up-to-date list of all granted subject areas. This list shall be updated and made available within 30 days of a SDOAC decision on SAR.

6.2 Record Keeping

6.2.1 The SCC shall maintain all records of requests, considerations and agreements regarding recognition of SAR.

ANNEX A (Normative)
INFORMATION TO BE PROVIDED WHEN REQUESTING
RECOGNITION OF PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY FOR A SUBJECT
AREA

A.1 Requester

Indicate the name of the requesting Standards Development Organization (SDO) and of the person to whom any inquiries are to be directed.

A.2 Title of the Subject Area

The title of the proposed subject area should clearly indicate the field of technical activity intended to be included. It should be sufficiently concise to reduce the possibility of general subject coverage.

A.3 Scope

- a) The scope of the proposed subject area should provide the limits of coverage. It should be sufficiently specific to avoid overlap or duplication of subject areas already assigned. It should clearly state what topics will be covered by the proposed subject area. If appropriate, those individual topics excluded from the subject area should be included.
- b) The scope should not contain general statements regarding the capabilities of the Requesting SDO. While a list of the topics to be included within the proposed Subject area may be helpful, such a list may be limiting. The requesting SDO should use caution, therefore, when including such a list.
- c) In addition to the limits of activity, the requesting SDO should provide equivalent International Classification for Standards (ICS) designation(s) for the field of activity and name any relevant ISO or IEC technical committee.

A.4 Purpose and Justification

Give details of the following aspects of the suggested proposed subject area:

- a) The specific reasons why the requesting SDO should be assigned primary responsibility. These reasons should include:
 - Current development activities included in the scope of the proposed subject area;
 - Development activities related to, but not included in, the scope of the proposed subject area;

- A description of the resources, background and experience expected to be applied to the proposed subject area (including existing committees, committed stakeholders and the like).
- b) The aims and reasons for establishing the proposed area as a recognized subject area. These should include:
- Emphasis on the topics of standardization to be covered;
 - The problems expected to be solved or the difficulties it is intended to overcome;
 - The benefits to be gained by the development and implementation of a family of standards in the proposed subject area or, alternately, the loss or disadvantage(s) if no family of standards is developed in a defined subject area.
- c) The main interests that might benefit from, or be affected by, a family of standards grouped within a subject area, such as industry, consumers, trade, governments, distributors. The requester should include an indication whether the parties concerned are willing to reach voluntary agreement among themselves for the stated purposes and whether they intend to apply the developed standard(s).
- d) Timeliness and urgency of the subject area to be established:
- Is the technology reasonably stabilized to be able to define the proposed subject area with sufficient precision?
 - Are the standards expected to be produced in the subject area required as a basis for the future development of the technology in question?
 - Is there urgency to establish the subject area given the identified needs of stakeholders, and the problems that have already, or are expected to be, encountered?
- e) The degree of commonality with other established subject areas. This should include the SDO(s) that has (have) been granted those subject areas, and a statement of the willingness of the Requester to enter into discussion concerning overlap and/or potential cooperation with the other SDO(s).

A.5 Relevant Documents

List all known relevant standards and regulations, including any standards the requesting SDO is developing, has developed or has been requested to develop that either fall within the scope of the proposed subject area, or may be adapted to be included within that scope. Supporting statements from stakeholders indicating agreement with the concept, or the need to establish a subject area to contain a family of needed standards should be included whenever possible.

A.6 Co-operation and Liaison

List relevant standards organizations or other bodies with which co-operation and liaison should exist and indicate all areas of possible conflict or overlap.

A.7 SAMPLE APPLICATION FORM:

A request for Recognition of Primary Responsibility for a Subject Area shall be submitted to the SDOAC Secretary, Standards Council of Canada. The request will be circulated to the Accredited SDOs for review and voting. The requester shall be an accredited SDO (see CAN-P-1006).

The proposal (to be completed by the Requester, attach Additional pages as necessary)

Requester (include the name of the requesting SDO and the name of the contact person to whom any enquiries should be made)	
Title of Subject Area (as outlined in Annex A of CAN-P-1006)	
Scope (as outlined in Annex A of CAN-P-1006)	
Purpose and justification (as outlined in Annex A of CAN-P-1006)	
Relevant documents to be considered (should include International, regional or other local standards, regulations or other documents as necessary, including the relationship of the requested Subject Area to existing or other proposed Subject Areas)	
Liaison organizations (include other organizations, e.g. other SDOs, Government Agencies, etc.)	
Concerns known patented items (see CAN-P-1, CAN-P-2) <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no If YES, provide full information as annex	Signature of the Requester

To be filled in by SCC/SDOAC Secretary, upon completion of receipt review

Date of circulation	Closing date for voting	Signature of the Secretary
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Comments and recommendations of the SDOAC Secretary

Comments with respect to the Request (Indicate any issues to be brought to the notice of Requester. (Including opinion on completeness of request, request for additional information to be provided with ballot, etc.)

ANNEX B (Normative)
TEMPLATE FOR ELECTRONIC SDOAC BALLOT FORM

B.1 The following is a template for consideration as an electronic ballot form to be used under the SDOAC forum.

B.2 Date of ballot.

B.3 Date of closure (normally 30 calendar days).

B.4 Subject area request being voted on (or file number).

B.5 VOTE.

B.6 According to Clause 4.2.1 of CAN-P-1006, the SDO's position shall be consistent with the positions below. There shall be no abstentions for this vote.

- a) Agree to the request as proposed;
- b) Agree not to grant the request;
- c) Agree to discuss it at the next regular SDOAC meeting; or
- d) Agree to convene a SDOAC Subject Area settlement meeting for further clarification, discussion of the request, negotiation if required and ultimately resolution of the request. Requesting such a settlement meeting shall be substantiated based on one or more criteria provided in Annex C.
 - Please provide substantive reasons for the request of a settlement meeting;
 - Please briefly describe what settlement is envisioned.

B.7 When no comments are provided, the vote position shall be considered in agreement to the request as proposed.

B.8 Voting SDO and name of representative.

ANNEX C (Normative)

CRITERIA FOR BALLOT REVIEW BY SDOAC

NOTE The following are provided in an attempt to provide sound criteria for the examination of subject area requests. Not all the following questions/criteria may be addressed, only those which are of particular relevance to the reviewing body.

- C.1** Is the title of the subject area clear and concise?
- C.2** Is the title free of overlap with existing subject areas?
- C.3** Is the scope well defined and well limited?
- C.4** Is the scope free of overlap with existing subject areas?
- C.5** Has there been an attempt to align the scope with ICS classifications and/or ISO Technical committees?
- C.6** In general, if the requested subject area appears in overlap, in duplication or simply in very close relationship to existing subject areas, has the willingness to enter in discussions been expressed to a reasonable degree ?
- C.7** Have cooperation or liaison issues been addressed?
- C.8** Has the requesting SDO demonstrated its ability to accomplish primary responsibility in the requested subject area?
- C.9** Has the need for recognition of this subject area been demonstrated convincingly?
- C.10** Is the environment within the requested subject area sufficiently mature (technology, stakeholder consensus, etc.) for such recognition to be granted?

ANNEX D (Informative)

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY FOR SUBJECT AREAS

PROCESS CHART

