
**Societal security — Emergency
management — Guidelines for colour-
coded alerts**

*Sécurité sociétale — Gestion des urgences — Lignes directrices
relatives aux alertes à code couleur*



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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.

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. www.iso.org/directives

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For an explanation on the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the WTO principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) see the following URL: [Foreword - Supplementary information](#)

The committee responsible for this document is ISO/TC 292, *Security*.

Introduction

People may be faced in their daily lives with various kinds of risks. People at risk should be able to take appropriate safety actions when faced with hazards even though they may not have a full understanding of them.

Public warnings, through a combination of prior notifications and alerts, enable people at risk to take appropriate and timely actions to protect their safety.

Colour-coded alerts are used to notify people at risk of status changes on a safety or danger continuum in allowing them to take appropriate actions.

This International Standard will lead to better understanding of colour-coded alerts by reducing confusion and prompting more appropriate responses in an emergency situation.

Societal security — Emergency management — Guidelines for colour-coded alerts

1 Scope

This International Standard provides guidelines for the use of colour codes to inform people at risk as well as first response personnel about danger and to express the severity of a situation. It is applicable to all types of hazard in any location.

This International Standard does not cover the method for displaying colour codes, detailed ergonomic considerations related with viewing displays, or safety signs covered by ISO 3864-1.

2 Normative references

The following documents, in whole or in part, are normatively referenced in this document and are indispensable for its application. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO 3864-1, *Graphical symbols — Safety colours and safety signs — Part 1: Design principles for safety signs and safety markings*

ISO 22322, *Societal security — Emergency management — Guidelines for public warning*

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO 22300 and the following apply.

NOTE All terms and definitions contained in ISO 22300 are available on the ISO Online Browsing Platform: www.iso.org/obp.

3.1 alert

part of public warning that captures attention of first responders and people at risk in a developing emergency situation

[SOURCE: ISO 22322, definition 3.1]

3.2 colour blindness

total or partial inability to differentiate certain hues

[SOURCE: ISO 5492:2008, definition 2.34]

3.3 colour-code

set of colours used symbolically to represent particular meanings

[SOURCE: ISO 17724:2003, definition 11]

3.4 hue

attribute of a visual sensation according to which an area appears to be similar to one of the perceived colours, red, yellow, green, and blue, or to a combination of two of them

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC 8632-1:1999, definition 4.1.61]