

# InterNational Electrical Testing Association

## Operating Principles and Procedures

### 1. GENERAL

These *Operating Principles and Procedures* describe the method used by the InterNational Electrical Testing Association (NETA), an ANSI Accredited Standards Developer, to develop American National Standards (“Standards”). Where these *Operating Principles and Procedures* are silent on an issue, the ANSI *Essential Requirements* shall serve as the precedent document.

### 2. ORGANIZATION

**2.1 Committees** – Section Panels (SP) established by NETA shall be responsible for developing and maintaining Standards that fall within the scope of these procedures. The membership of the NETA Section Panels shall be sufficiently diverse to ensure reasonable balance without dominance by any single interest group. When necessary, Section Panels may form subgroups (subcommittees, working groups, ad hocs) that shall report back to their parent Section Panel. Section Panels may delegate approval authority to a subcommittee. The subcommittee shall operate in a manner consistent with operating principles and procedures found herein.

**2.2 Secretariat** – NETA shall be the Secretariat for all Committees operating in accordance with these procedures.

The Secretariat shall:

- a. Organize the committees.
- b. Oversee compliance with these procedures, including legal review as necessary.
- c. Maintain rosters of all Section Panels, subcommittees, and task force groups.
- d. Maintain all records pertaining to the committees.
- e. Provide administrative support, including secretarial services for the committees.
- f. Publish approved standards and revisions thereto.
- g. Perform other functions as required.

**2.3 Records** – Material associated with the development, reaffirmation, and revision of a standard, including drafts, ballots, and appeals, shall be retained for one complete Standards cycle, or until the Standard is revised or reaffirmed. Records regarding the withdrawal of all Standards shall be retained for at least five years from the date of withdrawal.

**2.4 Membership** - Membership on NETA Section Panels shall be open to any person materially or directly affected by the standardization activity in question. Participation shall not be conditional upon membership in any organization nor unreasonably restricted on the basis of technical qualifications or other such requirements. NETA membership is not a prerequisite to participation. Unless it is claimed by a directly and materially affected person that a single interest category dominated the standards development process, no test for dominance is required. NETA, however, strives to assure that any single interest category does not constitute a majority of the membership of the formulating group dealing with Standards. Reasonable dues and fees directly relating to the support provided and activities of a given Committee shall be assessed with the approval of the Committee. The Secretariat shall consider and may recommend reasonable limits on the size of Section Panels and committees.

Participation on NETA Section Panels shall be limited to one voting member from each entity, company, or organization.

**2.5 Interest Categories** – All members of NETA committees shall be classified as Producers, Users or General Interest representatives in accordance with the following definitions:

**2.5.1 Producers:** An individual or entity that provides electrical testing services. This category typically includes representatives from electrical testing companies or from maintenance divisions of industrial, commercial, utility, or governmental organizations.

**2.5.2 Users:** An individual or entity that uses electrical testing services. This category typically includes those involved in safety; industrial, plant, specifying, and consulting engineers; government, utility, or maintenance personnel.

**2.5.3 General Interest:** General Interest members are neither Producers nor Users. This category includes, but is not limited to, test equipment manufacturer representatives, electrical equipment manufacturer representatives, electrical inspectors, electrical contractors, regulatory agencies (state and federal), researchers, and educators. However, if the members of such organizations and/or associations are Producers and/or Users, the organization and/or association shall be classified in accordance with the classification of its members.

An individual in professional practice or a consultant, retained under an indefinitely continuing agreement with an organization, shall be classified in accordance with the classification of the organization retaining the individual and shall be so identified. There shall be a limit of one voting member from each entity, company, or organization.

**2.6 Membership Roster** – The Secretariat shall prepare and maintain a membership roster documenting the classification of each Section Panel member.

**2.7 Termination of Membership** – The Secretariat shall be authorized to terminate the membership of an individual of a Section Panel for cause, including inactivity or failure to pay appropriate dues/fees as levied by the committee (unless a waiver by the committee is approved. A Section Panel member shall be considered inactive for failure to return at least 75 percent of the letter ballots issued during a calendar year. Committee members shall notify the Secretariat of any changes in employment affecting representation and shall submit a new application if continued membership on the committee is desired.

**2.8 Subcommittee Membership** – Where a subcommittee has been established by a parent committee and has been delegated the responsibility for developing and maintaining Standards, the subcommittee may include persons who are not members of the parent Section Panel. Such a determination will be based on the consensus of the subcommittee with approval by the parent Section Panel and Secretariat. In cases where the Subcommittee acts as the consensus body, members of the subcommittee shall meet all the requirements of the parent committee.

A subcommittee member is subject to all dues/fees, as appropriate, for the maintenance of membership.

**2.9 Committee Officers** – A chair and vice chair shall be appointed by the Secretariat from the individual members of the Section Panel, subject to approval by majority vote of the consensus body. Each will serve until a successor is selected and ready to serve. The secretary shall be appointed by the Secretariat; the secretary need not be a member of the committee.

**2.10 Standards Review Council** – The NETA Standards Review Council (SRC) manages, coordinates, and reviews all Association technical projects. This group performs the final review and approval of all NETA standards, materials, and/or reports prior to their being mailed to ANSI. Any substantive changes made by the SRC are subject to review using the process set forth in this document.

**2.11 Staff Liaison** – The NETA Staff Liaison serves in an advisory capacity to assist in achieving compliance with these *Procedures* and is responsible for the editorial treatment of documents to ensure compliance with the NETA *Manual of Style*. He or she shall perform such other functions as may be stated in these *Procedures* or assigned by the Secretariat.

### 3. MEETINGS

**3.1 Frequency** – The Committees will meet to develop American National Standards on an as-needed basis.

**3.2 Notification** – At least 30 days notice via e-mail shall be given for meetings of all Section Panels and subcommittees. An agenda shall be prepared and distributed with the meeting notice no later than two weeks prior to the meeting date.

**3.3 Open Meetings** – All meetings of NETA Section Panels and its subcommittees shall be open, and attendance by any interested party shall be welcome, subject to the individual policy of each Section Panel (e.g., regarding registration, meeting fee if required, etc.). Only members of the Section Panel shall have the right to vote.

**3.4 Quorum** – A majority of the members of a Section Panel shall constitute a quorum for conducting business at a meeting. Matters shall be deemed approved by the affirmative vote of a majority of the members present, except with respect to matters covered in Section 6. If a quorum is not present, actions on agenda items may be taken but shall be subject to ratification by a letter ballot of the Section Panel.

**3.5 Parliamentary Procedures** – For any procedural issues not covered under these procedures, *Robert's Rules of Order (Revised)* shall apply on questions of parliamentary procedure.

## 4. NOTIFICATION OF STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT

Notification of standards activity shall be announced in suitable media as appropriate to demonstrate the opportunity for participation by all directly and materially affected persons. At the initiation of a project to develop or revise an American National Standard, notification shall be transmitted to ANSI using the Project Initiation Notification System (PINS) form, or its equivalent, for announcement in *Standards Action*. A statement shall be submitted and published as part of the PINS announcement that shall include:

(a) an explanation of the need for the project; and

(b) identification of the stakeholders (e.g., telecom, consumer, medical, environmental, etc.) likely to be directly impacted by the standard.

If the response to sub-section (b) changes substantively as the standard is developed, a revised PINS shall be submitted and published. A PINS form may be submitted, but is not required, at the initiation

of a project to reaffirm or withdraw an American National Standard. Comments received in connection with a PINS announcement shall be handled in accordance with these procedures.

A PINS is not required for revisions of an American National Standard that is maintained under continuous maintenance and (1) is registered as such on the ANSI website, (2) has a notice in the standard that the standard is always open for comment and how to submit comments, and (3) has information on NETA's website that the standard is under continuous maintenance and how to submit comments.

If NETA receives written comments within 30 days from the publication date of a PINS announcement in *Standards Action*, and said comments assert that a proposed standard duplicates or conflicts with an existing American National Standard (ANS) or a candidate ANS that has been announced previously in *Standards Action*, a mandatory deliberation of representatives from the relevant stakeholder groups shall be held within 90 days from the comment deadline. Such a deliberation shall be organized by NETA and the commenter and shall be concluded before NETA may submit a draft standard for public review. If the deliberation does not take place within the 90-day period and NETA can demonstrate that it has made a good faith effort to schedule and otherwise organize it, then NETA will be excused from compliance with this requirement. The purpose of the deliberation is to provide the relevant stakeholders with an opportunity to discuss whether there is a compelling need for the proposed standards project. The outcome of such a deliberation shall be conveyed in writing by NETA and commenter (ideally as a joint submission) to the ANSI Board of Standards Review (BSR) for consideration should NETA ultimately submit the related candidate standard to ANSI for approval. In the case of ANSI Audited Designators, the Audited Designator shall review the results of the deliberation prior to designating a standard as an ANS. While the outcome is not binding, participants are encouraged to develop a consensus on whether and how the standards development project should proceed.

In addition, proposals for new American National Standards and proposals to revise, reaffirm, or withdraw approval of existing American National Standards shall be transmitted to ANSI using the BSR-8 form, or its equivalent, for listing in *Standards Action* in order to provide an opportunity for public comment. The comment period shall be one of the following:

- A minimum of thirty days if the full text of the revision(s) can be published in *Standards Action*;
- A minimum of forty-five days if the document is available in an electronic format, deliverable within one day of a request, and the source (e.g., URL or an E-mail address) from which it can be obtained by the public is provided to ANSI for announcement in *Standards Action*; or
- A minimum of sixty days, if neither of the aforementioned options is applicable.

NETA may abandon the processing of a proposed new or revised Standard or portion thereof if it has followed its accredited procedures. A written justification for such an action shall be made available upon receipt of any written request received by the NETA within 60 days of the date of the final action.

## **5. SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE**

A substantive change in a Standard is one that directly and materially affects the use of the Standard. Examples of substantive changes are below:

- a. "shall" to "should" or "should" to "shall";
- b. the addition, deletion or revision of requirements, regardless of the number of changes; and/or
- c. the addition of mandatory compliance with referenced standards.

## **6. VOTING PROCEDURES**

**6.1 Letter Ballots** – New Standards, reaffirmation and revision of Standards, and the withdrawal of Standards shall be approved by letter ballot of the Section Panel. Additionally, substantive changes to and interpretations of all Standards shall be approved by letter ballot of the Section Panel.

Administrative changes and editorial changes to Standards may be decided by a majority of the members present at a regularly scheduled meeting of a Section Panel or by letter ballot.

**6.2 Voting** – Each member shall vote one of the following positions on letter ballots:

- a. Affirmative.
- b. Affirmative with comment.
- c. Negative, with reasons.
- d. Abstain.

**6.3 Voting Period** – The closure date for electronic ballots shall be at least 30 days from the date of the mailing of the ballots. The Secretariat shall be authorized to grant an extension of the voting period if deemed necessary.

**6.4 Approved Actions** – All electronic ballots shall be considered approved when all of the following conditions have been met:

1. Approval by at least a majority of the voting membership.
2. At least two-thirds of the votes cast, excluding abstentions and negatives without reasons, are affirmative.
3. All negative votes with reasons have been addressed in accordance with 6.7.

**6.5 Reporting Votes** – The results of each vote on all Standards shall be reported as follows:

- a. Number of members.
- b. Number of members voting affirmatively.
- c. Number of members voting negatively with reasons.
- d. Number of members voting negatively without reasons.
- e. Number of members abstaining.
- f. Number of members not returning ballots.

**6.6 Negative Votes** – A negative ballot shall be required to be accompanied by a reason and, if possible, shall include specific actions that will resolve the objection.

A negative ballot not supported by a reason is not required to be recirculated but must be recorded as a negative without comment on the BSR-9 during submittal to ANSI. The ballot shall be counted as returned for the purpose of establishing a quorum.

A negative ballot with a reason that the Section Panel determines is not directly related to the proposal under consideration will be placed on the agenda for consideration at the next regular meeting of the Section Panel and the commenter shall be so notified. It shall be recorded as a negative without comment on the BSR-9 during submittal to ANSI.

**6.7 Consideration of Negative Votes** – The Section Panel or Secretariat will endeavor to resolve all negative comments. The Section Panel or Secretariat shall use the following procedures in attempting to resolve negative votes:

- a. All negative ballots and comments will be forwarded to the Section Panel responsible for the proposed Standard for response and resolution. The Section Panel chair (with other Section Panel members, as necessary) will draft the response on behalf of the Section Panel. Negative ballots may be judged as valid, invalid, or nongermane. All comments are given a comprehensive response in writing.
- b. The negative votes with comments along with NETA’s responses to negative ballots will be circulated by a new ballot to give the Section Panel the opportunity to respond, reaffirm, or change their votes. In the case of public review comments, which are not votes, these comments with the accompanying responses in writing will be circulated for new ballot as well.
- c. All substantive changes shall be submitted to ANSI via the BSR-8 for further public review.
- d. Voting members or public review participants who have unresolved negative votes (comments) shall be notified in writing of their right to appeal and of the appeals process.
- e. Negative votes which are not accompanied by reasons shall be recorded as “negative without reasons” and no further action shall be required.

*Previously-considered negative votes* -- If the reasons for a negative vote have been previously considered by the SP, it shall not be necessary to reconsider the vote unless new information has been submitted. If no new information is submitted, the previous decision of the SP shall stand, and the negative voters shall be so advised. The full decision and rationale shall be provided in writing to the negative voter in the response from the SRC.

## **7. INTERPRETATIONS**

**7.1 Processing Interpretations** – Requests for interpretations of Standards shall be submitted in writing to the Secretariat and shall be forwarded by the Secretariat to the Section Panel president or any other Section Panel or Standards Review Council member with particular expertise on the subject in question. Proposed interpretations may be prepared by any Section Panel member with particular expertise on the subject in question. All proposed interpretations shall be prepared in writing and shall be submitted to the Secretariat for a letter ballot of the Section Panel. Interpretations shall be approved in accordance with section 6.

**7.2 Notification of Interpretations** - Notification of approved interpretations shall be sent in writing to the requester. Notification shall also be given to other users of the Standards through technical journals and other appropriate publications, e-mail, and/or the NETA web site.

## **8. METRIC POLICY**

NETA accepts ANSI’s Metric Policy which states that, “Units of the International System of Units (SI), the modernized metric system, are the preferred units of measurement in American National Standards.”

## **9. CONSIDERATION OF INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS**

The Section Panel shall take international standards into consideration and shall, if appropriate, base its Standard on international standards.

## 10. PUBLIC REVIEW AND COMMENT

Proposals for new Standards or reaffirmation, revision, or withdrawal of existing Standards shall be transmitted to ANSI for listing in *Standards Action* for comment. The Secretariat shall determine whether listing of proposed standards actions shall be concurrent with the final committee letter ballot and whether announcement in other suitable media is appropriate. All comments that are received shall be considered by the Section Panel, and the commenter shall be notified, in writing, of the Section Panel's decision/response.

## 11. PATENT POLICY

NETA has adopted the ANSI Patent Policy, as outlined in the ANSI *Essential Requirements*.

## 12. CORRESPONDENCE

**12.1 Section Panel Correspondence** – Correspondence from a Section Panel member to the entire membership of the Section Panel or any subcommittees shall be forwarded to the Secretariat for approval and distribution. All official Section Panel/subcommittee correspondence, including meeting notices, agendas, reports, and letter ballots, shall be distributed by the Secretariat. Copies of all other correspondence between Section Panel/subcommittee members, relating to NETA standards activities, shall be forwarded to the Secretariat.

**12.2 External Correspondence** – Inquiries relating to the Section Panel and Standards shall be directed to the Secretariat. SP members should advise individuals who contact them that responses to all inquiries are handled by the Secretariat.

## 13. APPEALS

**13.1 Complaint** – Persons who have been or may be affected by any Section Panel action or inaction shall have the right to appeal such action or inaction. The appellant shall file a written complaint with the Secretariat within 30 days after the date of notification of any action or at any time with respect to inaction. The complaint shall state the nature of the objection, the procedures or the sections of the Standards that are at issue, the action or inaction at issue, and the specific remedial action(s) that would satisfy the appellant's concerns. Previous efforts to resolve the objections and the outcome of each shall be noted.

**13.2 Response** – Within 30 days after the receipt of the complaint, the Secretariat shall respond in writing to the appellant, specifically addressing each allegation in the complaint to the extent possible. The Secretariat shall attempt to resolve, informally, the complaint of the appellant.

**13.3 Appeals Panel and Hearing** – If the Secretariat is unable to informally resolve the complaint, it shall appoint an appeals panel to hold a hearing on a date agreeable to all participants, with at least 15 working days notice. The appeals panel shall consist of three individuals who have not been directly involved in the dispute and who will not be materially affected by any decision made in the dispute. At

least two members of the panel shall be acceptable to the appellant and at least two shall be acceptable to the Secretariat.

**13.4 Conduct of the Hearing** – The appellant has the responsibility of demonstrating improper action or inaction, the adverse effects therefrom, and the efficacy of the requested remedial action. The Secretariat has the responsibility to demonstrate that the SP took all actions in question in compliance with these procedures.

**13.5 Decision** – The appeals panel shall render its decision in writing within 30 days of the hearing, based upon a preponderance of the evidence, stating its findings of fact and conclusions, with reasons therefore and citing the evidence. The Secretariat shall notify the appellant and the Section Panel of the decision of the appeals panel, which shall be binding and final on all concerned.

#### **14. REVISIONS TO PROCEDURES**

Proposed revisions to these *Operating Principles and Procedures* should be written and submitted to the Secretariat along with rationale supporting the requested change. The Secretariat will present the proposed revisions to the Standards Review Council for review, consideration, and ultimate decision. Any approved revisions to these *Operating Principles and Procedures* will be effective upon publication (either electronically or in print format).

#### **15. COMMERCIAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

NETA has adopted the ANSI Commercial Terms and Conditions clause as outlined in the ANSI *Essential Requirements*.

The Secretariat shall be responsible for the interpretation of these *Operating Principles and Procedures*.