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## Project management guidelines for terminology standardization

*Lignes directrices pour la gestion de projets de normalisation  
terminologique*



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## Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO 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, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

International Standards are drafted in accordance with the rules given in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 3.

Draft International Standards adopted by the technical committees are circulated to the member bodies for voting. Publication as an International Standard requires approval by at least 75 % of the member bodies casting a vote.

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this International Standard may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights.

International Standard ISO 15188 was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 37, *Terminology (principles and coordination)*, Subcommittee SC 2, *Layout of vocabularies*.

Annexes A, B, C and D of this International Standard are for information only.

## Introduction

The use of consistent terminology upon which users publicly agree reflects the quality of the final version of a document in technical subjects. The objective of terminology standardization, which is the unification and harmonization of concepts, concept systems, terms and definitions, is to obtain a normative vocabulary in which only one term corresponds to one concept and only one concept corresponds to one term (ISO 10241), thus reducing ambiguity caused by polysemy, synonymy or homonymy and allowing for the creation of new terms in accordance with the principles and methods of terminology (ISO 704).

Standardized terminology, which results from the process of terminology standardization, consists of sets of single-concept designations belonging to special languages (ISO 1087-1) used in the various subject-fields of human knowledge. It improves communication and provides better access to and management of information. There are economic benefits to be derived when general consensus is achieved on the meaning of terms. This in turn contributes to the harmonization of concepts and terms (ISO 860), which facilitates trade and improves national productivity and access to international markets. Inconsistent use of terminology may lead to misunderstandings and potential economic losses.

The aim of standardization in terminology project management is to facilitate terminology standardization and to avoid the cost that would result from reworking proposed or existing standardized terminologies, and also from producing a terminology that lacks uniformity or fails to meet the requirements of the user. The ultimate objective is to keep the project productive and cost-efficient.

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**WARNING** — It is of primary importance that technical committees carrying out terminology work follow the principles laid down by ISO/TC 37 (see Bibliography). Other terminology standardization projects should be subject to the same principles.

The ISO/TC 37 documents form the basis for terminology standardization and ensure a common understanding of policies and procedures with respect to terminology work. They should be used to ensure consistency in the standardization of terminologies.

Experienced terminologists should be consulted whenever possible. For information and assistance in terminology work, contact a national terminology organization or the ISO/TC 37 Secretariat at the following address:

Simmeringer Hauptstrasse 24  
A- 1110 Vienna, Austria  
Telephone: +43 1 74040 441  
Fax: +43 1 74040 740  
E-mail: infopoint@infoterm.org

## 1 Scope

This International Standard specifies guidelines setting out the phases and procedures to be followed in terminology standardization projects, as well as harmonization and uniformity projects, both inside and outside the framework of international standardization. It is divided into two sections, the first one dealing with terminology standardization in general, and the second dealing with terminology standardization within international standards bodies (ISO, for example). It answers a need expressed by many members of national and international standards bodies and managers of terminology working groups for a standard on the management of terminology standardization projects, rather than solely on the processes of terminology work, project management or quality assurance, which are covered in other standards.

It does not stipulate the principles of terminology work, which are treated in other ISO/TC 37 standards (see ISO 704 for example), nor the methodological approach to international harmonization of concepts, concept systems, terms and definitions, which are treated in ISO 860. It also does not deal with the rules for the preparation and layout of international terminology standards, outlined in ISO 10241, or provide advice for creating and using terminological databases, found in ISO/TR 12618. Finally, it does not deal with the guidelines on quality in project management found in ISO 10006.

These guidelines should be applied to all phases of terminology standardization projects from the initial identification of needs to the final satisfaction of requirements and user expectations.

## 2 Normative references

The following normative documents contain provisions which, through reference in this text, constitute provisions of this International Standard. For dated references, subsequent amendments to, or revisions of, any of these publications do not apply. However, parties to agreements based on this International Standard are encouraged to investigate the possibility of applying the most recent editions of the normative documents indicated below. For undated references, the latest edition of the normative document referred to applies. Members of ISO and IEC maintain registers of currently valid International Standards.

ISO 704:2000, *Terminology work — Principles and methods*

ISO 860:1996, *Terminology work — Harmonization of concepts and terms*

ISO 1087-1, *Terminology work — Vocabulary — Part 1: Theory and application*

ISO 10006:1997, *Quality management — Guidelines to quality in project management*

ISO 10241:1992, *International terminology standards — Preparation and layout*

ISO/TR 12618:1994, *Computational aids in terminology — Creation and use of terminological databases and text corpora*

ISO 12620, *Computer applications in terminology — Data categories*

ISO/IEC Guide 2:1996, *Standardization and related activities — General vocabulary*

ISO/IEC Guide 51:1999, *Safety aspects — Guidelines for their inclusion in standards*

### 3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this International Standard, the terms and definitions given in the standards mentioned in the normative references and the following apply.

**3.1 terminology project**  
project aimed at collecting, developing, analysing and recording the terminology of one or more subject fields

**3.2 standardization project**  
project aimed at establishing provisions for common and repeated use

**3.3 verification**  
confirmation by examination of evidence that specified requirements have been met

**3.4 international standardization**  
standardization in which involvement is open to relevant bodies from all countries

[Guide 2:1996, 1.6.1]

**3.5 terminology standardization**  
establishment of terminology standards or of terminology sections in technical standards, and their approval by an authoritative body

**3.6 risk**  
combination of the probability of occurrence of harm and the severity of that harm

[Guide 51:1999, 3.2]

### 4 Project management for terminology standardization

#### 4.1 General

The management process through which a terminology project evolves, from its beginning to its completion and particularly when applied to standardization, unfolds through a sequence of phases: preparation, design,