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SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL STANDARD

Standards for standards

Part 1: The development of national standards and other normative documents

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1 dr lategan road groenkloof ☒ private bag x191 pretoria 0001
tel: 012 428 7911 fax: 012 344 1568 international code + 27 12
www.stansa.co.za
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standards
SouthAfrica
(a division of SABS)

SANS 1-1:2003

Edition 1

Table of changes

Change No.	Date	Scope

Foreword

This standard was approved by National Committee STANSA TC 200, *Technical committee for the development of standards*, in accordance with procedures of Standards South Africa, in compliance with annex 3 of the WTO/TBT agreement.

This standard cancels and replaces an earlier procedural document, ARP 017:1997, *Procedures for the technical work in the preparation of South African standards*.

Contents

	Page
Foreword	
1 Scope	3
2 Normative references	3
3 Concepts and definitions	4
4 Status of the SABS (informative)	6
5 Aims and benefits of standardization (informative)	6
6 Concepts and principles behind the development of national standards and other normative documents (informative)	7
7 Committees (normative)	9
8 New project options (informative)	10
9 Development stages (normative)	11
10 Appeals (normative)	12
11 Updating and maintenance of standards (normative)	12
12 Copyright (normative)	13
13 Patents (normative)	14

SANS 1-1:2003

Edition 1

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Standards for standards

Part 1:

The development of national standards and other normative documents

1 Scope

This standard describes the underlying principles of the preparation of national standards and other normative documents published by Standards South Africa (STANSA).

This standard is intended to serve as a guide for committee members, chairpersons and Standards South Africa staff members, and as background information for standards development organizations, interested organizations and members of the public.

It is not intended to lay down detailed internal procedures since these are generally required only by Standards South Africa staff. Standards South Africa will, from time to time, publish guidance documents relating to the practical application of the provisions of this standard.

NOTE Standards South Africa, formerly known as the Standards Development Division of the South Africa Bureau of Standards (SABS), now has a clearer and more distinct identity. It remains a Division of the SABS.

2 Normative references

The following normative documents contain provisions which, through reference in this text, constitute provisions of this standard. All normative documents are subject to revision and, since any reference to a normative document is deemed to be a reference to the latest edition of that document, parties to agreements based on this standard are encouraged to take steps to ensure the use of the most recent editions of the normative documents indicated below. Information on currently valid national and international standards can be obtained from Standards South Africa.

2.1 Standard

ISO/IEC Guide 2, *Standardization and related activities – General Vocabulary*.

2.2 Other publication

World Trade Organization Code of Good Practice for the preparation, adoption and application of standards (annex 3 to the World Trade Organization/Technical Barriers to Trade Agreement).

3 Concepts and definitions

3.1 Concepts

3.1.1

consensus

general agreement, characterized by the absence of sustained opposition to substantial issues by any important part of the concerned interests, and by a process that involves seeking to take into account the views of all parties concerned and to reconcile any conflicting arguments
[ISO/IEC Guide 2]

NOTE Consensus need not imply unanimity.

3.1.2

standardization

activity of establishing, with regard to actual or potential problems, provisions for common and repeated use aimed at the achievement of the optimum degree of order in a given context
[ISO/IEC Guide 2]

NOTE 1 In particular, the activity consists of the processes of formulating, issuing and implementing standards.

NOTE 2 Important benefits of standardization are improvement of the suitability of products, processes and services for their intended purposes, prevention of barriers to trade and facilitation of technological cooperation, as further discussed in clause 5 of the standard.

3.2 Definitions

For the purposes of this standard, the following definitions apply:

3.2.1

compulsory specification

standard, or part of a standard, which has been declared to be compulsory by the Minister of Trade and Industry in terms of the Standards Act, 1993 (Act 29 of 1993)

3.2.2

national technical agreement

NTA

technical document, however developed, publication of which is agreed to by consensus in a technical committee or subcommittee and published without being subjected to public comment, in the interests of speedy availability or for other reasons determined by the technical committee or subcommittee

NOTE A national technical agreement is not a national standard, but could be developed into one, if so desired by the technical committee or subcommittee.

3.2.3

normative reference/provision

standard, or provision within a standard, with which it is necessary to conform in order to be able to claim compliance with that standard or provision

3.2.4

sectoral technical agreement

STA

technical document, however developed, agreed to by consensus within an interest group, consortium or sector, and published by Standards South Africa

NOTE 1 The document will include a list of participating organizations involved in its development, and may be identified by letters such as ITA (Industry Technical Agreement), IWA (Industry Workshop Agreement), CKS (Coordinating/Koördinerende Specification), NRS (Rationalized User Specification), or ARP (Aanbevole/Recommended Practice).

NOTE 2 A sectoral technical agreement is not a national standard, but could be developed into one, if so desired by the appropriate technical committee or subcommittee.

NOTE 3 Sectoral technical agreements should not conflict with, or undermine, the provisions of any national standard or compulsory specification.

3.2.5

South African standard

normative document, established by consensus within a technical committee or subcommittee, subjected to public enquiry and comment, ratified by the Standards Approval Committee and published by Standards South Africa, that provides for common and repeated use, rules, guidelines or characteristics for activities or their results, aimed at the achievement of the optimum degree of order in a given context

NOTE Standards should be based on the consolidated results of science, technology and experience, and aimed at the promotion of optimum community benefits.

3.2.6

standards development organization

SDO

body assuming responsibility for the preparation and maintenance of national standards and other normative documents

3.2.7

Standards Approval Committee

SAC

an internal committee of Standards South Africa responsible for approval of all new work items, and the ratification, revision, amendment and withdrawal on the basis of due process of all normative documents

3.2.8

subcommittee

SC

group of representatives that is responsible for the preparation of South African standards within a subfield of the scope of a technical committee and that reflects valid national interests within the subfield

3.2.9

technical committee

TC

national technical committee

group of representatives that is concerned with standardization, responsible for identifying the need for, and the preparation of South African standards in a defined field and that reflects valid national interests within that field

3.2.10

technical regulation

document which lays down product characteristics or their related processes and production methods, including the applicable administrative provisions, with which compliance is necessary [Annex 3 to the World Trade Organization/Technical Barriers to Trade Agreement]

SANS 1-1:2003

Edition 1

3.2.11

working group

WG

group of experts appointed by a TC or SC to deal with a particular project or with a particular aspect of a project

4 Status of the SABS (informative)

The South African Bureau of Standards is, in terms of the Standards Act, 1993 (Act 29 of 1993), the recognized national institution for the promotion and maintenance of standards in South Africa. The affairs of the SABS are controlled by the Council of the South African Bureau of Standards, whose members are appointed by the Minister of Trade and Industry. The Council determines the direction and objectives of the SABS.

The mission of the SABS is to provide and promote standardization services in South Africa and abroad in support of the national system of innovation and trade, with the ultimate aim of contributing to the upliftment of the quality of life of all sectors of society.

The objectives of the SABS, as stated in the said Standards Act, include the following:

- to issue national standards; and
- to obtain membership of foreign or international bodies that have objectives similar to those of the SABS.

The SABS may also, in the course of exercising its power and in order to achieve its objectives,

- enter into agreement with,
- render assistance to, or
- obtain the cooperation of

a person, a body, an organization, an administration, an authority or a government, in any country or territory outside South Africa.

NOTE The SABS is a member body of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and participates actively in a number of their committees. The SABS also provides the financial and administrative support for South Africa's membership of the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC), which is responsible for international standards in the electrotechnical field. The SABS is an active member of SADCSTAN, the standards development committee within the Southern African Development Community (SADC), and takes part in other standardization forums such as the Economic Commission for Europe (UN-ECE) and the Codex Alimentarius commission.

5 Aims and benefits of standardization (informative)

The main aims and benefits of standardization can be summarized as follows:

- improving the quality (fitness for purpose) of goods and services;
- maintaining and improving the quality of life of society, by paying attention to such matters as safety, health and the environment, and by providing a basis for legislation needed for the protection of the public;
- more efficient utilization of resources through better (i.e. standardized) communication; through simplification of manufacturing, product identification and purchasing by means of variety control; and through cost savings as a result of economies of scale, reductions in wastage, etc.;

- providing a framework within which to facilitate and encourage trade among willing partners; contracts based on standards; elimination of trade barriers; the promotion of service excellence and fair and efficient trade at all levels; and
- promotion of efforts to facilitate the correct application of standards through, for example, the consideration of training principles.

Standardization involves the following:

- the development, establishment and publication of standards (covering, for example, specifications for products, services or systems, codes of practice, methods of test, etc.);
- when appropriate, inspection and testing of products and processes for compliance with standards;
- when required, formal certification by a certification body of the compliance of a product, service or system with one or more standards;
- when appropriate, the application of standards as Technical Regulations; and
- administrative functions related to, amongst others, the maintenance of the national standards base.

6 Concepts and principles behind the development of national standards and other normative documents (informative)

The development of South African standards is funded by the State. Standards South Africa acts as a facilitator in the development and maintenance of South African standards, provides secretarial and technical writing facilities and services for the committee responsible for this task and acts as a publishing house for South African standards and related documents.

To achieve market relevance of South African standards, best practice in terms of the WTO/TBT agreement is followed to ensure that valid interest groups are represented on committees and, once the committee has reached consensus, draft South African standards are submitted to a public enquiry stage.

The technical content of a standard contextualises national requirements and needs as identified by the committee. Standards are thus “South African standards” and not “SABS” standards.

Consensus in representative committees on the technical content of standards is arrived at either in formal meetings or by correspondence. The principle of consensus is applied throughout and an appeal procedure exists (see clause 10) for the resolution of disputes. Cost-effectiveness, together with proper financial control and commitment to response and deadlines within committees, is essential for the efficient development of South African standards.

Standards South Africa also publishes other normative documents, such as National Technical Agreements and Sectoral Technical Agreements. Figure 1 shows the development process of these documents and their relationship to South African standards.

1 Source document

Any draft or existing normative document

2 Responsible body

Group, sector, consortium, or STANSA Working group

STANSA TC or SC

3 Process

Technical consensus + consensus to publish as an STA

Consensus to publish as an NTA

Technical consensus + public enquiry

4 Product

Sectoral Technical Agreement
Published as such on behalf of a group, independently of any STANSA TC or SC. Can stand alone, or be submitted to a TC or SC for further development into a South African standard after going through the process of consensus building and public enquiry.

National Technical Agreement
Published as such on behalf of a TC or SC, usually for reasons of speedy availability. Full technical consensus is not a prerequisite but consensus to publish is. Can stand alone, or be further developed into a South African standard after going through the process of consensus building and public enquiry.

South African Standard
A full consensus standard complying with WTO/TBT requirements.

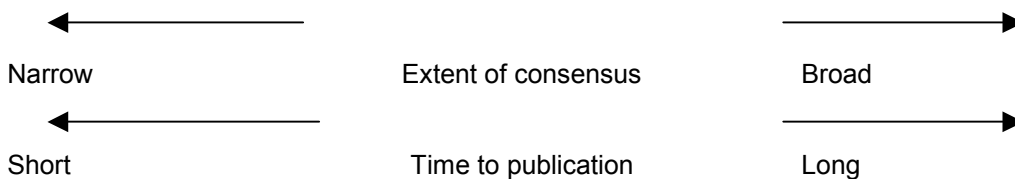


Figure 1 — Development of normative documents

Normative documents such as National Technical Agreements, Sectoral Technical Agreements and national, regional and international standards, may be used as source documents in the development of South African standards, subject to any copyright constraints. Standards South Africa has the right to adopt ISO, IEC and certain other international, regional and national standards as South African standards.

South African national standards or parts thereof may be declared as compulsory specifications by the Minister of Trade and Industry in terms of the Standards Act, 1993 (Act 29 of 1993). The said Standards Act requires that a draft notice of the intent to declare the specification compulsory be published in the Government Gazette for a public comment period of 60 days, although the Minister may proceed directly with the final publication in urgent cases. The procedure for the declaration of standards as compulsory falls beyond the scope of this document.

All other standards or normative documents are submitted to the Standards Approval Committee for ratification that the laid-down procedures were followed. Once ratified, the documents are released for publication.

South African standards are reviewed regularly to ensure continued market relevance. If updating is required, a revision or an amendment can be initiated (see clause 11).

7 Committees (normative)

7.1 General

Committees are the backbone of the standardization process. Committees can be technical committees (TCs), subcommittees (SCs) of technical committees or working groups (WGs).

7.2 Technical committees

Technical committees shall be constituted to be representative, as far as reasonably possible, of valid national interests in the standardization of products or processes. Membership is preferably on the basis of organization, association or forum representation as opposed to an individual basis. Organizations normally invited to serve on technical committees include government bodies, industry associations, consumer organizations or associations, non-government organizations, organized labour and professional, technical and trade organizations. Committees may invite experts to serve in any capacity, advisory or otherwise.

7.3 Membership levels and responsibilities of committee members

In order to achieve maximum efficiency and the necessary discipline in the work, each organization shall clearly indicate, with regard to each technical committee or subcommittee of which it is a member, if it intends to join as

- a P-member, i.e. a member that will participate actively in the work, with an obligation to respond to documents circulated for comment, voting or both, and to participate in and (where applicable) vote at meetings, or
- an O-member, i.e. a member that will follow the work as an observer, and will therefore receive committee documents and have the right to submit comments and to participate in meetings, but not to vote.

NOTE 1 In some committees, where such differentiated membership is not desired, only the rules for P-members apply.

NOTE 2 Member organizations may request a change in membership status at any time.

SANS 1-1:2003

Edition 1

NOTE 3 If a P-member has been persistently inactive and has failed to make a contribution to two consecutive meetings, either by direct participation or by correspondence, or has failed to respond to documents circulated for comment and/or voting, the chairperson should remind the member of the obligation to take an active part in the work and suggest the alternative of electing O-membership instead. In the absence of a satisfactory response to this reminder, the member should automatically be removed from the relevant committee.

7.4 Subcommittees

Technical committees can propose the formation of subcommittees to which they may delegate the responsibility for the preparation of standards.

7.5 Working groups

A committee can set up working groups, usually temporary in nature, to undertake specific, short-term tasks, such as the preparation of a working draft (WD), or other investigations.

7.6 Committee chairperson

A chairperson is expected to have a working knowledge of standardization procedures at national and international levels. Working groups have convenors appointed and approved by the parent committee. Chairpersons of technical committees and subcommittees should preferably be external to Standards South Africa.

Chairpersons are initially appointed to their position for a maximum term of three years. They are appointed by the committee secretariat from nominations made by the members of the committee and their appointment shall be ratified by the SAC.

After the initial term a chairperson may be nominated for extensions of chairmanship, each such extension being for a maximum term of three years. Each such extension shall follow the same procedure as the initial appointment. At the end of each such extension re-nomination may be considered.

7.7 Technical committees: relations with and participation in international committees

Wherever practicable, the technical committee structure should be in alignment with that of the corresponding international standards organization. The means of liaison with international committees shall be determined by the national committee. In practice, many committees provide input into the development of international standards and subsequently decide to adopt these international standards as South African standards.

Delegates to international standards meetings are experts representing the views of the relevant national committee. Official communication with international technical committees and subcommittees shall be routed through the ISO or IEC Offices of the SABS.

8 New project options (informative)

When a new standards project is under consideration, there are often two possibilities: either to adopt without change an existing international or regional standard or to develop a South African standard containing at least some different requirements.

The advantage of direct adoption is that the resulting adopted standard is produced cheaply, quickly and easily, and that it is in line with the World Trade Organization/Technical Barriers to Trade (WTO/TBT) Agreement. It might, however, not adequately represent the full needs and requirements of the South African market.

Developing a standard from scratch has the advantage that a more focussed standard can be achieved that addresses local needs. On the other hand, the development of such a standard is costly and time-consuming, and there is always the very real possibility that the lengthy committee process could culminate in no more than a duplication of the work done in the development of existing international or regional standards. Where possible, existing international or regional standards should be used as departure point.

The final decision as to which route to follow is taken by the responsible committee. However, Standards South Africa is committed, wherever possible, to encouraging committees to adopt international or regional standards, since this will ultimately result in global standardization, with all its benefits.

9 Development stages (normative)

9.1 Any person or organization may request a new project or standard in writing. The proposer shall supply information justifying the development of the standard. In general, the drafting stages in the development of a standard begin after a new work item proposal has been accepted by the responsible committee and approved by the Standards Approval Committee. The approved proposal may be a project for either a new standard or the revision of an existing standard. Acceptance of a new work item by correspondence requires a response from at least 50 % of the P-members of the committee with a simple majority of the respondents in favour.

9.2 A project leader, usually in conjunction with a working group, prepares one or more working drafts of the standard, which are preliminary documents.

9.3 Once the working group members have finalized their task, a committee draft (CD) is presented to the committee (TC or SC) to commence the consensus-building process, which entails commenting and voting on the document.

9.4 Any of the above steps can be performed repeatedly until consensus is reached within the TC or SC. The following minimum time limits apply:

- a) new work item proposal – three weeks for reply;
- b) draft for comment or voting (or both) – three weeks for reply; and
- c) notice for meeting – three weeks before the meeting date.

9.5 If consensus cannot be reached within the original time frame specified, the Standards Approval Committee may review progress and, if appropriate, suggest a re-submission of the new work item, or request the market relevance to be re-evaluated. Project cancellation should only be considered if it is not possible to produce a normative document that encompasses the progress made and that is based on lower consensus.

9.6 On acceptance of the committee draft, a draft South African standard (DSS) is made available for public comment both nationally and internationally (public enquiry stage). A comment period of 60 days is normally required in terms of the WTO *Code of good practice for the preparation, adoption and application of standards* (see annex 3 to the World Trade Organization/Technical Barriers to Trade Agreement, to which South Africa is a signatory). A 30 day comment period applies in the case of adoptions. Comments received are reviewed by the TC or SC. The DSS process should be repeated if, in the chairperson's opinion, significant technical changes are required to be made to the standard at this stage. If no comments are received, or no significant technical changes are introduced, the standard is deemed to be approved, and is forwarded to the Standards Approval Committee for ratification. After ratification the document is released for publication.

9.7 The style, layout and language of standards are the responsibility of the Standards Development Support Department of Standards South Africa.

10 Appeals (normative)

10.1 Provision is made for appeal by a member of a committee against a subcommittee decision, a technical committee decision, or against a decision of the management of Standards South Africa. An appeal shall be lodged in writing, within ten working days of the decision, stating clearly the technical grounds on which the appeal is made.

10.2 An appeal against a subcommittee decision or a ruling by the chairperson of a subcommittee, shall be lodged with the chairperson of the technical committee.

10.3 An appeal against a technical committee decision shall be lodged with the chairperson of the Standards Approval Committee.

10.4 An appeal against a decision by the chairperson of the Standards Approval Committee shall be lodged with the CEO of the SABS. Any decision by the CEO concerning an appeal in respect of a standard is final and shall be reported to the Council of the SABS.

10.5 Pending resolution of an appeal, work in progress on a standard during the appeal, shall continue up to, but not including, ratification of the standard by the Standards Approval Committee.

11 Updating and maintenance of standards (normative)

11.1 General

Corrections to standards are issued whenever they are found to be necessary. In addition, all standards are subject to regular review to ensure that they do not become obsolete.

11.2 Corrigenda

Typographical or editorial corrigenda are issued with the approval of the chairperson of the responsible committee.

11.3 Amendments

Amendments to published standards are issued when essential for the

- correction of an error that could be misleading or have potentially serious consequences, or
- alteration or addition (or both) to previously agreed-upon technical provisions that are approved by the committee responsible for the standard.

Any person or organization may propose an amendment. The proposed text of the amendment shall be supported by a motivation.

The amendment is incorporated into the standard and the amended standard is then issued as a consolidated edition carrying a new edition number.

11.4 Systematic review

Every South African standard is reviewed periodically to ensure that it remains valid. The review period, as decided upon by the responsible committee, can be stated in the foreword of the standard. In the absence of an agreed review period, the review period is taken to be five years. Adopted international standards are normally reviewed only when the source standard is reviewed.

When reviewing the standard, the following three options shall be considered by the committee:

- a) Confirmation, which means that
 - the standard, as is, remains valid, or
 - the standard, as amended, remains valid, or
 - the standard, subject to amendment, will be considered valid.
- b) Revision, which means that
 - a revision of the entire standard is to be undertaken, in accordance with the procedure for new projects.
- c) Withdrawal, which means that
 - the standard is no longer needed.

11.5 Revisions

The revision of a standard, resulting in a new edition, shall be considered when:

- a) a change is needed in the basic structure or layout of the standard;
- b) as a result of numerous amendments or for other reasons, the resultant page or clause numbering has become confusing to such an extent that reading of the standard becomes difficult;
- c) the criteria for determining compliance with the standard for a product or service have changed to such an extent, either as a result of amendment(s) or as a result of technological changes, that the chairperson or staff within the standards development organization responsible for that standard deems it necessary to issue a new edition of the standard, in order to
 - i) draw attention to these substantially changed criteria, or
 - ii) make the latest version of the standard more readily understandable;
- d) in the case of adopted standards, a revision of the original standard is issued.

12 Copyright (normative)

The copyright of all normative documents published by Standards South Africa is vested in Standards South Africa. At the drafting stage, the project leader is responsible for ensuring that no material is included that would infringe the copyright of a third party. If it is imperative that such material be included, permission has to be obtained from the copyright holder.

NOTE In the case of a Sectoral Technical Agreement, copyright might, under certain circumstances, be shared between Standards South Africa and the group, sector or consortium concerned.

Where committee members submit material that they have originated, and such material is subsequently included in a normative document, Standards South Africa recognizes the right of the originator of the material to continue to reproduce the material in the form in which it was originally submitted. However, committee members are reminded that although they might have contributed part of the content of a standard, this does not entitle them to reproduce the entire contents of the published standard without prior permission from Standards South Africa.

13 Patents (normative)

Technical reasons may justify the preparation of a standard in terms which include the use of items covered by patent rights, provided the holder of such identified patent rights is willing to negotiate licences under his rights on reasonable and non-discriminatory terms and conditions. A statement to this effect shall be included in the foreword of the standard. Standards South Africa shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights.

Should it be revealed after publication of a standard that licences under patent rights, which appear to cover items included in the standard, cannot be obtained under reasonable and non-discriminatory terms, the standard shall be referred back to the relevant committee for further consideration.