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The International Organization for Standardization (ISO)

Henry Cuschieri
Head: Membership and External Relations
ISO Central Secretariat

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About ISO
We are an independent, non-governmental organization

We are a global network of national standards bodies with one member per country

Our job is to make International Standards

We are coordinated by a Central Secretariat in Geneva, Switzerland
What are International Standards?

• Represent **global consensus** on a solution to a particular issue

• Embody universally agreed procedure or practice

• Provide requirements, specifications, guidelines or characteristics to consistently ensure that materials, products, processes and services are fit for their purpose

ISO standards do NOT:

• Seek to establish, drive or motivate public policy or regulations, social or political agendas

• Set performance thresholds (these are set by policy makers/regulators according to their requirements)
Why use International Standards?

• Are developed in a **multi-stakeholder environment** and reflect a **double layer of consensus**

• Can reduce market inefficiencies and **facilitate regulator compliance**

• Can be used for **conformity assessment** to enhance confidence in products, systems, processes, services or personnel

• Offer the same level of **consumer protection** whether applied in a mature or evolving economy

• Are **globally applicable**
164 members

300+ technical committees

22000+ International Standards

100 new standards each month
The ISO system

- Experts: Around the world
  - Write the standards

- ISO members: National standards bodies
  - Represent ISO in their country

- ISO/CS: Full-time staff
  - Coordinates system
ISO Members
Membership Categories

- Full
- Correspondent
- Subscriber
Capacity building
Apply Good Standardization Practice

Develop National Standardization Strategies

Promote the use of standards: policymakers, business and other stakeholders

Effective participation in development of ISO standards

4 Objectives
Twinning arrangements

- P-member
- Convenor
- Secretariat
- Vice-Chairs

- Training
- Guidance
- Sharing experience

- Capacity building
IEC/ISO/ITU collaboration
World Standards Cooperation

• Established in 2001
• Strengthen and advance the voluntary consensus-based International Standards system
• Collaboration on events, workshops, education, training, policies, etc.
• 14th October - World Standards Day
• World Academic Day
Standards and trade
Trade barriers

TRADE BARRIERS

Tariffs

Non-Tariff Barriers

Non-Technical
• Quotas
• Price control
• Export restrictions
• Trade protective measures

Technical
• Standards
• Technical Regulations
• Sanitary and phyto-sanitary measures

WTO Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade
WTO TBT Agreement (1)

Seeks to ensure that technical regulations and standards do not create unnecessary obstacles to trade.

Recognizes that countries have the right to implement measures to protect human, animal or plant life and health, or the environment.
WTO TBT Agreement (2)

Member **shall** use relevant **international standards** …

… as a basis for

- Technical regulations (Art. 2.4)
- Conformity assessment procedures (Art. 5.4)

except when ineffective or inappropriate for policy objectives
WTO TBT agreement (3)

The Six Principles for the Development of International Standards

- Transparency
- Openness
- Impartiality and consensus
- Effectiveness and relevance
- Coherence
- Development dimension

ISO complies with all of these
Trade facilitation

Regulatory differences between countries is amongst the key factors in explaining trade costs related to regulations

Referencing int. standards in regulation

• Drives regulatory harmonization
• Boosts export performance
• Facilitates integration into GVCs
• Reduces testing and certification costs
Engaging policymakers
Cooperation between regulators and standardizers

The core objective:
Policy makers and regulators are enabled to select the most appropriate, effective and flexible instruments to address public policy issues
Best practice

Regulators and NSBs:

• Develop a **long-term** relationship and strategy
• Use tools such as **MoUs**
• Aim for **mutual representation** at each others meetings
• Ensure focused and targeted **liaison** in specific projects
• Consider aligning **technical structures**
• Avoid **duplication** of work
Questions?
Thank you!