ISO/TC 181 N 1527

STRATEGIC BUSINESS PLAN
ISO/TC 181
Safety of toys

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ISO TC 181 addresses the safety of toys in all respects focusing on traditional toys. The global toy sales is approx. 108,7 billion US$ (2023) (Source: www.toy-icti.org – Global Sales Data).

The committee has issued a number of standards on toy safety related to mechanical/physical, chemical and flammable properties. Compliance with these standards has become mandatory in a number of countries. Other countries and regions have used these standards as platforms for improving existing standards.

A number of areas for improving and updating the standards due to experiences including incident data and scientific research have been identified.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 ISO technical committees and business planning

The extension of formal business planning to ISO Technical Committees (ISO/TCs) is an important measure, which forms part of a major review of business. The aim is to align the ISO work programme with expressed business environment needs and trends and to allow ISO/TCs to prioritize among different projects, to identify the benefits expected from the availability of International Standards, and to ensure adequate resources for projects throughout their development.

1.2 International standardization and the role of ISO

The foremost aim of international standardization is to facilitate the exchange of goods and services through the elimination of technical barriers to trade.

Three bodies are responsible for the planning, development and adoption of International Standards: ISO (International Organization for Standardization) is responsible for all sectors excluding Electrotechnical, which is the responsibility of IEC (International Electrotechnical Committee), and most of the Telecommunications Technologies, which are largely the responsibility of ITU (International Telecommunication Union).

ISO is an independent, non-governmental international organization with a membership of 172 national standards bodies (organizations representing social and economic interests at the international level), supported by a Central Secretariat based in Geneva, Switzerland.

The principal deliverable of ISO is the International Standard.

An International Standard embodies the essential principles of global openness and transparency, consensus and technical coherence. These are safeguarded through its development in an ISO Technical Committee (ISO/TC), representative of all interested parties, supported by a public comment phase (the ISO Technical Enquiry). ISO and its Technical Committees are also able to offer the ISO Technical Specification (ISO/TS), the ISO Public Available Specification (ISO/PAS) and the ISO Technical Report (ISO/TR) as solutions to market needs. These ISO products represent lower levels of consensus and have therefore not the same status as an International Standard.

ISO offers also the International Workshop Agreement (IWA) as a deliverable, which aims to bridge the gap between the activities of consortia and the formal process of standardization represented by ISO and its national members. An important distinction is that the IWA is developed by ISO workshops and fora, comprising only participants with direct interest, and so it is not accorded the status of an International Standard.

2. BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT OF THE ISO/TC

2.1 Description of the Business Environment

The following political, economic, technical, regulatory, legal and social dynamics describe the business environment of the industry sector, products, materials, disciplines or practices related to the scope of this ISO/TC, and they may significantly influence how the relevant standards development processes are conducted and the content of the resulting standards:

2.1.1 Market situation

Toys are used in play by children worldwide. Users are children from birth to 14 years of age.

In many or most countries, there is a great awareness of the importance of the safety of toys, both on the political and on the community level.

The market is dominated by a number of large toy manufacturers, with headquarters in North America, Asia or Europe, who export worldwide.

Many small and medium sized local companies, which produce toys for export as well as for the local market, also exist.

A number of finished toys or semi-manufactured parts for toys are produced in East Asia. These are usually tested locally by multinational or internationally recognized test laboratories in accordance with national, regional or international requirements depending on the target market (for example the European market, so that e.g. the importers within EU can mark the toys with the CE mark).

2.1.2 Stakeholders

Directly involved interested parties in the standardisation process are the toy industry, either by direct representation or through industry associations, consumer organisations on behalf of the end users, representatives of governmental or local authorities (e.g. through policy and enforcement agencies), test laboratories and research institutions.

2.2 Quantitative Indicators of the Business Environment

The following list of quantitative indicators describes the business environment in order to provide adequate information to support actions of the ISO/TC:

Based on figures from ICTI, the International Council of Toy Industries (see www.toy-icti.org – Global Sales Data), the turnover on the world market for 2023 was approximately 108,7 billion US$.

3. BENEFITS EXPECTED FROM THE WORK OF THE ISO/TC

Toys are subject to a very large international and regional trade, and therefore the establishment and maintenance of international standards with satisfactory safety requirements and test methods for determining the safety of toys are of importance to the international environment.

The expected benefits are

- The creation of a set of robust safety standards that are available for adoption by member jurisdictions.
- A corresponding reduction in injuries to children from toys.
- An increase in alignment over time of requirements for toys globally to facilitate international trade and reduce non-tariff barriers to this.
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- An overall reduction in the cost of development of standards for the safety of toys, in particular for jurisdictions that choose to adopt the ISO documents as their own national standards.

4. REPRESENTATION AND PARTICIPATION IN THE ISO/TC

Countries/ISO members bodies that are P and O members of the ISO committee

4.1 Analysis of the participation

ISO/TC 181 has 27 P-members and 37 O-members with a broad worldwide distribution.

Important international stakeholders who have participated actively in the work are CI (Consumers International) and ICTI (International Council of Toy Industries).

In order to better reflect the work of the committee in the context of its market environment, a more active participation from some large toy manufacturing countries in Asia who are at present P- and O-members of the committee has been sought with encouraging results.

5. OBJECTIVES OF THE ISO/TC AND STRATEGIES FOR THEIR ACHIEVEMENT

5.1 Defined objectives of the ISO/TC

The primary objective of ISO/TC 181 is the preparation and maintenance of *safety standards* for toys with regard to mechanical, physical, chemical and flammable properties.

Although *safety* will constantly be the first concern, other objectives to be addressed could be as follows:

- to take environmental aspects into consideration, as relevant;
- to continue cooperation with regional standardization bodies, e.g. CEN/TC 52 and ASTM F 15.22.

5.2 Identified strategies to achieve the ISO/TC's defined objectives

5.2.1 Preparation and maintenance of safety standards for toys

ISO/TC 181 will ensure the necessary maintenance and revision of the present standards. As the standards of the committee are of a horizontal nature, only development of a limited number of new standards is foreseen.

Identification of safety aspects will be based on
- scientific evidence and reports
- accident data
- risk analysis

Note: The absence of an accident history may not be a good reason for an automatic presumption of a low level of risk. Other factors should also be taken into account such as risk assessment, particularly when the possible severity is high. Appropriate data may not be available for many reasons including the absense or ineffectiveness of a data collection system, the time delay in collating and presenting statistics, changes in production design and use conditions, etc.

5.2.2 Environmental aspects

Although the major objective of the committee is the safety aspects of toys, the great and growing interest in environmental issues is acknowledged. Environmental aspects will therefore be observed and discussed wherever relevant in order to avoid prescribing measures which might have a negative environmental impact, both when considering safety aspects and associated test methods.

5.2.3 Cooperation with CEN/TC 52

Close cooperation between ISO/TC 181, CEN/TC 52 and ASTM F 15.22 shall be kept up, and attempts to reach solutions, which will be agreeable to all committees shall be continued. This should be done e.g. by continuing the recurring attendance and active participation of US and China - ISO/TC 181 observers both
at CEN/TC 52 and its WG levels and by maintaining the tradition of having joint ASTM F 15.22 – ISO/TC 181 meetings. These actions ensure continuous focus and coordination of the work of all three committees.

6. FACTORS AFFECTING COMPLETION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ISO/TC WORK PROGRAMME

The continued active commitment on the part of the stakeholders will affect the completion and implementation of the work programme.

7. STRUCTURE, CURRENT PROJECTS AND PUBLICATIONS OF THE ISO/TC

This section gives an overview of the ISO/TC's structure, scope, projects and publications. All of this information is updated regularly and is available on ISO's website, ISO Online.

The links below are to three different sections of the TC's page on ISO's website:

7.1 Structure of the ISO committee

7.2 Current projects of the ISO technical committee and its subcommittees

7.3 Publications of the ISO technical committee and its subcommittees

Click on the tabs and links on this page to find the following information:

- About (Secretariat, Secretary, Chair, Date of creation, Scope, etc.)
- Contact details
- Structure (Subcommittees and working groups)
- Liaisons
- Meetings
- Tools
- Work programme (published standards and standards under development)

Reference information

Glossary of terms and abbreviations used in ISO/TC Business Plans

General information on the principles of ISO's technical work