



Governing Body

329th Session, Geneva, 9–24 March 2017

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Institutional Section

INS

FOR INFORMATION

Developments concerning the review of the implementation of the ILO–ISO agreements

Summary: As requested by the Governing Body at its 325th Session, this document for information reports on significant developments relating to the pilot implementation of the Agreement between the International Labour Organization and the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) which was authorized by the Governing Body and signed in 2013. This information is submitted pending the final Office report on the pilot expected to be available by the Governing Body's 331st Session. In the event the final report is delayed due to unforeseeable ISO timetables, it is proposed that the Office provide an additional report to that session.

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Related documents: GB.328/INS/13; GB.325/INS/11; GB.323/INS/11/2 and GB.323/INS/11/2(Add.); GB.323/PV paras 188–199; GB.320/INS/14/4; GB.320/PV; GB.319/INS/INF/1; GB.317/INS/13/7; GB.316/INS/15/7(Rev.); GB.316/PV(&Corr.); GB.310/PV; GB.309/PV; GB.298/15/5; GB.298/PV.

1. At its 328th Session (October–November 2016), the Governing Body decided: (a) to extend again the pilot implementation of the 2013 Agreement between the International Labour Organization and the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) strictly for the time necessary for the ILO’s effective participation in the completion of the International Standard, ISO 45001 Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems standard; and (b) to take a decision, at its earliest possible session after final disposition of ISO 45001, on the basis of an analysis conducted by the Office, whether to continue or revise the 2013 Agreement, negotiate a new agreement, or take other necessary action in recognition of the ILO’s mandate. For that purpose it requested the Office to submit this document for information at its 329th Session on any significant developments relating to the matter.
2. The Governing Body has twice extended the pilot implementation of the Agreement due to unrelated delays in the ISO process of drafting ISO 45001. The collaboration had raised concerns about the cost-effectiveness of the ILO’s participation as well as uncertainty as to whether the final version of ISO 45001 would respect and support the provisions of international labour standards.
3. While no notable progress has occurred in relation to the systematic issues arising in the implementation of the Agreement described in the last report,¹ the ISO drafting process resulted in a revised version of the ISO Draft International Standard (DIS) of ISO 45001 on occupational health and safety management systems, completed in early February 2017. Since the last report, the ILO participated in the extensive review of the draft standard in the light of the remaining 3,000 comments, which was conducted by the Working Group of the ISO Project Committee 283 (ISO/PC 283) in meetings held in Austria, Denmark and Lithuania which replaced the full Project Committee meeting expected for early 2017.
4. The drafting process since the Toronto plenary PC meeting in June 2016 has continued to raise a number of fundamental issues involving worker participation on which the ILO provided input. Further to the last report (paras 9–10), the measured positive outcomes from the Toronto meeting have remained in the ISO standard. However, references to workers’ roles in “participation” and “consultation” are now inconsistent across the text. A change to the definitions of “participation” and “consultation” deleted references to workers to avoid duplication with certain references in the text to “participation of workers” and “consultation with workers”. Nonetheless, in several other places in the text that refer solely to “participation” or “consultation”, a reference to “workers” was not added, therefore leaving unclear whose participation and consultation is being referenced in those instances. In relation to training at no cost to workers, the ILO’s renewed request to add a requirement in the standard was not accepted; only a non-binding note on the subject remains in the text and a reference in the annex. The issue of ensuring that outsourced processes subject to the organization’s occupational health and safety management system avoid arrangements outside the formal economy remains pending. Since the last report, significant revisions to the annex, which serves a guidance function, resulted in new emphases on worker representatives’ inputs in determining the needs and expectations of the organization, and on top management encouraging workers to report hazardous situations and protecting them from reprisals.
5. At its last meeting, the Working Group submitted the text for ISO editing. In the light of the significant textual changes in past ISO editing processes, including on ILO issues, the ILO supported the request of a number of Working Group members for an opportunity to review and comment on the edited text, with comments taken into consideration before the

¹ For details, see [GB.328/INS/13](#), paras 3 and 4.

DIS-2 edited version is circulated for ballot. The Committee leadership (United Kingdom and Denmark) noted the request and undertook to do so if time permitted.

6. Once edited, the revised version of the DIS (“DIS-2”) is expected to be submitted in early summer for a three-month vote among ISO members on whether to accept the DIS-2 for publication as an ISO International Standard. The ILO–ISO Agreement allows for ILO high-level comments to be annexed to the ballot materials on the relevant DIS. Such ILO comments, which are consulted with constituents before submission, may again assist the ISO member bodies to understand how the revised DIS relates to relevant provisions of international labour standards and related ILO action.
7. As a result of these developments, the ISO timeline for drafting ISO 45001 is again running later than expected. A meeting of the PC is set for September 2017 in Malaysia. If the DIS-2 vote is affirmed with limited comments on textual changes needed, the September PC meeting will be expected to resolve those comments and approve the text for translation and publication. If the vote is affirmative but subject to significant substantive comments on the text, or if it is negative, the September PC meeting will need to resolve the comments submitted and prepare a Final Draft International Standard (FDIS) for vote among all ISO members on whether to accept the FDIS for publication as ISO 45001. Such a vote would likely be held before the end of 2017. In that event, it is proposed that the Office provide another document for information on any significant developments to the 331st Session before submitting the final report, most likely to the Governing Body’s 332nd Session in March 2018, in accordance with the decision taken at its 328th Session.

Geneva, 9 March 2017