



IAF Procedures Document



GENERAL PROCEDURES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF IAF DOCUMENTS

Issue 4

(IAF PR 2:2018)

The International Accreditation Forum, Inc. (IAF) facilitates trade and supports regulators by operating a worldwide mutual recognition arrangement among Accreditation Bodies (ABs) in order that the results issued by Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs) accredited by IAF members are accepted globally.

Accreditation reduces risk for business and its customers by assuring them that accredited CABs are competent to carry out the work they undertake within their scope of accreditation. ABs that are members of IAF and their accredited CABs are required to comply with appropriate international standards and IAF mandatory documents for the consistent application of those standards.

ABs that are signatories to the IAF Multilateral Recognition Arrangement (MLA) are evaluated regularly by an appointed team of peers to provide confidence in the operation of their accreditation programs. The structure and scope of the IAF MLA is detailed in IAF PR 4 - Structure of IAF MLA and Endorsed Normative Documents.

The IAF MLA is structured in five levels: Level 1 specifies mandatory criteria that apply to all ABs, ISO/IEC 17011. The combination of a Level 2 activity(ies) and the corresponding Level 3 normative document(s) is called the main scope of the MLA, and the combination of Level 4 (if applicable) and Level 5 relevant normative documents is called a sub-scope of the MLA.

- The main scope of the MLA includes activities e.g. product certification and associated mandatory documents e.g. ISO/IEC 17065. The attestations made by CABs at the main scope level are considered to be equally reliable.
- The sub scope of the MLA includes conformity assessment requirements e.g. ISO 9001 and scheme specific requirements, where applicable, e.g. ISO TS 22003. The attestations made by CABs at the sub scope level are considered to be equivalent.

The IAF MLA delivers the confidence needed for market acceptance of conformity assessment outcomes. An attestation issued, within the scope of the IAF MLA, by a body that is accredited by an IAF MLA signatory AB can be recognized worldwide, thereby facilitating international trade.

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Issue No 4

Prepared by IAF Executive Committee

Approved by IAF Members

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GENERAL PROCEDURES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF IAF DOCUMENTS

1. PREAMBLE

1.1. This procedure applies to the preparation of IAF documents which are intended for publication, as defined in Clause 7.1 of this procedure.

1.2. All documents intended to be published as IAF documents shall be prepared and authorised in accordance with the rules set out in this document, and formatted as set out in *IAF QMS-003 Rules for the Formatting of IAF Documents*.

1.3. All IAF documents shall be published in English. The English version with the most recent issue date of each IAF document is the governing version.

1.4. IAF documents shall be clearly identified with the Issue Number, Issue Date, and Application Date. IAF documents may in addition have a Short Title, for ease of identification. IAF shall be identified as the copyright holder of all IAF documents. IAF retains all rights to ownership for all IAF documents. All IAF Members shall have an automatic royalty free, non-transferable license to all IAF documents. In the event of termination of membership etc. all rights to use IAF documents will lapse.

1.5. Members of IAF may incorporate the text of an IAF document into the text of their own publications. If a Member chooses to do this, the text of the IAF document is to be reproduced unchanged, and its status as an IAF document clearly identified. If a Member does include the text of an IAF document in its own publications, the full text of the IAF document is also to be made available on request.

1.6. All IAF publicly available documents will be posted on the IAF website and will be freely available.

1.7. All documents intended to be published as IAF documents shall be authorised in accordance with the rules set out in clause 3 of this document prior to publication. All IAF documents shall be controlled in accordance with the rules set out in this document.

1.8. Whilst IAF develops a range of documents designed to assist in the uniform application of standards and other normative documents, IAF does not consider these application documents to be a conformity assessment system or scheme. IAF will not develop or own a conformity assessment system or scheme.

2. TRANSLATED DOCUMENTS

2.1. Members of IAF whose language of operation is not English have the right to translate any IAF document into their own language of operation. The translation rights shall be maintained/owned by the Member responsible for the translation.

2.2. Translation of IAF documents is made on the sole responsibility of the Member making the translation. Such documents shall make reference to the original IAF document. Translated documents have no status as IAF documents.

2.3. Members of IAF may incorporate the text of a translated document into the text of their own publications. If a Member chooses to do this, the text of the translated document is to be reproduced unchanged, and its status as a translated document clearly identified. If a Member does include the text of a translated document in its own publications, the full text of the IAF document is also to be made available on request.

2.4. Translation of all IAF documents in languages other than English shall be published in a format equivalent to that laid down in this document, making appropriate allowances for cultural and language differences. All the information required by this document shall be included in all translated documents. The English version with the most recent issue date remains the governing version.

3. DEVELOPMENT OF NEW OR REVISED IAF DOCUMENTS

3.1. Proposals for a new IAF document, or for a significant revision of an existing IAF document, shall be submitted using the Project Proposal Form (see Appendix One) to the relevant Permanent Committee by the proponent(s). The submission shall include, at least, the following details:

- (i) The issue or problem which the proposed document, or revision to an existing document, is intended to address;
- (ii) The difficulty, cost or implications of leaving the problem or issue unresolved;
- (iii) An outline of the alternative solutions available;
- (iv) The preferred solution, if known;
- (v) The resources needed to complete the project (which shall normally include a proposal for the establishment of a new Subordinate Group, e.g. Working Group or Task Force, by the responsible Permanent Committee); and
- (vi) A program for completion of the project, including milestones, hold points, reporting times, and deliverables.

Note: For the purposes of this document, the Executive Committee is considered to be the responsible Permanent Committee for those documents owned by the Executive Committee.

3.2. The responsible Permanent Committee's Secretariat shall circulate copies of the proposal to all Members of that Committee.

3.3. Agreement by consensus of the Members of the Permanent Committee shall be required for the project to proceed. A Subordinate Group shall normally be established to carry out the project. The Chairperson of the responsible Permanent Committee shall arrange for the selection and appointment of the Convener and Members of the Subordinate Group, with the agreement of the Members of that Committee. Subordinate Groups' work shall comply with the procedures in paras. 5 and 6 of *IAF PL 5: Structure of the International Accreditation Forum Inc.*

3.4. Any General Assembly Meeting of IAF may also direct the Executive Committee to initiate a new work item.

3.5. The following process, also represented diagrammatically in Appendix Two, shall be followed for the development of IAF publications, except for Communiqués, internal documents, promotional documents, Memoranda of Understanding and Informative Documents:

- (i) The Convener of the Subordinate Group shall provide leadership and facilitate the drafting of the document by consensus. The Subordinate Group may consult as necessary in order to develop a suitable draft.
- (ii) When satisfied with the draft the Convener of the Subordinate Group shall submit it to the Chairperson of the responsible Permanent Committee for approval for circulation to all Members of the Committee, with comments or explanations as necessary, for 30 day comment. A Permanent Committee may, subject to the agreement of its members, waive circulation of a draft document to its members for 30-day comment, and proceed directly to 60-day comment of all IAF Members. In this case, the process will be followed from paragraph (vi). All comments received shall be collated by the responsible Permanent Committee's Secretariat and shall be referred to the Subordinate Group, which shall decide on an appropriate response to each comment.
- (iii) The Subordinate Group's summary of comments shall list all comments received related to the relevant clause or paragraph and identify the organization/person commenting, together with the Group's recommended response to that comment. The summary of comments should explain the rationale for all decisions. A suitable format is given in Appendix Three.

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- (iv) Subsequent drafts may be prepared within the Subordinate Group, taking into account the decisions on comments received. When satisfied with the draft the Convener of the Subordinate Group shall submit it together with the summary of comments to the Chairperson of the responsible Permanent Committee for decision to circulate it again for 30 day comment to that Committee or approval to progress it to 60 day comment of all IAF Members. If possible, consensus among Members of the Subordinate Group should be reached before the draft is submitted to the Chairperson of the responsible Permanent Committee.
 - (v) If further drafts for 30 day comment by the responsible Permanent Committee are required, the processes set out in paragraphs (ii), (iii) and (iv) above shall be repeated for each draft.
 - (vi) If the Chairperson of the responsible Permanent Committee approves the draft for 60 day comment of all IAF Members, the document shall be forwarded to the IAF Secretariat for circulation to all IAF Members. A marked copy showing changes from the currently published issue of the document shall be included if the document is a revision. All comments received shall be collated by the IAF Secretariat and shall be referred to the Convener of the Subordinate Group, who shall decide on an appropriate response to each comment.
 - (vii) If further drafts are prepared, the processes set out in paragraphs (ii), (iii) and (iv) above shall be repeated for each draft.
 - (viii) When the Convener of the Subordinate Group is satisfied that an acceptable degree of consensus has been achieved the Convener of the Subordinate Group shall submit the draft to the Chairperson of the responsible Permanent Committee for decision to circulate it again for 60 day comment or approval to progress it to a ballot of all IAF Members. If the Chairperson of the responsible Permanent Committee decides that the draft should be recirculated for a further 60 day comment to all IAF Members the processes set out in paragraph (vi) above shall be followed.

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- (ix) If the Chairperson of the responsible Permanent Committee decides that the draft is ready for voting, a clean copy of the document, a marked copy showing changes from the 60 day comment period, a marked copy showing changes from the currently published issue (if the document is a revision), the Subordinate Group's report on comments received, and a proposed application date agreed upon by the Permanent Committee shall be forwarded to the IAF Secretariat for circulation to all IAF Members for approval by 30 day written ballot. To assist with the resolution of any concerns the reasons for submission of a negative vote should be provided. A ballot shall be approved by a simple majority of eligible Members submitting an affirmative vote except for changes to IAF PL 2 *Bylaws of the IAF* and the *IAF MoU*, which both require a two thirds majority for approval. Votes of abstention shall be counted in determining a quorum which shall be 50% of IAF Accreditation Body Members.
 - (x) At the conclusion of the ballot the IAF Secretariat shall inform IAF Members of the ballot results and shall forward any comments received to the Convener of the Subordinate Group for review and consideration as to whether any changes to the draft for publication are necessary.
 - (xi) When the Subordinate Group has reached an acceptable degree of consensus as to the content of the draft for publication, the Convener shall forward this to the Chairperson of the responsible Permanent Committee for approval for publication.
 - (xii) The Chairperson shall coordinate the publication of the approved draft with the IAF Secretariat who shall place this on the IAF website and announce the publication to all IAF Members.

3.6 The following process shall be followed for the development of IAF Communiqués:

- (i) The applicable IAF Permanent Committee shall prepare a draft Communiqué.
- (ii) When satisfied with the draft the Chairperson of that Committee shall forward the Communiqué to the IAF Secretariat for circulation to all IAF Members for 30 day comment.
- (iii) All comments received shall be reviewed by the applicable IAF Permanent Committee and any changes necessary made to the draft text.

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- (iv) Upon approval of the wording, the Chairperson of the applicable Permanent Committee shall forward the draft Communiqué to the IAF Executive. For IAF-only Communiqués, the Executive shall be empowered to make editorial modifications, as necessary, prior to releasing it for publication. In the case of Communiqués intended for publication jointly with other organisations, the Executive shall empower the IAF representatives on the joint group to negotiate and agree on the final wording on behalf of IAF.

3.7. The following process shall be followed for the development of IAF marketing and promotional documents that display the IAF logo:

- (i) The IAF CMC shall prepare the draft text, with input from the relevant Permanent Committees.
- (ii) When satisfied with the draft, the CMC Chairperson will gain the approval of the CMC and the applicable Permanent Committee.
- (iii) The CMC shall apply the design, format and layout to the materials.
- (iv) The CMC Chairperson shall forward the material to the IAF Executive for approval.

3.8. The development of Informative Documents will follow the process detailed at Clause 3.5 with the exception that Informative Documents will proceed directly to 30 day IAF ballot, following a 30 day comment period by the relevant Committee and approval by the Committee Chairman that all comments received have been considered. The process is diagrammatically represented by the shaded sections of Appendix Two.

3.9. The following process shall be followed for Memoranda of Understanding with other organizations that are not legally binding and do not create any legal obligations upon any of the parties or their members:

- (i) Memoranda of Understanding with other organizations shall be drafted by the IAF EC in conjunction with the other organization(s) involved.
- (ii) When a draft has been agreed upon between all parties, the IAF Secretary shall forward the document to all IAF Members for a three-week comment period. IAF members shall be provided with relevant background information about the development of the document and requested to advise the IAF Secretary of any major concerns by the specified deadline.
- (iii) Editorial comments received from members of any of the organisations involved may be taken into account where the comment is agreed by all parties. IAF Members' requests for significant changes to the document will be considered in conjunction with all parties participating in the drafting of the document.

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- (iv) Following completion of the comment period and subsequent resolution of any comments received, the EC shall decide whether a further review is necessary or to proceed to signature and publication on behalf of the IAF Membership.

3.10. Any document requiring the approval of Members at a General Assembly Meeting, shall be circulated to all Members of IAF together with any comments the Executive Committee sees as appropriate.

3.11. If the General Assembly is expected to meet within 3 months of the date the proposed document is received by the Secretariat, the document shall be circulated 60 days in advance of the General Assembly Meeting and the matter shall be decided by Members at the General Assembly Meeting in formal session.

3.12. If a General Assembly Meeting of Members is not expected within 3 months, or the matter is urgent, the Secretariat shall conduct a ballot of the Members by electronic means in accordance with *IAF PL 2 Bylaws of the IAF*, Section 3.11 Written Ballot of the Bylaws.

3.13. If the Executive Committee judges the matter to be urgent it may submit the matter to the Board, which may, on its own authority, conditionally approve the document. The Secretariat may then publish a conditionally approved document, subject to debate and voting on the document at the next General Assembly Meeting.

3.14. If the document is not approved either by ballot or at a General Assembly Meeting the Secretariat shall refer the document back to the Chairman of the Permanent Committee for further consideration.

3.15. Once a document has been approved, the Secretariat shall publish it and inform all Members of its availability.

4. RULES FOR VOTING OUT OF SESSION

4.1. When the Board of Directors of IAF decides that a matter needs agreement of all Members out-of-session, the issue will be put to the vote by ballot in accordance with *IAF PL 2 Bylaws of the IAF*, Section 3.11 Written Ballot of the Bylaws. The rules for the voting procedure shall be as follows:

- (i.) The document setting out the issue, the Permanent Committee or Subordinate Group recommendation including the author's report, and the Executive Committee's recommendation and comments shall be forwarded by e-mail to the contact point of all Member Bodies entitled to vote.

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- (ii.) Members are required to lodge their vote within thirty calendar days.
 - (iii.) The rules of voting as set down in the By Laws apply.
 - (iv.) If insufficient confirmations or votes are received, the IAF Secretariat shall follow up and remind Members until the close of voting.
 - (v.) All Members shall be advised of the result of the vote within two weeks of the close of voting. A ballot shall be approved by a simple majority of eligible Members submitting an affirmative vote, except for changes to IAF PL 2 *Bylaws of the IAF* and the *IAF MoU*, which both require a two thirds majority for approval. Votes of abstention shall be counted in determining a quorum, which shall be 50% of IAF Accreditation Body Members.
 - (vi.) The voting record of IAF voting Members will be made public on an annual basis.

5. REVISION OF IAF DOCUMENTS

5.1. When an IAF document is revised, the entire document is to be re-issued. The process for revising an IAF document shall be in accordance with the process detailed in Clause 3 of this document.

5.2. If the revision is to the content or substance of the document, a new issue number is to be allocated to the document. If the revision is due to correction of errors, typing mistakes or similar, the same issue number may be retained, but a new version number and issue date shown on the revised document.

5.3. After each revision is approved, the IAF Secretariat will place a copy of the new version in English on the IAF web site. Each Member shall review their own documents and revise them as necessary to make them consistent with the revised IAF document.

6. CUSTODY AND CONTROL OF IAF DOCUMENTS

6.1. The master copy of all IAF documents shall be held and controlled by the current IAF Secretary. The IAF Secretary shall prepare, and keep up-to-date, a list of all publicly available IAF documents. The list shall identify the Document Title, Issue Number, Version Number, Issue Date and Application Date of each document issued by IAF. Publicly available IAF documents shall be made available to the public through the IAF web site.

6.2. The IAF Secretariat shall ensure that every Member of IAF is notified of the publication of each new publicly available IAF document or revision. Each Member shall ensure that obsolete versions of IAF documents are not supplied to the public, and are removed from use.

6.3. When a new Member of IAF signs the IAF MoU, the IAF Secretariat shall provide the new Member with access to the Members Only section of the IAF web site to be able to obtain relevant IAF Committee and Subordinate Group documents.

7. CLASSES OF IAF PUBLICATIONS

7.1. IAF publications, and revisions to them, shall be classified into the following classes:

(i) IAF Policy Documents (PL Series)

Set out the policies, including governance requirements that IAF Members are expected to follow as well as statements of the IAF viewpoint on current issues. These include the IAF Bylaws, the Memorandum of Understanding, and similar policy publications.

(ii) IAF Multilateral Recognition Arrangement (MLA) Documents (ML Series)

Publications which define and formalise the rules and commitments for membership and the operation of the IAF MLA.

(iii) IAF Mandatory Documents (MD Series)

Mandatory requirements to be implemented by Accreditation Bodies when accrediting Certification bodies to ensure consistent application.

(iv) IAF Procedure Documents (PR Series)

Publications which lay down the requirements to be followed in implementing the IAF program, spelling out the procedures, and processes which must be followed in order to achieve IAF objectives.

(v) IAF-ILAC Joint Publications (A Series)

Documents prepared and published jointly with the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC).

(vi) IAF Informative Documents (ID Series)

Documents which provide information to assist IAF Members to develop and/or improve their accreditation schemes.

Other types of IAF publications include Communiqués and promotional documents.

8. ENQUIRIES

8.1 All enquiries regarding IAF documents shall be referred in the first instance to the IAF Secretariat.

APPENDIX ONE - PROJECT PROPOSAL FORM**Committee Project Proposal Submissions**

(In accordance with IAF PR 2:2018 General Procedures for the Development of IAF Documents)

Instructions

To be submitted by the proponent of a project and/or initiative to develop an IAF document. Submissions should address the points listed below, supporting and/or related information attached. Completed submissions with attachments shall be submitted to the Committee Chair.

Upon approval by the Committee Chair the Committee Secretary shall circulate copies of the proposal to all committee members. Agreement by consensus of the committee members shall be required for the project to proceed.

Suggested format:**Title:****Name(s) of Proponent(s)****Date:****Content:**

1. Core Issue to be addressed:

2. Consequence if the identified issue unresolved:
(Include costs, implications, difficulty)

3. Alternative Solutions:

3.1 Preferred Solution (if known)

Is there a possibility of co-operation at the regional level?

Is this an appropriate project for an IAF/ILAC Joint Committee?

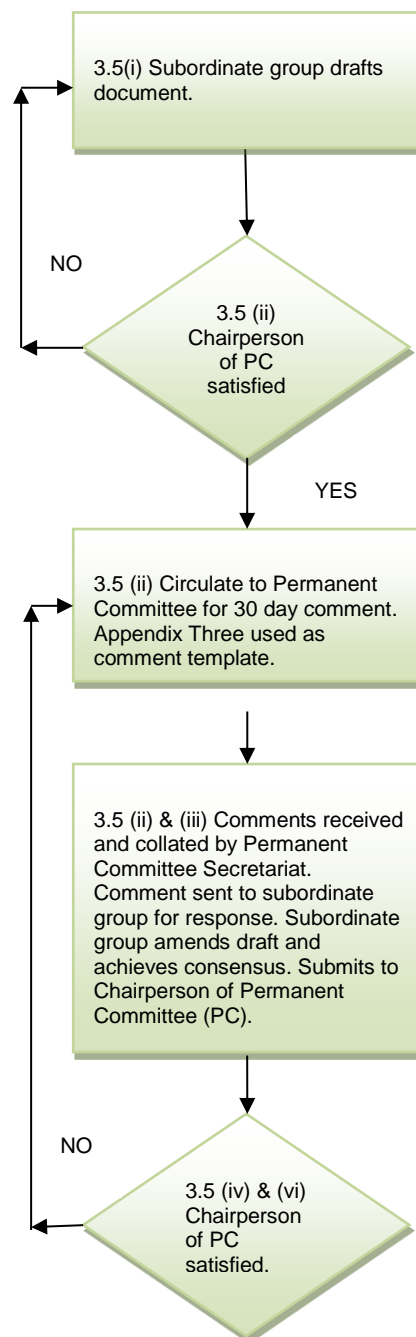
Finding of any investigation of these above options should be summarized in this proposal.

4. Resources needed for preferred solution:
(e.g. new WG, new TF, time, research)

5. Program outline for Proposed preferred Project:
(Include milestones, hold points, reporting time, deliverables, target dates)

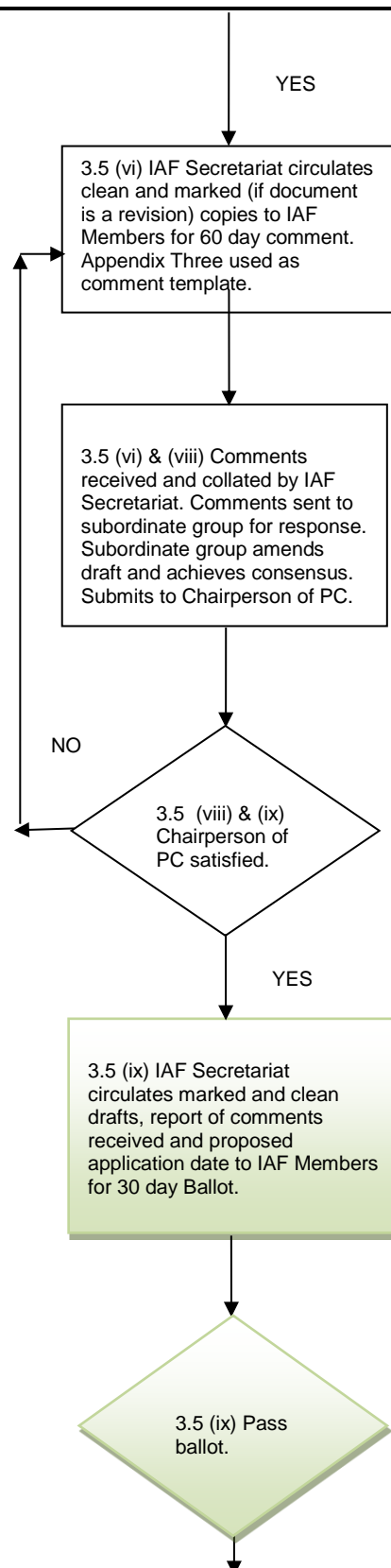
6. Approval of Committee Chair
(date, notation in minutes and/or e-mail attached if applicable)

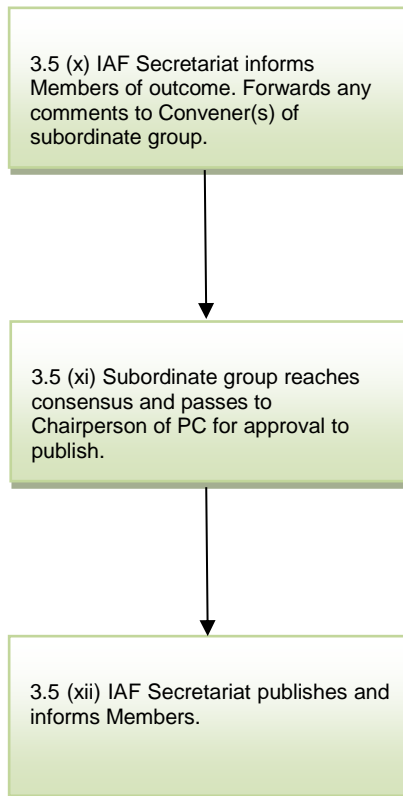
7. Decision of the Committee

**APPENDIX TWO – FLOWCHART ON IAF PROCESS OF DEVELOPING AND
AMENDING IAF PUBLICATIONS^{1,2}**


¹ This process does not apply to Communiqués or internal documents.

² The shaded section applies to Informative Documents.





**General Procedures for the Development
of IAF Documents**

APPENDIX THREE - REPORT ON COMMENTS ON DRAFT NO Z

IAF Template for Comments

Closing Date:

Document:

MB	Clause/ Subclause	Type of Comment	Comment (Justification for Change) by the MB	Proposed Change by the MB	Convener Observations

Instructions

The following columns are compulsory:

MB : the Member Body acronym (e.g. CNAS or DAkKS or UKAS)

Clause/Subclause: the clause or subclause number (e.g. 3.1 or 5.4.3 g). The automatic collation system will sort using this data, so it must be in the standard format. For comments on the document as a whole, leave this column blank

Type of Comment: ge = general, te = technical, ed = editorial

Comment: comments on document

To add another row, place the cursor in the last cell of the table (bottom right hand cell) and hit the ‘tab’ key.

If you wish to record a “no comment”, submit a form with just your MB acronym in the ‘MB’ column, and “no comment” in the ‘Comment’ column. This will ensure that the automatic collation system records your “no comment”.

Further Information:

For further information on this document or other IAF documents, contact any member of IAF or the IAF Secretariat.

For contact details of members of IAF see the IAF website: <http://www.iaf.nu>

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