

# **Consensus Body Procedures for the Development of AISC Standards**

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## A. SCOPE

These procedures govern the activities of the American Institute of Steel Construction (AISC) related to the development, approval, revision, reaffirmation and withdrawal of American National Standards for the design and construction of structural steel. In the absence of specific language, the ANSI *Essential Requirements* apply.

The term “standard” indicates any specification, code or standard issued by AISC intended to become an American National Standard.

The preface, commentary and user notes of AISC standards are not considered to be part of the standard and are not balloted. These sections will be identified in the standard as required by the ANSI *Essential Requirements*.

## B. ORGANIZATION

### B.1. Consensus Bodies

AISC shall establish consensus bodies to develop and maintain standards that fall within the scope of these procedures.

#### B.1.1. Interest Categories

Consensus body members shall be classified into one of the following three interest categories:

- a. Industry: This category includes individuals associated with the production or fabrication of structural steel, including affiliation with trade associations.
- b. Consultants: This category refers to professional technical interests that specifies or advises on the design of fabricated structural steel and connections including, but not limited to, structural engineers, steel detailers and architects.
- c. General interest: This category incorporates all individuals that do not fit into the Industry or Consultants categories including, but not limited to, educators, researchers, and representatives of regulatory agencies.

Consensus body members shall indicate their agreement with their respective classification at the time of acceptance of their appointment.

**B.1.2. Dominance**

The membership of each consensus body shall be sufficiently diverse to ensure reasonable balance without dominance by any single interest category, individual or organization.

**B.1.3. Balance**

AISC shall strive to achieve a balance of interests on its consensus bodies in accordance with the following criteria: No single interest category shall constitute more than one-third of the membership of a consensus body dealing with safety-related standards. No single interest category shall constitute a majority of the membership of a consensus body dealing with other than safety-related standards.

**B.1.4. Size**

The target size of each consensus body shall be 21 members, except for the Committee on Specifications, whose target size shall be 45 members.

**B.2. Secretariat**

AISC staff comprises the Secretariat for all consensus bodies established in accordance with these procedures. The Secretariat shall:

- a. Organize the consensus bodies.
- b. Oversee compliance with these procedures.
- c. Maintain consensus body rosters.
- d. Provide administrative support to consensus bodies.
- e. Shepherd standards through internal and external approval processes.
- f. Publish approved standards.
- g. Manage the consensus body appointment process.
- h. Nominate consensus body officers.

**B.3. Officers**

Each consensus body shall have a chair and vice chair nominated by the Secretariat and subject to majority approval of the consensus body.

Each consensus body shall have a secretary appointed by the Secretariat. The secretary shall not be considered to be a member of the consensus body.



## **C. MEMBERSHIP**

### **C.1. Nominations and Applications**

Applications and nominations for consensus body membership shall be collected by the Secretariat and acknowledged within 30 calendar days. The Secretariat and consensus body officers may also make nominations.

### **C.2. Evaluation**

Existing members, nominees and new applicants shall be evaluated for appointment or reappointment to a consensus body with respect to the following:

- a. Fulfillment of membership obligations, for existing members.
- b. Potential for dominance by a single interest category, individual or organization.
- c. Potential for imbalance among the interest categories.
- d. Expressed interest and willingness and ability to participate actively.
- e. Evaluation of professional qualifications and experience.
- f. The target size of the consensus body.

### **C.3. Approval**

The addition, renewal or termination of members shall be decided by the consensus body chair and Secretariat.

### **C.4. Term**

Appointments and reappointments shall have a length of two years with a common starting date. Appointments are permitted to be extended, as needed, at the end of a standards development cycle. Mid-cycle appointments shall extend until the end of the current two-year cycle when appointed.

### **C.5. Obligations of Membership**

#### **C.5.1. Attendance**

Members are expected to attend meetings on a regular basis.

#### **C.5.2. Voting**

The consensus body chair, vice-chair, and members shall have a vote. The secretary shall track voting participation.

After the first missed ballot, the secretary shall so notify the member in writing.

After a second consecutive missed ballot, the consensus body chair shall so notify the member in writing.

Failure to return a third consecutive ballot shall result in immediate termination, and the secretary shall so notify the member in writing.

Extenuating circumstances (such as illness or international travel) may be considered when evaluating voting participation.

Ballots having common due dates shall be considered to be a single ballot with respect to voting participation.

Consensus body members appointed midway through a ballot cycle shall not be permitted to vote on the related recirculation ballot, if any. A ballot cycle shall be defined to include a ballot plus any required recirculation ballot.

#### **C.6. Non-Voting Roles**

Individuals may apply to the Secretariat for a non-voting role on the consensus body. Non-voting roles shall be assigned at the discretion of the Secretariat.

Persons in non-voting roles shall be notified of consensus body activities, may attend meetings, and may submit comments for consideration. Individuals with non-voting roles shall not have voting privileges.

The Secretariat may create non-voting roles as required. Possible non-voting roles are as follows:

- a. *Secretary*: AISC staff assigned to provide administrative support to the consensus body.
- b. *Advisory*. Individuals involved for coordination purposes.
- c. *Informational copies*. Individuals with a general interest in the activities of the consensus body.
- d. *Emeritus*. Long-time past members of the consensus body.

Persons in non-voting roles shall not be counted towards the target consensus body size.

#### **C.7. Membership Rosters**

The Secretariat shall maintain a current roster of consensus body members. Membership rosters shall be available to members of each consensus body online.

Rosters shall include a listing of all consensus body members along with their respective consensus body roles, affiliations, interest categories and email addresses.

Consensus body rosters—with personal contact information redacted for privacy considerations—shall be made available to interested parties upon request.

## **D. MEETINGS**

Consensus body meetings shall be held at the request of the chair or Secretariat, or by a petition of one-third or more of consensus body members.

Meetings of the consensus body shall be open to all members and others having an interest. The consensus body chair shall have the option to call an executive session when deemed appropriate.

*Robert's Rules of Order* (latest edition) may be used to expedite due process on questions of parliamentary procedures not specifically covered in these procedures.

### **D.1. Notices**

The Secretariat shall distribute timely meeting notices in advance of the meeting. The notice shall describe the general purpose of the meeting.

The Secretariat shall distribute an agenda to members in advance of the meeting. The Secretariat shall make the agenda available to anyone expressing interest in the meeting.

### **D.2. Quorum**

The presence of a majority of the consensus body members shall constitute a quorum for conducting business at a meeting.

Proxies held for absent members shall be counted towards quorum.

If quorum is not met, actions taken at a meeting must be approved by letter ballot or at a subsequent meeting.

### **D.3. Proxies**

A consensus body member may designate a proxy on a per-meeting basis. The proxy shall vote on behalf of the absent consensus body member when approval ballots in accordance with Section F.2 are taken during the designated meeting. Absent

consensus body members who have not designated a proxy shall have the opportunity to vote before or the after the meeting in accordance with Section F.2.3.

The proxy must also be a member of the consensus body and must agree to hold the proxy. A consensus body member may hold more than one proxy at a meeting.

Designation of a proxy does not satisfy attendance obligations.

Proxies may not be designated for letter ballots.

## **E. LETTER BALLOTS**

Letter ballots may be conducted by physical or electronic means permitted by the ANSI *Essential Requirements*.

### **E.1. Authorization**

A letter ballot shall be authorized by one of the following:

- a. A majority vote of the members present at a meeting.
- b. The consensus body chair, vice chair, or secretary.
- c. A petition of at least one-third of the consensus body members.

### **E.2. Voting Period**

The voting period shall not be less than 14 calendar days. The voting period length shall be determined by the consensus body secretary.

#### **E.2.1. Early Closing**

If all ballots are returned before the end of the voting period, the secretary may end the voting period early.

#### **E.2.2. Extensions**

The voting period may be extended at the discretion of the consensus body chair.

#### **E.2.3. Reminders**

One or more timely reminder notices shall be issued before the end of the voting period to those voters who have not yet returned ballots.

**E.2.4. Results**

The secretary shall make the ballot results and all associated comments available to the consensus body no later than 30 calendar days from the end of the voting period.

Results shall include interest category information for consensus body members.

**F. NUMERICAL REQUIREMENTS FOR CONSENSUS****F.1. Procedural Actions**

The following actions require approval by a majority of the consensus body.

- a. Approval of minutes, agenda revisions, membership issues, etc.
- b. Issuance of a formal interpretation of a standard.
- c. Adoption or modification of interest categories.

**F.1.1. Voting Method**

The approve/negative/abstain method of voting shall be employed.

**F.1.2. Objections**

There need not be reasons, resolution of objections, or recirculation.

**F.1.3. Absentees**

Absentees need not be given the opportunity to vote.

**F.2. Approval Actions**

Approval of a new, revised, reaffirmed, or supplemented standard requires approval by at least three-quarters of those voting, excluding abstentions and negative votes without comment.

**F.2.1. Voting Method**

Each member of the consensus body shall vote one of the following positions:

- a. Approve, with or without comment;
- b. Negative, with reasons;
- c. Abstain.

**F.2.2. Objections**

The consensus body shall attempt to resolve all objections. Unresolved objections and attempts at resolution shall be reported to the consensus body in order to afford all members of the consensus body an opportunity to respond, reaffirm or change their vote.

**F.2.3. Absentees**

When these actions are taken at a meeting, members who are absent shall be given the opportunity to vote before or after the meeting.

**F.2.4. Participation Requirements**

At least two-thirds of the consensus body shall cast a vote. Abstentions and negative votes without comment shall be counted towards the numerical requirements for participation.

**G. PUBLIC REVIEW****G.1. Notices**

Public comment periods shall be announced in accordance with Section O.

**G.2. Comment Period Duration**

The duration of the public comment period shall be one of the following:

- a. 30 calendar days if the full text of the revisions can be published in ANSI *Standards Action*.
- b. 45 calendar days if the document is available via download or deliverable by email within one business day of the request. The source from which the document may be obtained by the public shall be included in ANSI *Standards Action*.
- c. 60 calendar days if neither of the aforementioned options is applicable.

**G.3. Results**

The secretary shall make public comments available to the consensus body no later than 30 calendar days from the end of the public comment period.

## **H. CONSIDERATION OF VIEWS AND OBJECTIONS**

Prompt consideration shall be given to written views and objections received during a consensus body ballot, public comment period or PINS (Project Initiation Notifications) announcement.

Comments received subsequent to the close of a public comment period shall be considered in the same manner as the submittal of a new proposal, and the submitter of the comment shall be so notified in writing.

### **H.1. Attempts at Resolution**

An effort to resolve all expressed objections accompanied by comments related to the proposal under consideration shall be made. Each objector shall be advised in writing of the disposition of their objection and the reasons therefor. If resolution is not achieved, each unresolved objector shall be informed in writing of their right to appeal.

### **H.2. Responses**

Responses shall be provided no more than four months from the close of the relevant ballot or public comment period.

Notices sent to public comment period objectors shall allow for a minimum of 7 calendar days for the objector to confirm if the written disposition resolves their comments or if their comments remain unresolved.

### **H.3. Recirculation of Unresolved Objections**

Each unresolved objection and attempts at resolution and any substantive change shall be reported to the consensus body in order to afford all members of the consensus body an opportunity to respond, reaffirm or change their vote. A record of evidence regarding any change of an original vote shall be maintained.

### **H.4. Reporting of Unresolved Objections**

Unresolved objections resulting from a consensus body ballot, public comment period or PINS deliberation shall be reported to both the consensus body and ANSI.

### **H.5. Comments Not Related to the Proposal**

Comments not related to the proposal under consideration submitted during a consensus body ballot shall be documented and considered in the same manner as the submittal of a new proposal.

When the applicable ballot notice requirements of the ANSI *Essential Requirements* are met, negative votes accompanied by comments not related to the proposal under consideration or negative votes without comments shall be recorded as “negative without comment” without further notice to the voter and no recirculation is required. “Negative without comment” votes shall be reported in accordance with the ANSI *Essential Requirements*.

#### **H.6. Approve or Abstain Comments Related to the Proposal**

Comments related to the proposal under consideration submitted with approve or abstain votes shall be considered, and the submitter shall be notified of the disposition of the comment in writing. Circulation of the responses to the consensus body shall satisfy the requirement of written notification.

#### **H.7. Substantive Changes**

Substantive changes made in response to any comment or for any other reason shall be recirculated to the consensus body in order to afford all members of the consensus body an opportunity to respond, reaffirm or change their vote, and shall be subject to a public comment period.

#### **H.8. New Proposals**

New proposals shall be collected by the secretary of the consensus body for future consideration.

### **I. SUBMITTAL OF STANDARDS**

Standards approved by the consensus body shall be submitted to the AISC Board of Directors for approval. The standard shall be approved by a majority of the Board of Directors using the approve/negative/abstain method of voting. There need not be reasons, resolution of objections, or recirculation.

Standards approved by the Board of Directors shall be submitted to ANSI in accordance with the ANSI *Essential Requirements*.

### **J. MAINTENANCE OF STANDARDS**

#### **J.1. Activity Requirements**

Active AISC standards designated as American National Standards shall be revised or reaffirmed on a regular basis.



AISC standards designated as American National Standards shall be revised or reaffirmed within five years of the date of ANSI approval unless an extension has been granted by ANSI. For the purposes of meeting this requirement, the date of filing of the ANSI PINS form for the revision or reaffirmation of the standard may be used.

### **J.2. Withdrawal of a Standard**

The Secretariat may withdraw any AISC standard without a vote of the relevant consensus body.

The withdrawal of an American National Standard shall be communicated to ANSI immediately.

### **J.3. Discontinuance of a Standards Project**

The Secretariat may abandon any proposed or revised American National Standard project, or portion thereof without a vote of the relevant consensus body.

The discontinuance of an American National Standard project, or portion thereof shall be communicated to ANSI immediately.

A written justification for the action shall be made available upon receipt of any written request received within 60 calendar days of the date of the final action.

## **K. TERMINATION OF A CONSENSUS BODY**

Requests to terminate a consensus body shall be made in writing to the Secretariat.

Requests shall be reviewed by the Secretariat and the AISC Board of Directors, along with any supporting documentation, and shall be submitted for approval by a majority vote of the AISC Board of Directors using the approve/negative/abstain method of voting. There need not be reasons, resolution, or recirculation to the AISC Board of Directors.

## **L. REQUESTS FOR INTERPRETATION**

Requests for interpretation of a standard shall be in writing and directed to the Secretariat. The Secretariat shall acknowledge receipt of the request in writing within 30 calendar days of receipt.

The Secretariat shall assign the request to the appropriate consensus body for consideration.

The consensus body shall approve the interpretation response in accordance with Section F.1.

To accommodate consensus bodies that meet once per year, the Secretariat shall communicate the interpretation response or an update on its progress to the requestor in writing no later than one year after receipt of the request. Final interpretations shall be posted on the AISC web site.

## **M. APPEALS**

Directly and materially affected interests who believe they have been or will be adversely affected by a standard within a consensus body's jurisdiction, or by the lack thereof, shall have the right to appeal procedural actions or inactions, including whether a technical issue was afforded due process, of the consensus body or the Secretariat.

### **M.1. Complaint**

Notice of intention to appeal shall be filed by certified mail with the Secretariat within 30 calendar days after the date of notification of action or at any time with respect to inaction. The complaint shall state the nature of the objection(s) including any adverse effects, the section(s) of these procedures or the standard that are at issue, actions or inactions that are at issue, and the specific remedial action(s) that would satisfy the complainant's concerns. Previous efforts to resolve the objection(s) and the outcome of each shall be noted.

### **M.2. Response**

Within 30 calendar days after the receipt of the complaint, the Secretariat shall respond in writing to the complainant, specifically addressing each allegation in the complaint to the extent possible. The complainant will be given a deadline of 14 calendar days after the written response is provided to request a hearing with an appeal panel. If the complainant does not request a hearing by the deadline given, the appeal is considered closed. The Secretariat shall attempt to resolve the complaint informally.

### **M.3. Appeals Panel and Hearing**

If the Secretariat is unable to informally resolve the complaint, it shall appoint an appeals panel to hold a hearing on a date agreeable to all participants, with at least 14 calendar days' notice. The appeals panel shall consist of three individuals who have not been directly involved in the dispute and who will not be materially affected by

any decision made in the dispute. At least two members of the panel shall be acceptable to the complainant and at least two shall be acceptable to the Secretariat. When no agreement can be reached on the composition of the appeals panel after 15 calendar days of negotiations, the Secretariat shall appoint the panel.

#### **M.4. Conduct of the Hearing**

The complainant has the responsibility of demonstrating improper actions or inaction, the adverse effects therefrom and the efficacy of the requested remedial action. The Secretariat has the responsibility to demonstrate that the consensus body took all actions in question in compliance with these procedures and that the requested remedial action would be ineffective or detrimental.

#### **M.5. Decision**

The appeals panel shall render its decision within 30 calendar days, stating its findings of fact and conclusions, with reasons therefor and citing the evidence. The Secretariat shall notify both the complainant and the consensus body, in writing, of the decision of the appeals panel, which shall be binding and final on all concerned.

### **N. COORDINATION AND HARMONIZATION**

AISC shall attempt in good faith to resolve potential conflicts between and among existing American National Standards and candidate American National Standards in compliance with the ANSI *Essential Requirements*.

### **O. NOTIFICATION OF STANDARDS ACTIVITIES**

Notification of standards activity and proposals for new, revised, reaffirmed, or supplemented standards, or withdrawal of existing standards, shall be announced in suitable media in accordance with the ANSI *Essential Requirements* to afford persons directly and materially affected an opportunity for participation.

PINS forms shall be submitted as indicated in the ANSI *Essential Requirements*. When comments are received from the public regarding a PINS submittal, such comments shall be addressed as indicated in the ANSI *Essential Requirements*.

**P. REVISIONS TO PROCEDURES**

Proposed revisions to these procedures shall be initiated by the Secretariat or submitted to the Secretariat in writing accompanied by an explanation or justification for the revision.

The Secretariat shall submit the proposed revision for approval by a majority vote of the AISC Board of Directors using the approve/negative/abstain method of voting and there need not be reasons, resolution, or recirculation to the Board of Directors.

The Secretariat shall submit the approved revised provisions to ANSI for review and approval.

**Q. METRIC POLICY**

AISC standards designated as American National Standards not written using the International System of Units (SI) shall include either dual units or shall include appropriate conversions correlating non-SI units to their SI equivalents.

**R. RECORD RETENTION POLICY**

AISC shall prepare and maintain records to provide evidence of compliance with these procedures and with the ANSI *Essential Requirements*.

Records concerning new, revised or reaffirmed standards shall be retained for one complete standards cycle.

Records concerning withdrawals of standards shall be retained for at least five years from the date of withdrawal or for a time period consistent with the ANSI audit schedule.

**S. PATENT POLICY**

AISC shall comply with the patent policy provisions contained in the ANSI *Essential Requirements*.

**T. COMMERCIAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS POLICY**

AISC shall comply with the commercial terms and conditions provisions contained in the ANSI *Essential Requirements*.

**U. ANTITRUST POLICY**

AISC shall comply with the antitrust provisions contained in the ANSI *Essential Requirements*.