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Products and related services — Information for consumers

Produits et services connexes — Informations pour les consommateurs

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Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) and IEC (the International Electrotechnical Commission) are worldwide federations of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies and IEC National Committees). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO and IEC technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO or IEC, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see www.iso.org/directives).

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO and IEC shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights. Details of any patent rights identified during the development of the document will be in the Introduction and/or on the ISO list of patent declarations received (see www.iso.org/patents).

Any trade name used in this document is information given for the convenience of users and does not constitute an endorsement.

For an explanation on the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) see the following URL: www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html.

This document was prepared by the ISO Committee on Consumer Policy (COPOLCO).

This third edition cancels and replaces the second edition (ISO/IEC Guide 14:2003), which has been technically revised.

The main changes compared with the previous edition are as follows:

— mention of new purchase information labelling tools (e.g. QR codes or RFID tags), available on the packaging of the product;

— clarification of the relationship with ISO/IEC Guide 37, ISO/IEC Guide 41 and IEC 82079-1;

— consideration of the product information needs of vulnerable persons;

— content added on recycling and second-hand goods;

— improved treatment of risk, sustainability and privacy issues;

— addition of new clauses on performance and conditions of use and dependability considerations;

— deletion of obsolete content on purchase information bodies and purchase information systems.

Introduction

Product information for consumers is a vital part of any consumer product or service. Improving the quality of information increases the ability of consumers to make an informed purchasing choice. It helps to minimize the risk of incorrect or inappropriate purchases or contracts. Consumer uncertainties are reduced and consumer satisfaction is increased. Those who supply a high standard of product information, taking into consideration the needs of vulnerable consumers, enhance their commercial reputation and save time and money, by reducing enquiries, complaints and returns.

This document addresses the following:

— committees preparing standards for consumer products and related services;

— consumer product designers, manufacturers, technical writers, marketers, graphic artists or others engaged in the work of drafting such information;

— other bodies such as enforcement agencies or consumer ombudsmen.

The primary purpose of this document is to provide guidance to those responsible for drafting national or international standards on what information prospective purchasers require and expect for products and their related services. However, it can also assist those who write purchase information (e.g. suppliers), as well as enforcement authorities.

Aspects of product information can vary in various jurisdictions and/or industry standards or technical specifications. Suppliers can establish, implement and maintain a procedure to identify the applicable laws and regulations of the countries where the consumer products and related services are manufactured, imported, distributed and sold, in order to ensure that applicable legal requirements are taken into account.

A number of methods can be used (individually or in combination) to provide information to consumers about products and related services, in order to accommodate varying levels of ability:

— written or printed;

— online;

— verbal.

Online information is increasingly used by consumers for pre-purchase research and decision-making.

There is considerable scope for further standardization in the field of product information in terms of individual consumer products and related services, and even more so for groups of consumer products and related services.

Products and related services — Information for consumers

1   Scope

This document provides guidance on the provision of information concerning products and their related services intended for consumers. It outlines general principles and recommendations for content, methods, formats and designs enabling consumers to compare and choose consumer products and their related services prior to purchase.

2   Normative references

There are no normative references in this document.

3   Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminological databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

— ISO Online browsing platform: available at https://www.iso.org/obp

— IEC Electropedia: available at http://www.electropedia.org/

3.1
complaint
<customer satisfaction> expression of dissatisfaction made to an organization, related to its product or service, or the complaints-handling process itself, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected

Note 1 to entry: ISO 10002 provides information on complaints handling in organizations.

[SOURCE: ISO 9000:2015, 3.9.3, modified — Note 1 to entry has been added.]

3.2
consumer
individual member of the general public purchasing or using property, products or services for private purposes

Note 1 to entry: The term "consumer" covers both customers and potential customers. *Consumer products* (3.3) and services can be one-time purchases or long-term contracts or obligations.

[SOURCE: ISO 26000:2010, 2.2, modified — Note 1 to entry has been added.]

3.3
consumer product
product designed and produced primarily for, but not limited to, personal use, including its components, parts, accessories, instructions and packaging

[SOURCE: ISO 10377:2013, 2.2]