

Procedures for
Development of
**American Institute of Timber
Construction**
Consensus Standards



Revised and Approved 18 May 2007

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Procedures for Development of American Institute of Timber Construction Consensus Standards

1 Consensus

These procedures for development and maintenance of American Institute of Timber Construction (AITC) Standards provide for due process, openness and balance in the development of consensus standards.

2 Organization of the AITC Standards Committee

The AITC Standards Committee (hereinafter referred to as "Committee") is the Consensus Body for the development of American National Standards. It shall have an interest classification system for its members as shown herein. The Committee shall be sufficiently diverse to ensure reasonable balance without dominance by a single interest category. A Panel of Directors (Panel) shall be selected from the Committee to consider views and objections and shall be considered part of the Committee. AITC (the Secretariat) shall perform administrative functions and shall be considered as part of the Committee.

3 Committee Responsibilities

The Committee is responsible for:

- (1) Developing AITC Consensus Standards.
- (2) Maintaining Standards developed by the Committee. The Committee must review each Standard within its scope at least every five (5) years and determine the appropriate recommendation for reaffirmation, revision, or withdrawal.

3.1 Panel of Directors

In addition to the responsibilities outlined in Section 3, the Panel shall be responsible for meeting to:

- (1) Review all comments received on draft standards.
- (2) Recommend changes to draft standards based on comments received.
- (3) Approve or deny membership of applicant members.
- (4) Address other issues brought to them.

3.2 Secretariat

In addition to the responsibilities outlined in Section 3, the Secretariat shall:

- (1) Organize the Committee.
- (2) Oversee the Committee's compliance with these procedures.
- (3) Maintain a roster of the Committee.
- (4) Perform administrative work, including meeting notices and arrangements; preparation and distribution of meeting agendas, minutes, ballots, and draft standards; and maintenance of adequate records.
- (5) Submit candidate standards approved by the Committee with supporting documentation for ANSI review and approval as American National Standards.
- (6) Publish approved Standards, revisions, and addenda.
- (7) Perform other administrative functions as required by these procedures.

4 Officers

There shall be a Chairman and Vice-Chairman appointed by the Secretariat from the individual members of the Panel, subject to confirmation by majority vote of the Panel.

Each will serve five years or until a successor is selected and ready to serve. The Vice-Chairman shall carry out the Chairman's duties if the Chairman is temporarily unable to do so.

5 Membership

Membership of the Committee shall be represented by those who have an interest in the activities of the Committee. The members shall be divided so as to represent each of the Interest Categories defined herein. Balance of the Interest Groups shall be maintained so as not to allow any one Interest Group dominance of the Committee. No single interest category shall make up more than 50% of the AITC Standards Committee.

5.1 Selection of Panel of Directors

The Panel shall be selected from the Committee by the Secretariat, subject to Committee approval.

5.2 Application

A request for membership shall be addressed to the Secretariat. The applicant shall indicate the following:

- (1) Applicant's direct and material interest in the work of the Committee;
- (2) Qualifications and willingness to participate actively;

If the applicant is an organization, company, or government agency they shall also identify:

- a. a representative;
- b. an alternate;
- c. an information contact.

5.2.1 Recommended Action

The Secretariat shall make recommendation to the Panel as to the acceptance or denial of membership to new applicants. In forming the recommendations, the Secretariat shall consider the:

- (1) Need for active participation by each interest category;
- (2) Potential for dominance by a single interest category (no majority allowed);
- (3) Extent of interest expressed by the applicant and the applicant's willingness to participate actively.
- (4) The Secretariat may consider reasonable limits on Committee size.

5.2.2 Diverse Interests

If distinct divisions of a company can demonstrate independent interests and authority to make independent decision in the area of the activity of the Committee, each may apply for membership. For example, one division or operating company of a private corporation may show a producing or selling interest while another may show a buyer or user interest.

5.3 Interest Categories

All appropriate interests that might be affected by the standards activity of the Committee shall have the opportunity for fair and equitable participation without dominance by a single interest. Each member may propose his/her own interest category as appropriate and in accordance with the Committee's established categories. The secretariat shall verify the appropriateness of the member's proposed interest category and may assign a different interest category as appropriate.

Interest Categories are:

- (1) *Manufacturer*. This category includes manufacturers and fabricators of engineered wood products and trade associations representing those interests.
- (2) *Producer*. This category includes producers and suppliers of components for the production of engineered wood products (adhesive, lumber, equipment, etc.)
- (3) *User*. This category is for the architect, engineer, contractor, homeowner, etc. who uses or designs with engineered wood products.
- (4) *General Interest*. This category is for educators, researchers, regulators or other individuals, companies, and organizations that have interest in engineered wood products and do not belong in any other category.

5.3.1 Changes to Interest Categories

The categories of interest shall not be revised, except by a vote of the Committee upon recommendation by the Secretariat. The rationale for the selection of categories shall be included in the Committee ballot.

5.4 Review of Membership

The Secretariat shall review the membership list at least annually with respect to the criteria described herein. Members are expected to fulfill attendance, voting, correspondence, and other obligations. Where a member is found in habitual default of these obligations, the Secretariat shall direct the matter to the Panel for appropriate action, which may include termination of membership. When a member fails to return two (2) consecutive ballots or changes affiliation, Committee membership will automatically be terminated unless a written letter requesting a waiver for cause is received within 30 days of notification. Membership may be reinstated upon reapplication in accordance with the provisions of these procedures.

5.5 Observers and Individual Experts

Individuals and organizations having an interest in the Committee's work may request status as observers, for approval by the Secretariat. The Committee may also select individual experts to assist it. Observers and individual experts shall be advised of the Committee activities, may attend meetings, and may submit comments for consideration but shall have no vote.

5.6 Membership Roster

The Secretariat shall maintain a current and accurate Committee roster and shall distribute it to the Committee at least annually, and otherwise on request. The roster shall include the following:

- (1) Committee Title;
- (2) Committee Scope
- (3) Committee Secretariat;
- (4) Officers – Chairman and Vice-Chairman
- (5) Members – name of organization or agency, its representative and alternate, addresses, and business affiliations; or name, address, and business affiliation of individual member(s);
- (6) Classification of each member;
- (7) Tally of classifications – total of voting members and subtotals for each interest category;

6 Meetings

The Panel shall meet, as decided upon by either the Panel, the Chairman, the Secretariat, or by petition of at least one third of the Committee members, to conduct business, receive reports of work, consider draft standards, resolve differences among subgroups, and consider views and objections from any source.

6.1 Open Meetings

Meetings of the Panel shall be open to all committee members and others approved to participate. When possible, at least three weeks notice of regularly scheduled meetings shall be given by the Secretariat. The notice shall describe the purpose of the meeting and shall identify a readily available source for further information. An agenda shall be available and shall be distributed in advance of the meeting.

6.1.1 Absentee

Meetings of the entire Committee (consensus body) are not anticipated; however, any Committee member who cannot attend a meeting of the Committee, excluding meetings of the Panel of Directors, shall be afforded the opportunity to submit a formal vote either before or after the meeting.

6.2 Quorum

A simple majority of the Panel shall constitute a quorum for conducting business at a meeting. If a quorum is not present, in person or by proxy, actions may be taken at a meeting but are not official until approved by letter ballot of the Panel or at a subsequent meeting.

6.3 Proxy

Any Panel member unable to attend a meeting of the Panel of Directors may appoint in writing, a proxy who will vote in his stead at the meeting. The proxy shall be the member's alternate as defined on the Committee roster, or another member of the Panel of Directors. A proxy shall not be an individual who is not represented on the Committee roster.

7 Balloting Process and Voting

7.1 Ballots

Any standard developed by the Secretariat and considered for designation as an American National Standard shall be balloted to the Committee. Any standard already designated as an American National Standard shall be balloted to the Committee for revision, reaffirmation, or withdrawal according to the frequency established in 9.3.

7.1.1 Authorization of Letter Ballots

A letter ballot may be authorized by any of the following;

- (1) Majority vote of those present at a Panel meeting;
- (2) The Chairman;
- (3) The Secretariat;
- (4) Petition of at least one-third of the Committee Members.

7.2 Vote

Each member of the Committee shall vote one of the following positions:

- (1) Affirmative;
- (2) Affirmative, with comment;
- (3) Negative, with reasons (the reasons for a negative vote shall be given and if possible should include specific wording or actions which would resolve the objection);
- (4) Abstain.

7.2.1 Vote of Alternate

An alternate's vote is counted only if the principal representative fails to vote.

7.2.2 Single Vote

No representative shall have more than one vote.

7.2.3 Voting Period

The voting period for letter ballots shall end not less than 30 days from the date of issue or as soon as all ballots are returned, whichever comes earlier. An extension may be granted at the Chairman's option, when warranted. A follow-up letter requesting immediate return of the ballot may be sent, as appropriate, to members and alternate members whose votes have not been received within ten working days before the ballot closes.

7.3 Actions Requiring Approval by a Majority

The following action requires approval by a majority vote of the Committee whether at a meeting or by letter ballot:

- (1) Approval of withdrawal of an existing standard.

Actions which may be approved by a majority of the Panel present at a meeting:

- (1) Addition of new Committee members.

7.4 Actions Requiring Approval by Two-Thirds of Those Voting

The following actions require a letter ballot or an equivalent formal recorded vote with response by at least a majority of the Committee (including abstentions) and approval by at least two-thirds of those voting, excluding abstentions:

- (1) Revisions to categories of interest;
- (2) Approval of a new standard or reaffirmation of an existing standard;
- (3) Approval of revision or addendum to part or all of a standard;
- (4) Ratification of actions recommended by the Panel, including making substantive changes to a balloted standard and ruling negative votes as "non-persuasive".

7.5 Disposition of Views and Objections

When the balloting has been closed, the Secretariat shall forward the ballot tally to the Chairman. The Chairman or Secretariat shall determine whether the written views and objections shall be considered by correspondence or at a meeting.

7.5.1 Consideration of Comments

Prompt consideration shall be given to the written views and objections of all participants. Negative votes unaccompanied by comments will not be considered, but will be recorded as "negative without comment" without further notice to the voter. A concerted effort to resolve all written objections shall be made according to the following steps:

- (1) The Panel of Directors shall review written comments and objections and recommend specific actions. The Panel may recommend:
 - a. Substantive change(s) to the draft standard;
 - b. Ruling of negative vote(s) as "non-persuasive";
 - c. Editorial or non-substantive change(s) to the draft standard.
- (2) Panel recommendations to make substantive change(s) or to rule negative vote(s) as "non-persuasive" shall be circulated to the Committee for review and ratification.
- (3) Panel recommendations which are ratified by a Committee vote meeting the requirements of 7.4, shall be adopted and included in a Recirculation Ballot.

7.5.2 Recirculation Ballot

A Recirculation Ballot reporting (1) unresolved objections (negative votes ruled “non-persuasive” by the Committee) and (2) substantive changes ratified by the Committee shall be sent to the Committee in order to afford all members an opportunity to respond, reaffirm or change their vote within thirty (30) days.

Unreturned Recirculation Ballots will be considered reaffirmation of the Member’s previous vote. Changes deemed editorial or non-substantive by the Panel of Directors need not be balloted.

Any substantive change resulting from votes or public comment shall be re-listed for public review.

7.5.3 Disposition of Late Comments

When the above process is completed, any comments received after the closing of the review and comment period shall be considered at the next review.

7.6 Report of Final Result

The Secretariat shall report the final result of the voting, by interest categories, to the Committee.

8 Submittal of Standard

Upon completion of the procedures for voting, disposition of views and objections, and appeals, the proposed Standard shall be submitted to the ANSI Board of Standards Review according to ANSI Procedures.

8.1 Other Review

Proposals for new AITC Standards or reaffirmation, revision, or withdrawal of existing Standards which are intended as American National Standards shall be transmitted to ANSI for listing in *Standards Action* in order to provide an opportunity for public comment. The proposals shall be posted on AITC’s website at www.aitc-glulam.org and a printed copy will be made available for a public comment period of at least 45 days.

8.1.1 Notification of Standard

The Secretariat shall determine whether listing of proposed Standard actions shall be concurrent with the final committee letter ballot and whether announcement in other suitable media is appropriate.

8.1.2 Changes to Standard

Views and objections resulting from the above shall be addressed in accordance with Section 7.5. Any substantive change made in the proposed AITC Standard shall be posted in accordance with Section 8.1.

9 General Procedures on Standards

9.1 Notification of Standards Development

At the initiation of a project to develop or revise an AITC Standard intended as an American National Standard, notification shall be transmitted to ANSI using the Project Initiation Notification System (PINS) form, or its equivalent, for listing in *Standards Action*.

9.2 Revisions to Standards

Revisions can be proposed at any time by those directly and materially affected by the standard and shall be considered by the Committee as part of the review process.

9.2.1 Proposing Changes

A proposed revision to a standard shall be delivered to the Secretariat and shall be clearly identified as to which standard and/or part of the standard to which it is applicable.

9.2.2 Editorial Revisions

Revisions which are editorial may be made at any time by the Secretariat.

9.2.3 Committee Action on Proposals

The Secretariat shall compile all proposed changes and transmit them to the Committee in a timely fashion for action. Where the Secretariat has determined that a proposal has been received from a party not directly and materially affected by the standard, the Secretariat shall notify the Committee of such determination.

9.3 Frequency of Review

Standards shall be reviewed by the Committee on a schedule which will allow an entire standard to be completely revised, reaffirmed, or withdrawn within five years from the date of the last revision.

10 Communications

Inquiries relating to the Committee shall be directed to the Secretariat. All replies to inquiries shall be made through the Secretariat.

11 Appeals

Directly and materially affected interest who believe they have been or will be adversely affected by a standard within the Committee's jurisdiction, or by the lack thereof, shall have the right to appeal procedural actions or inactions of the Committee or the Secretariat.

The secretariat shall notify each objector, whose objection is unresolved, in writing of his/her 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 any adverse effects, the section(s) of these procedures or the standard that are at issue, action 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 Determination of Validity

Within ten days of receipt, the Secretariat shall examine the complaint and determine the validity of the appeal. This determination shall be limited to whether the appellant represents a directly and materially affected interest, as required by this section. Complaints found to be valid shall be dispensed in accordance with the procedures in Section 11. If the Secretariat determines that the complaint is not valid, this determinations shall be balloted to the Committee within thirty days of receipt by the Secretariat.

11.3 Response

Within thirty days after receipt of the complaint the Secretariat shall respond in writing to the appellant, specifically addressing each allegation of fact in the complaint to the extent of the Secretariat's knowledge.

11.4 Hearing

If the appellant and the Secretariat 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 agreeable to all participants, giving at least ten working days notice. Efforts shall be made to resolve the appeal within a reasonable time limit. If the Committee feels that the appellant is using the appeals process as a means of delaying the development process, the appeal can be dismissed without the hearing by a two-thirds vote of the Committee membership.

11.5 Appeals Board

The appeals board shall consist of three Committee Members 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 two shall be acceptable to the Secretariat.

11.6 Conduct of the Hearing

The appellant has the burden of demonstrating adverse effects, improper actions or inactions, and the efficacy of the requested remedial action. The Secretariat has the burden of demonstrating that the Committee and the Secretariat took all actions in compliance with these procedures and that the requested remedial action would be ineffective or detrimental. Each party may adduce other pertinent arguments, and members of the appeals panel may address questions to individuals. *Robert's Rules of Order* (latest edition) shall apply to questions of parliamentary procedure for the hearing not covered herein.

11.7 Decision

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

- (1) Finding for the appellant, remanding the action to the Committee or the Secretariat with a specific statement of the issues and facts in regard to which fair and equitable action was not taken;
- (2) Finding for the Committee, with a specific statement of the facts that demonstrate fair and equitable treatment of the appellant and the appellant's objections;
- (3) Finding that new, substantive evidence has been introduced, and remanding the entire action to the Committee or the Secretariat for appropriate reconsideration.

12 Parliamentary Procedures

On questions of parliamentary procedure not covered in these procedures, *Robert's Rules of Order* (latest edition) may be used to expedite due process.

13 Openness

Notice of any action to create, revise, reaffirm or withdraw a standard, and the establishment of a new Standards Committee shall be minimum of 30 days and shall be provided to all known directly and materially affected parties. Notice shall include a clear and meaningful description of the purpose of the proposed activity and shall identify the source for further information. In addition, the name, affiliation, and interest category of each member of the Standards Committee shall be available to interested parties upon request to the Secretariat.

14 Records Retention Policy

AITC shall retain and maintain records concerning revision to all consensus standards a minimum of five (5) years or for one (1) revision cycle, whichever period is longer. When consensus standards are withdrawn, records shall be retained for a minimum of five (5) years from the withdrawal date.

15 Metric Policy

Consensus standards written and revised by AITC shall be written using the English system of measurement (in.-lb.) with metric equivalent in parentheses.

16 Patent Policy

In response to any patent issues that may arise related to any of the American Institute of Timber Construction's (AITC) American National Standards, AITC will comply with the most current Patent Policy of American National Standards Institute (ANSI).

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