

# **Business plan for the Technical Management Board 2005-2010**

## **1. Introduction**

The ISO Strategic Plan 2005 - 2010 sets out the issues and challenges which the ISO membership has agreed the organization will need to address during the coming years in order to maintain and reinforce its ability to respond to the needs of its stakeholders. It sets seven key objectives for the organization and defines the ensuing actions and results expected.

The TMB business plan constitutes the tool to be used by the TMB to address those elements of the Strategic Plan which are relevant to the technical work. It comprises a statement of the role and responsibilities of the Technical Management Board together with a description of the assumptions concerning the environment in which the TMB is carrying out its tasks. Those assumptions will be reviewed regularly, and at least once per year, in order to confirm their validity.

Many of the assumptions underlying the previous version of the TMB business plan remain valid, including the increasing globalization of markets and the need to facilitate the more active engagement of developing countries in international standardization activities. However, as has been the case in the past, the TMB will need also to be responsive to world events which may demonstrate the need for International Standards. Public concerns about climate change, security and natural disasters are all recent examples of areas where it was felt that International Standardization could make a contribution.

The business plan lists the seven key strategic objectives defined in the Strategic Plan, for each of which the TMB has appointed project champions from within its membership. It will be the role of the project champions to develop proposals for TMB consideration, status reports on decisions taken and the status of implementation of decisions, while the TMB secretariat will supply the associated KPIs so that the impact of TMB decisions can be assessed. These elements will constitute self-contained annexes to the TMB business plan, supplemented by an additional annex (8) with associated KPIs.

## **2. Role and responsibilities of the TMB**

The Technical Management Board is responsible for the overall management of ISO's technical work. Its role, as defined in the Statutes of the organization, is to approve the establishment and dissolution of technical committees, and revisions of the Directives for the work of the technical committees. It shall deal with all matters of strategic planning, coordination, performance, and monitoring of technical committee activities.

The main responsibilities of the TMB are to ensure that

1. ISO is able to meet existing, new and emerging market needs for International Standards and other deliverables on a timely basis.

2. ISO's technical structure and working methods provide mechanisms to meet these market needs and are consistent with the strategic objectives of the organization, as decided by the General Assembly and Council.
3. There is appropriate coordination of the technical work of the organization, both within ISO's technical structures and also with external organizations.
4. ISO is seen as the preferred forum for the development of, and promulgation of, International Standards and other deliverables in all fields covered by the scope of the organization.

Additionally, as part of this strategic framework, the TMB has also adopted as an objective that the ISO system encourages and facilitates the active participation of all of its members in the technical work, particularly those in developing countries.

### **3. Assumptions concerning the environment in which the TMB is carrying out its tasks**

The TMB requires the technical committees to document in their business plans their assumptions concerning the market needs for standards that they are attempting to address. Similarly, the TMB needs to be alert to worldwide trends (internal and external to ISO) and to take appropriate actions to ensure the responsiveness of the ISO system to the standardization requirements of the global market place. The principal trends which need to be taken into account, and TMB actions to address them, are currently considered to be the following:

- The globalization of markets is increasing the need for internationally accepted, globally relevant standards. Recognizing that, in some instances, standards, particularly those in rapidly evolving technologies, have been developed outside the ISO system because of a perception that the ISO system is not able to meet market needs, the TMB has to be able to demonstrate that such needs can indeed be met on a timely basis by the ISO system. TC business plans, SVAT, automatic cancellation policies and the standards development tracks have all been measures introduced to respond to this need while procedures to allow the adoption of externally developed standards as ISO standards are provided to allow organizations to bring their standards to ISO when it is considered that adoption by ISO will add value.
- The TMB needs further to ensure that International Standards are prepared not only on a timely basis, but also that they can facilitate international, inter-regional and intra-regional trade, thereby minimizing the need for stronger regional standardization activities. It must reinforce the message to "do it once, do it right, do it internationally". The global relevance policy has been developed as a response to this requirement.
- Economic trends in the world have forced industries to rationalize their operations to make them more efficient and effective, and more flexible in responding to market requirements in order to stay competitive. ISO needs to follow this trend in ensuring its own efficiency and effectiveness. Just as the exchanges in the global market place have become increasingly electronic, so has ISO's own working environment

become increasingly electronic. ISO is on its way to becoming a virtual organization characterized by electronic communication and exchanges. This development needs to be exploited further to allow stakeholders with less resources easier and more equitable participation in ISO's technical work. One consequence of industrial rationalization, however, is that in some instances, this has resulted in expertise for standardization being available in only a few countries. ISO needs to ensure that it has sufficient flexibility to ensure that, in such circumstances, procedural impediments do not prevent the development of standards needed by the market place.

- The global focus on sustainable development and associated societal trends (e.g. the ageing and growth of populations, increasing environmental awareness, etc.) are placing new demands on industry and society, much of which can be dealt with on a standardization level. The TMB needs to verify the relevance and effectiveness of the ISO work programme in responding to these trends. The Ad hoc group on Climate Change and Advisory Group on social responsibility are two recent examples of the TMB addressing such issues.
- Developing countries require standardization solutions that reflect their socio-economic development. The recently introduced three year systematic review of International Standards by all ISO member bodies, and the introduction into the Directives of provisions for twinning arrangements, are measures designed to ensure that developing countries needs can be taken into account during the elaboration of International standards.
- Converging technologies in many sectors (in particular in the information technology, telecommunications and consumer electronics sectors) are putting a strain on the traditional delineation between standards organizations on an international level. This requires that ISO, together with its peer and partner organizations, ensures that the market place is best served through the effective and efficient application of available resources. The procedures for technical cooperation with IEC and ITU are examples of responsiveness to this trend.
- New and emerging technologies will require standardization more rapidly as the technologies mature. Mechanisms such as workshops and the possibility to publish International Workshop Agreements and Technology Trend Assessments are mechanisms by which ISO can help to consolidate emerging markets. Likewise, the growing importance of the service sector to GDP in many countries is an indication of another emerging need for standardization activities.
- The regulatory domain is increasingly making use of voluntary standards, giving them the status of technical regulations. This trend is furthered by WTO/TBT requirements to harmonize technical regulations internationally based on International Standards.
- ISO standards are increasingly being used as the basis for conformity assessment systems. The CASCO toolbox of standards and Guides has been the main response to this trend.

#### **4. Key strategic objectives**

1. Developing a consistent and multi-sector collection of globally relevant International Standards
2. Ensuring the involvement of stakeholders
3. Raising the awareness and capacity of developing countries
4. Being open to partnerships for the efficient development of International Standards
5. Promoting the use of voluntary standards as an alternative or as a support to technical regulations
6. Being the recognized provider of International Standards relating to conformity assessment
7. Providing efficient procedures and tools for the development of a coherent and complete range of deliverables