

CASCO INTERPRETATION PROCESS

1 Introduction

This document describes the CASCO interpretation process for all CASCO generated International Standards and Guides. These documents are developed as joint ISO and IEC documents.

Interpretation is defined for this purpose as a clarification of any requirement in the standard. Interpretations are distinct from guidance in that guidance gives additional information which may be used to determine how the requirement may be fulfilled whereas interpretation does not give any information on how the requirement is to be fulfilled. The interpretation process can take up to 5 months and sometimes longer depending on the detail required.

Interpretations, once agreed, are posted on the [CASCO website](#) and remain until such time as the standard is revised and the clarification is incorporated into the standard or guide.

A request for an interpretation shall be from an ISO National Member Body (NMB) or from an A liaison member of CASCO. An A liaison member can submit a request for interpretation for a period of one year from January 2010. The submission of requests for interpretation by A liaison members is reviewed by the CASCO plenary annually. Any request for interpretation received from any other source is referred back to the source for submission by the Requestor (NMB or A liaison member) as appropriate.

On receipt of a request for interpretation, the CASCO Secretariat in collaboration with the CPC Convenor may decide that no interpretation is required or that the question should be re-phrased. In this instance the Requestor shall be informed by the CASCO Secretariat.

2 Responsibilities

The CPC Convenor together with the CASCO Secretariat shall appoint an Ad Hoc interpretation panel from among the members of the CPC and other experts. The CASCO Secretary shall act as the panel Convenor. The panel shall consist of as many experts in the field as is necessary to make a valid interpretation and shall have at least 3 members of the CPC, two of which are familiar with the specific standard under interpretation. Where possible, at least the Convenor of the WG responsible for the development of the standard shall be invited to participate in the interpretation. Should the WG Convenor not be available then another knowledgeable member of the WG should be invited to participate in the process. Other experts can be invited to participate in the panel. The CPC shall be informed of all members of the panel. The CPC can object to a member of the panel within 5 working days provided any objections are motivated. The final decision on the composition of the panel rests with the CPC Convenor.

The CASCO Secretariat is responsible for ensuring adequate expertise and a balance of interests on the panel. The CASCO Secretariat is also responsible for drafting the panel's report and obtaining the approval of the panel.

Panel members will be reminded that they represent their expertise and not the interests of any group. Any member of the panel shall indicate if there is a conflict of interest by their participation on the panel.

The panel shall be requested to indicate that they are satisfied the request is an interpretation request and not a guidance request. The panel shall reached consensus on this prior to the interpretation proceeding (66% in favour).

3 Interpretation process

The Requestor is responsible to ensure the question is adequately phrased before forwarding to the CASCO Secretariat. Prior to any submission to CASCO, the Requestor should access the CASCO interpretation website to determine if an interpretation has already been made.

The Requestor shall ensure the question is phrased in a manner that allows for clear understanding of the detailed response required and the issues to be addressed.

The CASCO Secretariat shall review each request to ensure it is formulated clearly. If necessary, the CASCO Secretariat may ask the Requestor to re-formulate the request. Within one week of receipt the Secretariat shall inform the CPC Convenor of the request and establish the panel. Within 3 weeks of the request the question shall be forwarded to the panel.

Any additional information required by the panel shall be requested directly to the Requestor by the CASCO Secretariat.

The CASCO Secretariat shall request a response from the panel members within 4 weeks after their receipt of the request.

The CASCO Secretariat will collate the responses from the panel and develop a consensus position based on the panel responses. The panel will be given one week to approve/disapprove the consensus position.

It is the responsibility of the CASCO Secretariat to document the reasons and rationale for the response based on the comments received from the panel members. The response shall include any additional information which may facilitate a better understanding of the interpretation. It is the aim of the panel to unanimously agree with the response. However, it is recognized that this is not always possible. For those decisions where it is not possible, consensus shall be reached when 2/3 (two thirds) of the panel have reached agreement. The report of the panel should indicate any difference of interpretation between panel members and the reasons for this.

4 Balloting

The report shall be forwarded within two weeks of completion to the CPC members for their approval. The CPC members shall review the original request and the panel's response and rationale for their decision.

The CPC members shall be requested within 3 weeks of receipt of the report to indicate their agreement (or disagreement) with the proposed interpretation and confirm the interpretation process has been followed. Should a CPC member disagree with the proposed interpretation they shall indicate the reasons for this in their response. Consensus of the CPC on an interpretation has been reached when 2/3 of the CPC responding are in agreement. Where a CPC member fails to respond they shall be considered to be in favour of the consensus position of the panel.

On reaching consensus by the CPC, the interpretation is forwarded to the CASCO members for balloting for a period of four weeks. The balloting shall be performed as an internal committee ballot.

The CASCO Secretariat shall compile the votes and comments within two weeks of closure.

The CASCO Secretariat shall determine if the result of the ballot indicates a consensus (66% in favour and not more than 25% against) on the proposed interpretation. The Secretariat will review the comments and accommodate those of an editorial nature, where appropriate.

The CASCO Secretariat informs the Requestor, the CASCO members and liaison members of the final interpretation.

The interpretation is posted on the [CASCO website](#).

QS Version	Approval date	Purpose of updating
1	2008-10-30	Procedure agreed at 24 th CASCO plenary
2	2009-04-03	Updates agreed at 11 th CPC meeting
3	2010-04-13	Updates agreed at 25 th CASCO plenary and 13 th CPC meeting