



## STRATEGIC BUSINESS PLAN – ISO/TC 308

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### Executive summary

ISO Technical Committee 308 (ISO/TC 308) focuses on creating a package of International Standards related to Chain of Custody (CoC), enhancing business practices and providing transparency rules for supply chain models. Its members are aiming at worldwide representation across various sectors, industries, governments, and NGOs. The committee intends to develop standards that address general principles of CoC, methods and limits of specific supply chain models, and support better CoC practices. By achieving this, ISO/TC 308 targets improving the credibility of supply chain models, enabling systems requiring multiple stakeholders in a value chain to engage with information, and serving as a reference for all other CoC standardization projects.

ISO/TC 308 addresses four UN Sustainable Development Goals directly:

- Decent Work and Economic Growth (Goal 8)
- Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure (Goal 9)
- Responsible Consumption and Production (Goal 12)
- Partnerships to achieve the Goal (Goal 17)

The committee's objectives include meeting market demands for standards, performing continuous quality assurance, writing detailed and credible standards, and developing them according to the ISO Directives timeline. Additional countries have been identified as potential candidates for membership due to their ongoing works, activity in blockchain startups, or engagement in CoC activities in other ISO committees.

To maintain progress and complete the work program effectively, ISO/TC 308 should consider managing identified risks and leveraging existing opportunities:

Opportunities:

- High expectations from stakeholders regarding energy and material transitions;
- Anticipation for the committee's standards to increase acceptability and credibility for mass balance;
- Significant participation from countries and experts engaged in CoC;
- Common understanding of the committee's goals supporting consensus.

Some of the risks include:

- Absence of recognition for the standards as a framework for CoC specific standards;
- Duplication of work or overlapping with other TCs;
- Low market acceptance of the delivered standards.

ISO/TC 308 plays a crucial role in facilitating the exchange of goods and services through the elimination of technical barriers to trade. Its primary objective is to create a comprehensive set of International Standards governing various aspects of CoC, ultimately benefiting businesses, regulators and consumers alike. Managing identified risks and capitalizing on existing opportunities will help ensure successful completion and implementation of the work program.

## 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 program 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 a legal association, the members of which are the National Standards Bodies (NSBs) of some 164 countries (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:

The Chain of Custody (CoC) technical committee's work will serve the needs of many stakeholder groups throughout a supply chain. Supply chains rely on information and products passing securely, safely and transparently through the system. In some cases, the specifics of how to transfer a physical or digital product through this chain requires a legal transfer of ownership, or custody. Accurately representing the transfer of data and goods is vital to maintaining proper accounting practices and truthful, trustworthy claims. An organization's reputation can be damaged, together with financial losses, sanctions imposed by authorities or market losses. In order to avoid these damages, a clear geographical origin and transactional history of goods, funds, and services is needed.

Several CoC programs exist both formally (e.g. certification programs, government programs, company programs) and informally, typically tied to one industry's needs or preferences. However, there is a need for harmonization between different supply chain programs as well as for clear and common requirements for all actors in a supply chain which the standards emerging from this Technical Committee will help to resolve.

Many certification programs currently manage specific CoC programs in specific industries. The outcomes of accurate reporting have a large bearing on an organization's reputation with its customers, and stakeholders.

The requirements on the digitalization are increasing and the data format and content needs to be harmonized, when using different chain-of-custody models.

Some practices are **not specific enough** (lack of requirements), which drives inconsistencies: harmonized requirements and more guidance are expected to ensure consistency between the practices.

Specific standards on traceability and chain-of-custody are already existing (e.g. for wood: ISO 38200 "Chain of custody of wood and wood based products" and for cocoa ISO 34101 series on "sustainable and traceable cocoa" or EN 45557 "General method for assessing the proportion of recycled material content in energy-related products").

Other rule sets are being developed for calculation, verification and reporting of data e.g. on recycled plastic content in single-use plastic beverage bottles.

Therefore, a common rule set for the different chain-of-custody methods is needed. This includes the calculation of material and energy flows, which lead to different claims depending on the use of the chain-of-custody model.

Standards for data exchange between the industry along the supply chain already exist, such as "[ISO 10303-4:2024](#) Industrial automation systems and integration - Product data representation and exchange" introducing the "Standard for the Exchange of Product model data" (STEP) and "[ISO 15926-1:2004](#) Industrial automation systems and integration - Integration of life-cycle data for process plants including oil and gas production facilities".

However, there is a need for more transparency and interoperability dealing with data exchange systems (e.g. circular systems such as reuse or recycling), and for greater involvement of stakeholders from the entire CoC. Otherwise, the CoC is “broken”, i.e. it becomes impossible to access the information which is (or will be) required for reporting either to other stakeholders or, if necessary, to regulatory systems. Other ISO Committees, such as [ISO/TC 307](#), Blockchain Standardization, and [ISO/IEC JTC1/SC 27](#) Information security, cybersecurity and privacy protection will likely contain elements of CoC within the standards that they have under development. It will be requested to have active liaisons with these committees to ensure that the requirements outlined by ISO/TC 308 will be covered within their work and vice versa.

All sectors of economy will need, in the future, support of appropriate standards dealing with traceability. Our work will apply to the entire economy.

### 3 Benefits expected from the work of the ISO/TC

The TC will draft standards that will offer companies a reliant framework to improve the traceability in their supply chain, and give customers and other supply chain partners, authorities, NGO's and other interested parties a reference to understand the traceability model that is used in a specific supply chain, and to evaluate the accuracy of the use of the traceability standard.

Authorities worldwide are putting more and more requirements to traceability. TC 308 will deliver standards of clear traceability models that can be used to fulfill those requirements and that provide assurance to all parties involved, avoiding inefficiencies, green washing and the rise of inappropriate non-tariff barriers to world trade that might otherwise be the consequence of national regulatory policies.

ISO/TC 308's work will enable a better allocation of benefits of environmental actions along the supply chain, such as so called "avoided impacts", or for an equitable sharing of benefits along the supply chain, e.g. environmental benefits coming from the energy or material transition.

This approach will help drive the transition to a circular economy by escalating the use of sustainably sourced non-virgin fossil, non-virgin, or virgin renewable inputs in man-made materials, without violating SDGs.

Various benefits are expected from our [ISO/TC 308](#) standards:

- Provide a **common ground** to exchange ideas between experts at international level (concepts, vocabulary, "boundaries", transparency...),
- Provide transparency within CoC methods regarding claims to comply with legal demands over the world e.g. nature of claimed specified characteristics, or geographic origin per each claimed material,
- Support development of **fair and acceptable CoC practices** which reflect best practices for multiple sectors (e.g. wood, metals, chemicals, textiles, cocoa, energy generation...),
- Support **standardization** in various fields (sustainable aviation fuels, equitable labor, ecosystem protection, renewable energy adoption, expansion of the types of materials available for recycling, use of bio-content, adoption of blockchain technologies, data exchange...),
- Support regulatory requirements,
- Support the **transition to circular economy** by describing credible methods to promote use of sustainably sourced materials, without violating (or – more positively - improving the impact on the SDG),
- Improve **all CoC activities** (e.g. reverse logistics...).

## **4 Representation and participation in the ISO/TC**

### **4.1 Membership**

Countries/ISO member bodies that are P (Participant) and O (Observer) members of the ISO committee can be viewed at: [ISO/TC 308 - Chain of custody](#)

### **4.2 Analysis of the participation**

Participation in ISO/TC 308 can be found [here](#).

The representation of ISO/TC 308 is worldwide and by all sectors, industries, government and NGO's. Both developed and developing countries are involved in ISO/TC 308.

Whereas several countries are already participating, additional countries could be targeted to provide experts to ISO/TC 308. The following paragraph provides selected countries together with the reasons why they could join.

- Canada: Currently working on Canadian market focused CoC/Mass Balance standards, aiming at harmonisation of on-going works.
- Asian countries, such as Malaysia, Indonesia and others, that are important supply chain partners in many industry sectors.
- Portugal and Singapore which are active in blockchain startups.
- Nigeria, Rwanda, Congo, Mozambique, Madagascar, Mali, South Africa, Saudi Arabia, Mauritius and Iran because they are already involved in CoC activities in ISO committees focused on Textiles ([ISO/TC 38](#)) and Circular Economy ([ISO/TC 323](#)).

## 5 Objectives of the ISO/TC and strategies for their achievement

### 5.1 Defined objectives of the ISO/TC

The TC will create a package of International Standards relating to Chain of Custody (CoC) including:

- General principles of CoC,
- Methods and limits of specific supply chain models of CoC and support better CoC practice,

The developed standards are intended to:

- Add clarity and enhance business practices for use of CoC supply chain models,
- Provide transparency rules for use of supply chain models to support the practice and make it credible,
- Support exchange of information and interoperability related to the CoC models used and aspects of those models,
- Serve as a reference for all other CoC standardization projects or where CoC is included in the scope of developing standards e.g. for circular economy, and material and energy transition, carbon related issues.

While well developed and widely used methods for the other CoC models exist currently, the standards and methods are diverse and span country, regional and program level of use. International standards concerning the other CoC models may be developed at a future date.

ISO TC/ 308 activities aim at providing standards to:

- **Enhance business practices** for use of supply chains models,
- Support **exchange of information** related to the use of supply chain models,
- Provide **transparency** rules for the use of supply chain models to support the practice and make it credible,
- Serving as **a reference for all other CoC standardization** projects,
- Supporting **better CoC practice**, including in the scope of developing standard e.g. for circular economy, and material and energy transition.

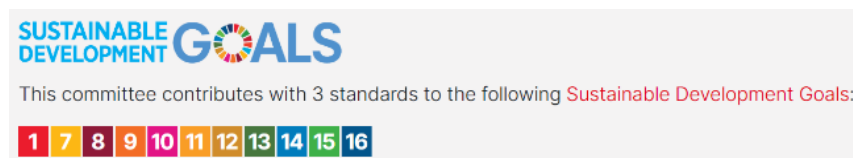
These standards offer guidance on developing appropriate rules, methods, and information exchange to enable systems which require multiple stakeholders in a value chain to engage with information.

The objectives of ISO/TC 308 are in line with ISO strategy: ISO/TC 308 standards aim at being used in every country and sectors.

There are several projects and ISO/TCs that are developing documents that use or reference CoC including:

- ISO/TC 292 ISO 28018
- ISO TC 209 ISO 22372
- ISO TC 323 ISO 59020 (needs further refinement)
- ISO TC 61/SC 14/WG 5 ISO 15270-4 (under development)

With the increased focus on the supply chain there are several regulations, directives or rulemaking that will likely specify approved types of chain of custodies models and the options within the models that will be allowed.



TC 308 works towards contributing to the following [UN Sustainable Development Goals](#):

- GOAL 1: No Poverty
- GOAL 2: Zero Hunger
- GOAL 3: Good Health and Well-being
- GOAL 4: Quality Education
- GOAL 5: Gender Equality
- GOAL 6: Clean Water and Sanitation
- GOAL 7: Affordable and Clean Energy
- GOAL 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth
- GOAL 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure
- GOAL 10: Reduced Inequality
- GOAL 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities
- GOAL 12: Responsible Consumption and Production
- GOAL 13: Climate Action
- GOAL 14: Life Below Water
- GOAL 15: Life on Land
- GOAL 16: Peace and Justice Strong Institutions
- GOAL 17: Partnerships to achieve the Goal

- *Goal 8: Decent work and economic growth*  
Traceability and insight into the supply chain allow for identification and the addressing and prevention of insufficient work conditions or even violations of labor rights.
- *Goal 9: Industry, innovation and infrastructure*  
ISO/TC 308 standards will reduce the complexities and resulting costs of various CoC standards, which are a barrier to market access, especially for smaller companies and developing countries.
- *Goal 12: Responsible consumption and production*  
By adhering to the requirements in ISO/TC 308 standards companies and consumers are provided insight into the origin and composition of the product, thereby being able to take conscious decisions regarding their consumption.
- *Goal 17: Partnerships to achieve the goal*  
ISO/TC 308 standards contribute to encouraging and promoting effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnership.

ISO/TC 308 standards can also provide support for SDGs 2, 6, 10 and 11.

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

The following paragraphs present **mid-term actions** (short and mid-term actions, with continuous commitment):

- Assess, identify, and meet **market demands** for standards (incl. circular economy). All sectors and regions must be included in the assessment.
- Perform continuous **quality assurance** to ensure standards of high quality.
- Making sure standards are written in a way that helps **increasing the credibility** for the supply chain models.
- The standards must be written in such detail that it can be used as a **specification or framework guideline** for any special industry-specific standards.
- Develop standards **within the time schedule**, as laid down in the ISO Directives.
- Organize committee and working group meetings in relevant markets.

"Tactical" actions (**short term and very practical**, with "workforce" needs):

**Group** all standards using "22095" number as reference, such as ISO 22095-2 for Mass Balance. This would allow to clearly identify our standards as belonging to a family of standards, and benefit from the fact that ISO 22095 is already known within the industry and other stakeholders. This has been done quite successfully e.g. in the cocoa industry (ISO 34101 series) or in the ISO 15926 series dealing with Life-Cycle data exchange within the industry.

**Exchange** with other ISO/TC (e.g. [ISO/TC 323](#) Circular economy) and regulatory bodies (liaisons to be set towards these bodies) to support the promotion of our standards. A possible way to achieve this is to form an ISO/TC 308/AHG that a) monitors and ensures that ISO/TC 308 standards are well applied through exchanges, and b) informs other ISO/TCs about our standards (at least ISO 22095), provide examples of studies (sectoral case studies) based on ISO 22095 (e.g. chemical and plastic sectors).

List of TCs with which liaison could be made:

- [ISO/TC 34](#) Food, including SC 18 about Cocoa
- [ISO/TC 59](#) Buildings and civil engineering works
- [ISO/TC 61](#) Plastics
- [IEC/TC 111](#) Environmental standardization for electrical and electronic products and systems
- [ISO/TC 122](#) Packaging
- [ISO/TC 174](#) Jewellery and precious metals
- [ISO/TC 176](#) Quality management and quality assurance
- [ISO/TC 207](#) Environmental management
- [ISO/TC 268](#) Sustainable cities and communities
- [ISO/TC 279](#) Innovation management
- [ISO/TC 287](#) Sustainable processes for wood and wood-based products
- [ISO/TC 301](#) Energy management and energy savings
- [ISO/TC 323](#) Circular economy
- [ISO/TC 324](#) Sharing economy

**Discuss with ISO/CS (how) to have ISO 22095, and the associated series of standards,** being recognized as the reference standard for CoC.

Additionally, ISO/TC 308 experts can be involved to:

- Provide practical recommendations for **data exchange formats** (e.g. Product Circularity data sheets), how to be sure that every actor is doing the appropriate practice, and assist an update of some existing standards by other ISO/TCs (inform these TCs on what is needed to report, and how to do it).
- Identify **events and other opportunities to communicate** and have our standards known. As an action: report to the leadership + mention if your volunteer to make a presentation, in order to define which actions need to be done.

## 6 Factors affecting completion and implementation of the ISO/TC work programme

Various factors are affecting the completion and implementation of the work program.

The following risks have been identified:

- Lack of **awareness that our ISO/TC 308** exist, and/or **misunderstanding of what we do**.
- **Absence of recognition** of our standards as being a framework for the development of CoC specific standards. Action: see before.
- **Duplication of work**, or overlap, with other TC, i.e. going in the scope of another TC.
- No **consensus** during our standardization work, which might stop projects, or add delays.
- Too high level of **complexity**, which might make the standards difficult to understand.
- No **acceptance** by the market of the deliverables (standards, TR...) of the TC. For example, if the requirements are considered to allow for less stringent practices, or if the requirements are considered too demanding as compared to existing practices. The development of the selected actions will help to manage the identified risks.

Additionally, some opportunities exist to support our work:

- High **expectations by stakeholders** regarding energy and material transition. These expectations will help to support the use of our standards since stakeholders need credible practices.
- High **expectations by stakeholders** that the standards developed in this TC will help to gain acceptance and credibility for mass balance and other CoC models.
- **Significant participation of countries and experts** in our CoC world. Examples have been provided, and experts contribute with their expertise. The standards will reflect the current state of the art.
- **Common understanding of what we do** (through several business areas). This common understanding might assist to support consensus.

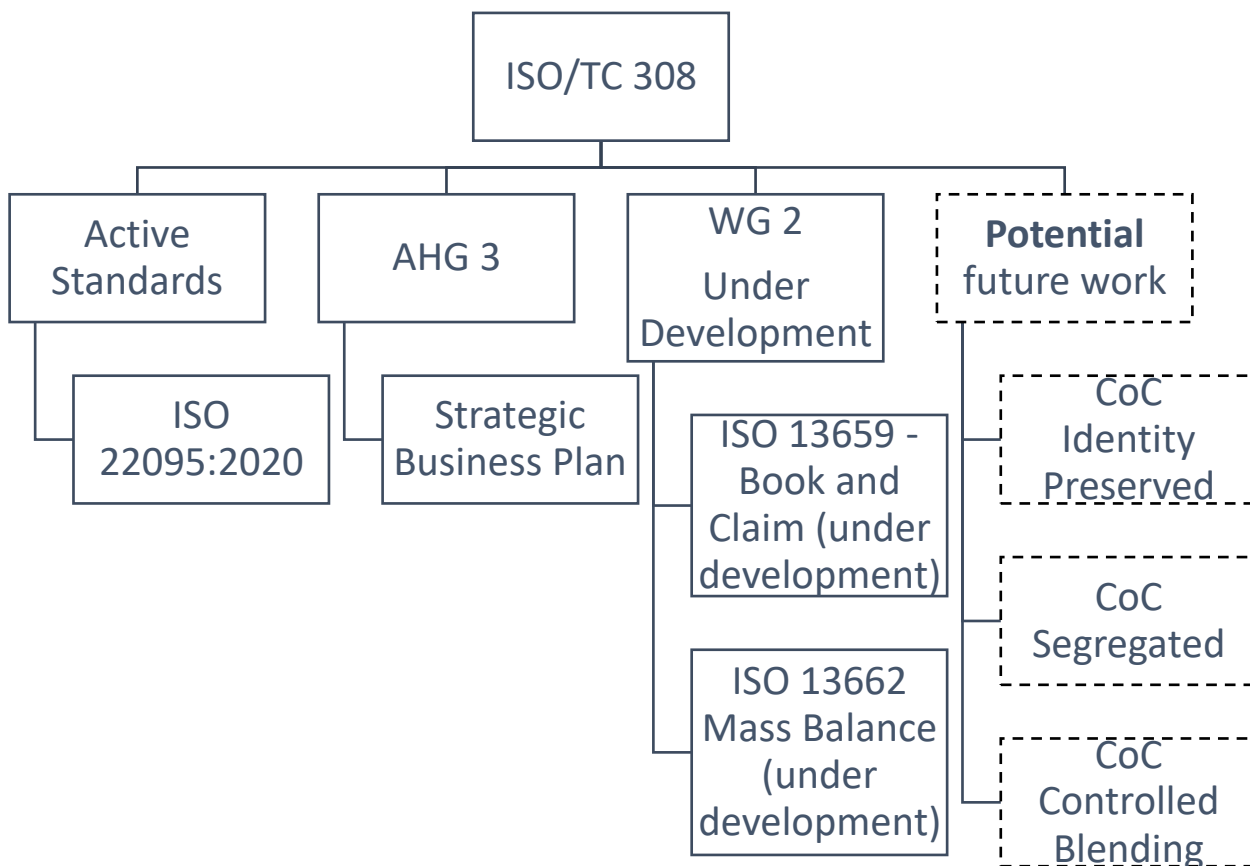
## 7 Structure, current projects and publications of the ISO/TC

This section gives an overview of the ISO/TC's structure, scope, projects and publications.

- **Title of ISO/TC 308:** Chain of custody.

- **Scope of ISO/TC 308:** Standardization in the field of chain of custody (CoC) for products and associated processes with specified characteristics, with the aim of ensuring that associated claims are reliable.
- **Establishment of ISO/TC 308 WGs and AHGs:**

Reference	Title	ISO standards under development
ISO/TC 308	Chain of Custody	<a href="#">ISO 22095:2020</a> (published)
ISO/TC 308/AHG 1	Future of ISO/PC 308 (disbanded)	-
ISO/TC 308/AHG 2	Mass balance and book and claim standards (disbanded)	-
ISO/TC 308/AHG 3	Strategic Business Plan	-
ISO/TC 308/WG 1	Chain of custody (disbanded)	-
ISO/TC 308/WG 2	Mass balance and book and claim	ISO 13659 (under development) ISO 13662 (under development)
Established if agreed by ISO/TC 308	Identity Preserved CoC model	Potential future work only
Established if agreed by ISO/TC 308	Segregated CoC model	Potential future work only
Established if agreed by ISO/TC 308	Control Blending CoC model	Potential future work only



**Figure: structure of ISO/TC 308**

The TC has been created following an initial work done in ISO/PC 308, i.e. the production of [ISO 22095](#). The development of standards within ISO/TC 308 use ISO 22095 as a base/core document. The next two standards, ISO 13659 ‘Book and Claim’ and ISO 13662 ‘Mass Balance’, aim at providing additional requirements and guidance for these two chains of custody models, and clarify their position as compared to controlled blending. Following investigation by ISO/TC 308 members, this work has been chosen to answer market needs and clarify appropriate practices for these two CoC models. ISO/TC 308 members wanted to urgently clarify appropriate practices for these two CoC models.

Over the next few years, the focus of ISO/TC 308 is to support the development of practical and credible reference standards for CoC. This document details the proposed actions and future structure of ISO/TC 308. Additionally, the document will refer to how to align with ISO’s overall strategy and will also focus on how this TC’s work can support ISO’s commitment to align with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations.

Other CoC model standards can be developed to provide additional requirements and guidance. Sector specific standards might be developed in the future, this can be done within joint working groups (JWG) between ISO/TC 308 and other TCs, by other TCs with a liaison to ISO/TC 308, or within ISO/TC 308. In that case ISO/TC 308 might consider adjusting its scope, if necessary.

## **Information on ISO online**

The link below is to the TC's page on ISO's website:

[ISO/TC 308 - Chain of custody](#)

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

- About (Secretariat, Committee Manager, 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](#)

[General information on the principles of ISO's technical work](#)