Pocket Guide for DoD Participation in the Development of Materiel International Standardization Agreements

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FOREWORD

With the emphasis on interoperability between the United States and its allies, effective U.S. participation in groups (committees) that develop international standardization agreements (ISAs) is essential. Not only must such participation produce the optimum level of interoperability, it must do so in a way that is consistent with good business practices and defense acquisition objectives.

This pocket guide provides some basic information about the ISA process and the responsibilities of participants on standardization committees, so that participants can best represent U.S. interests. So please keep this guide handy as a ready pocket reference.

For further information, visit the Defense Standardization Program Office website at http://www.dsp.dla.mil.

INTRODUCTION

Standardization is one of the key ingredients for multinational forces to operate together effectively. The use of common equipment, procedures, tactics, and doctrine between U.S. forces and coalition partners, to the maximum extent practicable, is defense policy. Within the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD), each Military Department and Defense Agency has established its own directions to implementing this policy, but this pocket guide describes the following fundamentals:

- Purpose of materiel ISAs
- Major bodies that develop ISAs
- General process and principles of standardization
- Responsibilities of participants
- Guidance for participants
- Accessing ISAs
- Contact information.

Purpose of Materiel ISAs

A materiel ISA is the record of an agreement among several or all member nations of a multinational organization to use compatible, interoperable, interchangeable, or common systems, subsystems, equipment, software, components, parts, and consumables (including C3, ammunition, fuel, supplies, and stores).

IMPORTANCE OF ISAs

ISAs are important for ensuring interoperability and operational readiness within alliances and partnerships. ISAs increase joint and coalition operations, achieve information technology superiority, improve logistics support, and enhance technological sophistication. It is important to ensure that operational requirements critical to coalition operations are identified, documented, and made easily available for implementation.

GOVERNING DIRECTIVES AND GUIDANCE

Many DOD directives and instructions deal with ISAs, but three key policy documents relate to materiel ISAs:

- Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Instruction (CJCSI) 2700.01, "International Military Agreements for Rationalization, Standardization, and Interoperability between the United States, Its Allies, and

Other Friendly Nations." This CJCSI and others can be found at http://www.dtic.mil/cjcs_directives/.

- DOD Instruction 2010.06, "Materiel Interoperability and Standardization with Allies and Coalition Partners." The full text of this and other DOD directives is located at http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives.
- DOD 4120.24-M, *Defense Standardization Program Policies and Procedures*. This manual provides guidance and procedures for participating in materiel ISA committees and for ratifying and implementing materiel ISAs. This document can be found at http://www.dsp.dla.mil.

Major ISA Bodies

Many multinational organizations develop ISAs, but most ISA activities take place within the five major organizations described below. Further information can be found at the website address shown for each body.

NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION (NATO)

As of 2012, NATO is an alliance composed of 28 nations from North America and Europe and 23 Partnership for Peace countries. NATO's fundamental role is to safeguard the freedom and security of its member countries by political and military means.

Since its inception in 1949, NATO has taken on additional roles outside of its original purview. These include crisis management and humanitarian relief efforts when there is consensus among the member countries to do so. Within NATO, there is the fundamental premise that standardization is not a means within itself, but rather a tool to enhance interoperability among multinational force operations.

U.S. Code, Title 10, Section 2457 states that it is U.S. policy that equipment procured for U.S. forces employed in Europe under the terms of the North Atlantic Treaty be standardized to the level or degree required for interoperability with equipment used by other NATO members for similar purposes. Also, DOD will seek greater doctrine and tactics compatibility to provide a better basis to arrive at common NATO requirements.

The NATO Standardization Organization (NSO) is an organization that operates under the authority of the North Atlantic Council (NAC). The NSO consists of two main functional elements:

- Committee for Standardization (CS)—the senior NATO committee for alliance standardization, composed primarily of representatives from all NATO countries. Operating under the authority of the NAC, it issues policy and guidance for all NATO standardization activities. The CS meets twice yearly and reports annually to the NAC on standardization activities. It is assisted by National Representatives (CSREPs), with delegated authority, who meet four times a year. The work of the CSREPs focuses on harmonizing standardization activities between NATO and national bodies and on promoting interaction between them in all areas of standardization.

- NATO Standardization Agency (NSA)—an independent NATO agency established by the NAC to function as the coordinator for all standardization efforts with the goal of enhancing the combined operational effectiveness of alliance military forces. In addition, it functionally supports the NSO and especially supports the Military Committee Standardization Boards. The NSA director is responsible for the activities of five branches: Policy and Coordination, Joint, Naval, Army, and Air. These branches provide staff support to their related Military Committee Standardization Boards.

Within the NSO are Tasking Authorities (TAs), which are senior NATO committees that validate standardization requirements and can task subordinate groups to work on standardization-related activities and produce standardization documents. NSO has four major TAs:

- Military Committee (MC)—responsible for the development of military operational standards. Its standardization initiatives are coordinated by the Joint, Air, Land, Maritime, and Medical Standardization boards.

- Conference of National Armaments Directors (CNAD)—responsible for NATO armaments cooperation between NATO member nations and for the acquisition of equipment for NATO forces.
- C3 Board—a senior multinational body responsible for all matters relating to consultation, command and control (C3) throughout NATO.
- Logistics Committee (LC)—the senior body responsible for assessing alliance logistics requirements and ensuring adequate logistics support of NATO forces.

Each NATO member nation is encouraged to send representation to engage in the standardization process within the TAs. The types of ISAs that NATO develops are Standardization Agreements (STANAGs), Standardization Recommendations (STANRECs), and Allied Publications (APs); they can be found in the NATO Standardization Document Database (NSDD) website at https://nsa.nato.int. You will also find all U.S.–ratified documents used by DOD at https://assist.dla.mil/. Also, for more information on the activities of NATO, visit http://www.nato.int.

AMERICAN, BRITISH, CANADIAN, AND AUSTRALIAN ARMIES (ABCA)

ABCA is an international program that promotes interoperability and standardization among the armies of the United States, Britain, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. The focus of the ABCA program is on interoperability, defined as the ability of alliance forces, and when appropriate, forces of partner and other nations, to train, exercise, and operate effectively together in the execution of assigned missions and tasks. The program office for ABCA is the U.S. Army.

ABCA Products, the prime tangible output of the program, are formal outputs of data or documentation from the program that are intended to enhance interoperability among the ABCA armies. The types of ABCA Products are standards, publications, architectures, databases, and reports. With the assistance of the program office, these Products are managed by Capability Groups and Support Groups, which are responsible for their Products' accuracy, currency, quality, and relevance. See http://www.abca-armies.org.

AIR AND SPACE INTEROPERABILITY COUNCIL (ASIC)

Formerly known as the Air Standardization Coordinating Committee, ASIC is an international organization that includes the air forces of Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Its mission is to enhance current and future air and space warfighting capabilities through joint and coalition interoperability. The ASIC mission and objectives are realized through standardization of doctrine, procedures, materiel, and equipment.

ASIC's tasks are carried out within the Working Group and Project Group structure, which comprises subject matter experts from each of the member nations. The types of ISAs that ASIC develops are Air Standards (AIR STDs), Advisory Publications (ADV PUBs), and Information Publications (INFO PUBs). More information may be found at http://www.dtic.mil/asic.

COMBINED COMMUNICATIONS-ELECTRONICS BOARD (CCEB)

The CCEB is a five-nation joint military communications–electronics (C-E) organization. Its mission is the coordination of any military C-E matter that is referred to it by a member nation. The member nations are Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States. The CCEB consists of a senior C4 (Command, Control, Communications and Computers) representative from each member nation. The purpose of the CCEB is to enhance C4 interoperability and capability for the defense forces of its member nations and to provide leadership and influence across the wider C4 community. The CCEB does not control national procurement initiatives or mandate the use of particular standards. For more information, see http://jcs.dtic.mil/j6/cceb/acps.

AUSTRALIA, CANADA, NEW ZEALAND, UNITED KINGDOM, AND UNITED STATES NAVAL C4 ORGANIZATION (AUSCANNZUKUS)

AUSCANNZUKUS consists of five nations: Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Its mission is to foster knowledge sharing that enables the warfighter to complete missions successfully across the spectrum of joint and combined operations. Its vision is "to deliver battle winning Maritime Information Warfare Interoperability." A series of documents under the Network Working Group addresses concepts of operations, standard operating procedures, and technical operating instructions. More information can be found at https://community.apan.org/international/auscannzukus.

STANDARDIZATION PROCESS AND PRINCIPLES

Each organization has its own set of steps and terminology for creating ISAs, but they all include generating standardization requirements and developing, staffing, ratifying, implementing, and periodically reviewing ISAs. Because ratification is a formal statement by the United States, it is mandatory that U.S. delegates follow the coordination policies and procedures established by the Military Departments and Defense Agencies they represent in the multinational treaty organization or forum.

The United States will generally ratify ISAs that meet identified needs of its military. U.S. delegates should consider the following criteria during the ratification process:

- ISAs should be substantive, technically correct, and adequate.
- ISAs should positively impact the performance, quality, cost, and/or reliability of U.S. materiel.
- ISAs should be consistent with U.S. standardization documents, U.S.–ratified ISAs, and DOD acquisition policies.
- ISAs should be accompanied by a viable U.S. implementation plan.

The underlying principle of participating in the development, ratification, and implementation of ISAs is to enable military forces of the United States and its allies to operate together effectively and economically. Establishing an ISA is not an end in itself. Interoperability is the primary aim of standardization, and standardization agreements should be developed in support of this objective.

Responsibilities of Participants

U.S. personnel who participate in Working Groups or forums to develop materiel ISAs must become familiar with DOD 4120.24–M, *Defense Standardization Program Policies and Procedures*, Chapter 6, "U.S. Participation in the Development and Ratification of International Standardization Agreements Intended for Use in Defense Acquisitions." It establishes criteria for the development, ratification, and implementation of materiel and materiel–related

ISAs. Several important participant responsibilities are described below:

- Participate in the development and ratification of only those ISAs that will improve the effectiveness of multinational forces when operating together; that will ensure compatibility, interoperability, interchangeability, or commonality for U.S.–supplied materiel; and that will not conflict with acquisition policy.
- Ensure the appropriate level of support and coordination for the proposed ISA by following applicable Military Department and Defense Agency policies and procedures to ensure that the ISA is technically correct, is adequate, and meets identified needs of the U.S. military.
- Consult the cognizant Standardization Executive on issues such as whether the United States should participate on specific ISA committees, ratify specific ISAs, or express reservations about specific ISAs.
- Periodically review the ISA and take the appropriate actions resulting from the review. These actions could include updating the ISA, withdrawing ratification, or maintaining the ISA in its present form.
- Ensure that U.S. ratification details are documented and reflected in official repositories of the originating multinational treaty organizations.

Guidance for Participants

Representing the position and interests of your Military Department or Defense Agency requires knowledge, skill, and attention. The following advice, based on lessons learned, can help make your efforts more effective and worthwhile.

PLANNING FOR PARTICIPATION

You must plan well in advance of your actual participation in standardization meetings. Here are some things that require your attention long before you sit down at the discussion table:

- Coordinate the visit with the Head of Delegation, appropriate office of primary responsibility, and organization within your Military Department or Defense Agency.
- Prepare your visit notification to the appropriate U.S. Government agencies (e.g., Mission to NATO) and applicable multinational treaty organization.
- Make air travel reservations early, particularly during peak travel periods.
- Be sure to attend your Military Department's or Defense Agency's antiterrorism training and security briefing.
- Obtain or update your passport and military identification. It takes a while for the process, so get started several weeks before you'll need these credentials.

- Review any guidelines for successful partic-
  ipation issued by your Military Department
  or Defense Agency.

PREPARING FOR MEETINGS

It takes a lot of groundwork and coordination
to represent effectively the interests of your
Military Department or Defense Agency.
Therefore, you will need to prepare statements
and positions carefully before attending the
meeting. This does not mean you aren't
allowed any flexibility. In fact, it's a good idea
to establish not only your primary goal but
also a few alternatives. Yet these, too, require
thorough consideration in advance.

Also, you should coordinate and obtain approv-
al for U.S. positions with the appropriate staff,
Head of Delegation, and organization. Review
and become familiar with the applicable U.S.
policy directives, as well as the policies and
procedures of the multinational treaty organi-
zation with which you'll be working.

BEING PROFESSIONAL AND PRODUCTIVE

The time you spend in meetings should be the
culmination of your groundwork. Your focus
and diligence during these meetings will deter-
mine how well your efforts pay off. Dress
appropriately for the meetings; determine the
dress code beforehand, and dress accordingly.
When in doubt, arrive in business attire. Focus

on being an effective listener. Stay engaged and attentive in the meeting room. Translation issues demand careful listening and speaking in order to understand and to be understood. Speak when you can make a positive contribution, not for the sake of merely appearing involved.

It's important to participate in social occasions; they can add a significant dimension to your effectiveness. That means you can't be a "lone wolf." Issues often can be successfully dealt with over dinner or at other social events outside the formal meeting room. Offer to help your colleagues—within the boundaries of ethics and confidentiality—when they are trying to get information and you are in a position to assist them. This helps solidify your role, and you may need their help later. Behave graciously when encountering hostility, unfounded accusations, or misinformation targeting you as a representative of the United States or its defense sector. Do not allow protracted discussions of "good and evil" or "right and wrong" to tie up group time or distract from the business at hand. Offer to continue the discussion elsewhere at another time, and try to understand the source of the hostility.

FOLLOWING UP

As with so many other endeavors in life, the secret to success in standardization discussions is good follow-through. When meetings are over, take care of action items and other loose ends to sustain the momentum toward results. Review the meeting minutes or decision sheets and follow up; complete your assigned tasks. Also remember to prepare trip reports in accordance with your Military Department or Defense Agency, and distribute them to the appropriate interested parties.

Accessing ISAs

ASSIST is the official source for specifications and standards used by DOD. ASSIST is a comprehensive database providing access to current information associated with military and federal specifications and standards under the management of the Defense Standardization Program. In addition to domestic standards and specifications, it provides electronic copies of ISAs ratified by the United States, their national points of contact, implementing documents, and reservations. To access standardization documents, users must establish an account at https://assist.dla.mil.

DSPO Contact

Need more information about the contents of this guide? Please contact:

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