

THE APPROVAL PROCESS IN STEP-BY-STEP DETAIL FOR WORKING GROUP CHAIRS

Now that the draft has been completed and approved by the working group, here are the anticipated steps:

A preliminary review of the draft should be conducted by the managing subcommittee. A review period of 30-60 days will be set for the review depending on the need and size of the draft. *(Generally this review is facilitated by the subcommittee chair but may be conducted by the ANS Standards Administrator in some circumstances. If no subcommittee exists, a preliminary review may be conducted by the managing consensus committee.)*

As soon as the subcommittee review closes, comments from subcommittee members will be forwarded to the working group chair for consideration of the working group. The working group is asked to provide a response to each comment. When the comment is accepted, the response is simply "accepted." When the comment is not accepted, a brief explanation is required. In addition to preparing comment responses, the draft should be revised to incorporate accepted comments if appropriate. Revisions to the draft should be made in track mode so that the commenter can easily review the draft to confirm acceptance.

Completed comment responses and the revised draft are provided to the subcommittee chair (or to the ANS Standards Administrator) for distribution to subcommittee members.

With subcommittee chair approval, the draft can be issued for the formal consensus committee ballot. *(Any changes made to the draft in track mode are accepted before the draft is issued to the consensus committee.)*

The consensus committee ballot is usually a 60-day review and held in parallel with a public review through ANSI. There are occasions that the review period is shorted by the direction of the consensus committee chair when there is great industry need or when issued for a rebalot /recirculation ballot.

As soon as the consensus committee review closes, comments from consensus committee members will be forwarded to the working group chair for consideration of the working group. The working group is asked to provide a response to each comment within 90 days. *(Occasionally less time is needed when there are not significant comments).* When the comment is accepted, the response is simply "accepted." When the comment is not accepted, a brief explanation is requested. In addition to preparing comment responses, the draft should be revised to incorporate accepted comments if appropriate. Revisions to the draft should be made in track mode so that the commenter can easily review the draft to confirm acceptance.

Although rare, comments may be received from members of the public. If and when these comments are received, they too must be considered and provided a response.

During this resolution process, it is important that changes to the draft be tracked. ANSI requires that all substantive changes made to the draft be approved by the consensus committee and serve an additional public review. The ANSI definition of substantive changes states that "A substantive change in a proposed American National Standard is one that

directly and materially affects the use of the standard. Examples of substantive changes are below:

- ❖ *“shall” to “should” or “should” to “shall”;*
- ❖ *addition, deletion or revision of requirements, regardless of the number of changes;*
- ❖ *addition of mandatory compliance with referenced standards.*

Completed comment responses, the revised draft, and determination of substantive changes are provided to the ANS Standards Administrator. The Standards Administrator will distribute the comment responses and revised draft to commenters. Committee members that submitted a negative vote are requested to review the resolution and consider upgrading their vote to approved or approved with comments. These negative voters are given 30 days to let us know. We cannot upgrade their vote without their consent for any reason.

If received, public comments will be provided a response and the revised draft with a notification that they have two weeks to let us know if they are not satisfied or we will consider the resolution satisfactory.

While unanimous approval is not required, it should always be the goal. If any commenters are not satisfied, there may be additional resolutions needed and additional changes made to the draft. In this case, additional resolutions will need to be documented and sent to the ANS Standards Administrator with another revised draft if applicable and list of substantive changes if any.

If a determination has been made that there are substantive changes to the draft, a rebalot and second public review will be needed. It is our practice to provide a list of substantive changes requiring approval along with the full, revised draft. Committee members and the public are requested to focus comments on the substantive change list. This practice has greatly reduced the review time of commenters and the amount of comments that the working group must address/resolve. *(Should there be an excessive amount of substantive changes, the draft will need to be issued for a full rebalot.)*

If any negative votes are maintained from committee members or any objections filed by a member of the public, a recirculation ballot must be conducted. A recirculation ballot announces the objection to the consensus committee with full details. Members must consider the objection and determine if they are in agreement with the objector. Should they side with the objector, they are permitted to change approved votes to negative or if they were a non response on the previous ballot, they may submit a vote. The results from the recirculation ballot are then reviewed by the consensus committee chair. If the approval is 66% or over, consensus is declared. The objector would then have to be notified and given an opportunity to appeal this decision to our top level committee – the ANS Standards Board. *(If the approval slips to less than 66%, the working group may be given specific direction to resolve the issue.)*

Once there are no more substantive changes and consensus is declared, the ANS Standards Board performs a review and certifies that the approval process was conducted according to our procedures. The review period for this ballot is 15 days. *(The Standards Board does not perform a technical review of the draft.)*

With Standards Board certification, documents are prepared and submitted to ANSI for certification as an American National Standard. The paperwork includes information about the ballot process, voting record, balance of interest of the consensus committee, objections, appeals, etc. ANSI does not perform a technical review of the draft. When there are no negatives, approval is usually granted in one or two weeks. When submitting requests for approvals involving negatives and appeals, the approval can take much longer.

As soon as we have been granted ANSI approval, the manuscript for the approved standard is edited for format and consistency before being sent out for typesetting. During this time, the working group chair is called upon to respond to editor queries. The standard is not printed until the working group chair is satisfied with the standard and gives his/her permission to print.

Once the standard is published, the working group is sent a complimentary copy. A Word doc of the formatted draft is maintained at ANS headquarters for use on the next revision.

Many times working groups disband after the approval of the standard. While this is understandable as they have already contributed a significant amount of volunteer time to the effort, we may need to call upon these members to respond to an inquiry about the standard. We would very much appreciate if working group members would keep us apprised of their contact information.