



# Interoperability

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will it work,  
and can standards help ?

New Delhi, India – 26 May 2009



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Does it fit,  
will it work,  
and can standards help?



Now that I have bought a new mobile phone,  
*what do I do with my old phone charger?*



Repairs are so expensive! It is very hard to find spare parts.  
*So, I have to get rid of my car – what a waste!*

## If you have ever had questions like these this workshop matters!

Interoperability affects many subjects of major concern to consumers, including delivery of healthcare services, interfaces for IT applications and components, and a wide range of consumer goods. Common household appliances, mobile telephones and other electronic goods are just some examples.

The issue involves both compatibility of spare parts, accessories and components among different models of one product line, and those of different product lines and brands. Even service areas such as insurance and banking now face problems with interoperability, notably in transparency of information and service delivery.

Consumers value interchangeability of components and software, a fair price in a competitive market, access to information and therefore the full range of goods and services. However,



Why can't I install my new software properly?  
*I keep getting error messages!*



I can't find bags for my vacuum cleaner any more:  
*what do I do?*



Why are there so many types of electrical plugs?



Why do I need so many different remote control devices?

these may not always be compatible with market pressures. Protection of intellectual property may lead to a proliferation of different and incompatible models. High research and development costs will put pressure on prices for some goods, severely limiting access, especially for poor consumers. Proprietary solutions can lead to anti-competitive behaviour, poor interoperability and seriously restricted consumer choice and convenience.

Can standards, which have often provided consensus-based, internationally agreed technical solutions to common problems, help meet consumers' needs for interoperability? What are these needs, and which standards are relevant? Can standards help achieve consumers' expectations for products in terms of cost savings, longer product life, greater convenience and reduced waste, within a competitive business environment?

This workshop will explore these issues.

# Programme

09:00 - 10:00	Registration	
10:00 - 10:30	<b>Opening ceremony</b>	
Welcome Address	<b>Mr. Sharad Gupta</b> , Director-General, Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS)	
Workshop Co-chairs	<b>Ms. Jai Ok Kim</b> , Chair of ISO/COPOLCO	
Inaugural Address	<b>Mr. Alinda Chandra</b> , Additional Director General, BIS	
Vote of Thanks	<b>Mr. Y.S. Bhavé</b> , Secretary, Department of Consumer Affairs, Government of India	
	<b>Mrs. Madhulika Prakash</b> , Deputy Director General (Technical)	
10:30 - 10:50	Coffee/tea break	
	<b>Welcome</b>	
	<b>Ms. Jai Ok Kim</b> , Chair of ISO/COPOLCO	
11:00 - 11:20	<b>Interoperability issues in consumer products from an Indian perspective</b>	
	<b>Mr. S. V. Subrahmanya</b> , Vice-President, Infosys Tech Ltd, (India)	
11:20 - 11:40	<b>What is "interoperability" ? Scope and overall perspective</b>	
	<b>Mr. Allan Asher</b> , Chair, Consumer and Public Interest Network, British Standards Institution (BSI), United Kingdom	
11:40 - 12:00	<b>The impact of counterfeiting on interoperability and product safety</b>	
	<b>Mr. R. A. Venkitachalam</b> , Vice-President and General Manager (India), Underwriters Laboratories	
12:00 - 12:20	<b>Interoperability in the ICT world – challenges, tools and policy implications</b>	<b>Mr. Steve Mutkoski</b> , Senior Standards Strategist, Corporate Interoperability and Standards Group, Microsoft (USA)
12:20 - 12:40	<b>Harmonized standards for interfaces of external power supplies, battery chargers and mobile electronic devices – a challenge and opportunity for consumers</b>	<b>Ms. Gabriela Fleischer</b> , Project Manager, DIN (Germany)
12:40 - 13:00	<b>How interoperability affects consumers' access to knowledge</b>	<b>Ms. Indrani Thuraisingham</b> , Head, Consumers International KL Office for Asia-Pacific and the Middle East (Malaysia)
13:00 - 13:10	Questions and answers	
13:15 - 14:15	Lunch break	



# Questions for discussion

1. What are three areas where problems of interoperability of goods and services are apparent, in your view?
2. Can standards help in one or more of these areas?
3. If standards can help, which area(s) most urgently need(s) solutions, and in which specific ways?

14:15 - 14:45 **Panel discussion, Questions and answers**

Panel moderator

**Ms. Anne Ferguson**, Manager, Consumer and Public Interest Standardization, BSI

Other panellists

To be announced

14:45 - 16:00 **Break-out groups**

## Topic 1:

Household appliances and consumer goods other than information and communications technology (ICT)

## Topic 2:

Electronic goods and ICT issues including software

16:00 - 16:30 **Coffee/tea break**

16:30 - 17:00 **Reports back from break-out groups**

Rapporteurs

17:00 - 17:15 **Questions and answers**

17:15 - 17:30 **Conclusions**

17:30 **Closure**

Session Moderators

**Ms. Karin Both**, Secretary of the Consumer Council, DIN, Germany

**Ms. Sondra Bruni**, Chair, Canadian Advisory Committee, SCC

**Mr. Jens Henriksson**, International Officer, Swedish Consumers' Association

**Ms. Ratna Devi Nadarajan**, Chief Executive Officer, Malaysian Association of Standards Users

Session Rapporteurs

**Ms. Linda Golodner**, President emeritus, National Consumers League, USA

**Ms. Premila Kumar**, CEO, Consumer Council of Fiji

**Ms. Mohana Priya Veerabarathi**, Information, Standards and Quality Executive, Malaysian Association of Standards Users

**Mr. Guillermo Zucal**, Consumer Committee Coordinator, IRAM, Argentina

## Workshop venue

Vigyan Bhavan Conference Centre

Maulana Azad Road

New Delhi 110003, India

Tel: +91 11 23 02 2231