

OPERATING PROCEDURES FOR ACCREDITED STANDARDS COMMITTEE O5

Maintained by AWWPA

AWPA serves as the Secretariat for Accredited Standards Committee O5 (ASC O5). This Procedural Annex to AWWPA's Technical Committee Regulations contains mandatory operating procedures specific to ASC O5. This Annex is for the purpose of AWWPA's role as ASC O5 Secretariat and does not apply to AWWPA's Technical Committees. This document is not an AWWPA Standard.

Revisions were made by the AWWPA Executive Committee on August 13, 2019 to ensure continued compliance with ANSI's Essential Requirements. This Procedural Annex was approved by the American National Standards Institute effective August 21, 2019.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction	7.5 Voting Period
2. Organization	7.6 Approved Actions
2.1 Forums and Committees	7.7 Reporting Votes
2.2 Secretariat	7.8 Negative Votes Without Reasons
2.3 Records	8. Consideration of Views and Objectives
2.4 Membership	8.1 Resolution and Disposition
2.5 Interest Categories	8.2 Negative Voter/Objector Response
2.6 Membership Roster	8.3 Recirculation Ballot
2.7 Leadership	8.4 Notification of Unresolved Negative Voters or Objectors
2.7.1 Chair and Vice Chair of ASC O5	9. Consideration of Unrelated Comments Received on a Letter Ballot
2.7.1.1 Terms and Limitations	10. Interpretations
2.7.2 Co-Chairs of a Committee	11. Metric Policy
2.7.2.1 Terms and Limitations	12. Commercial Terms and Conditions Policy
2.7.3 Leader(s) of Task Group	13. Antitrust Policy
2.7.3.1 Terms and Limitations	14. Public Review and Comment
2.7.4 Exception to Leadership Term Limits	15. Intellectual Property Rights Policy
2.8 Election of Leadership	15.1 General Policy Statement
2.8.1 Announcement of Election of Leadership Positions	15.2 Confidentiality
2.8.2 Nominations	15.3 Copyright
2.8.3 Elections	15.3.1 Copyright Policy
3. Meetings	15.3.2 AWWPA Deliverables
3.1 Frequency	15.3.3 Notice
3.2 Notifications	15.4 Patents
3.3 Open Meetings	16. Correspondence
3.4 Quorum	16.1 Committee Correspondence
3.5 Meeting Notes	16.2 External Correspondence
3.5.1 Meeting Note Content	17. Appeals
3.6 Parliamentary Procedures	17.1 Complaint
4. Notification of Standards Development	17.2 Response
5. Discontinuance of a Standards Project; Withdrawal of Standards	17.3 Appeals Panel and Hearing
5.1 Discontinuance	17.4 Conduct of the Hearing
5.2 Withdrawal	17.5 Decision
6. Substantive Change	18. Revisions to Procedures
7. Voting Procedures for Letter Ballots	
7.1 Letter Ballots	
7.2 Voting	
7.3 Voting Rights	
7.4 Proxies	

1 INTRODUCTION

These Operating Procedures describe the Accredited Standards Committee O5 (“ASC O5” or “Committee”) procedures to conduct the activities of the Committee and develop American National Standards (“American National Standards” or “Standards”). Where these Operating Procedures are silent on an issue, the American National Standards Institute’s (“ANSI”) Essential Requirements shall serve as the precedent document.

2 ORGANIZATION

2.1 Forums and Committees

ASC O5 shall be responsible for developing and maintaining Standards that fall within the scope of these procedures. When necessary, ASC O5 may form Committees that shall report back to the Committee. ASC O5 may delegate approval authority to a subtending Committee. Task Groups may be created by the Committee to accomplish a definite objective, usually within a defined period of time (typically no more than one year). Task Groups shall be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure the need for each Task Group. The Committee shall operate in a manner consistent with operating principles and procedures found herein.

2.2 Secretariat

AWPA shall be the Secretariat for the Committee operating in accordance with these procedures. The Secretariat shall:

Organize the Committee; Oversee compliance with these procedures, including legal review as necessary; Apply for accreditation by ANSI and maintain accreditation in accordance with ANSI requirements; Maintain rosters of the Committee, Committees, and Task Groups; Submit standards approved by the Committee with supporting documentation for ANSI review and approval as American National Standards; Ensure adherence to periodic maintenance of Standards; Maintain all records pertaining to the Committee; Provide administrative support, and secretarial services as necessary, for the Committee; Publish approved Standards and revisions thereto; and Perform other functions as required.

2.3 Records

Material associated with the development of a Standard (including reaffirmations and withdrawals) shall be retained for one complete Standards cycle, or until the Standard is revised. Records regarding the withdrawal of all Standards shall be retained for at least five years from the date of withdrawal.

2.4 Membership

The membership of ASC O5 shall be composed of entities that are materially or directly affected by the work conducted within the Committee. A member in good standing shall be allowed to vote on all issues brought before the Committee and/or Committees (as applicable), have access to password protected documents on the ASC O5 website, be eligible for leadership positions, and other privileges as determined by the Committee. Each member in good standing is entitled to a voting representative and an alternate.

Members are expected to actively participate in Committee meetings and letter ballots. Failure to attend two consecutive meetings or failure to participate in two consecutive ballots

shall require a written notice from the Secretariat explaining that active participation is expected. Failure to attend three consecutive meetings or failure to participate in three consecutive ballots shall require a written warning from the Secretariat and a suspension from membership in good standing. Failure to attend four consecutive meetings or failure to participate in four consecutive ballots shall require termination of membership with written notice from the Secretariat.

A member in good standing is defined as any materially or directly affected entity that participates in the Committee and pays dues and fees as assessed by the ASC O5 Secretariat to offset ASC O5 expenses.

Reasonable dues and fees directly relating to the support provided to, and the activities of, ASC O5 shall be assessed by the ASC O5 Secretariat with the approval of ASC O5. The annual budget is presented to the ASC O5 members and dues are required from each ASC O5 member, with additional voluntary contributions collected to offset dues and expenses. If a materially affected participant experiences a hardship or lacks the financial resources to participate, such participant shall send a request in writing to the Secretariat requesting a reduction or waiver of dues, explaining the reason for the request. The Secretariat is authorized to determine the amount of dues, or to waive the dues, for that participant, on an annual, case-by-case basis, and respond to the participant in writing as to its decision.

The membership of ASC O5 shall be sufficiently diverse to ensure reasonable balance without dominance by any single interest category, individual, or organization. Unless it is claimed by a directly and materially affected party that a single interest category dominated the standards development process, no test for dominance is required. ASC O5, however, strives to assure that any single interest category does not constitute a majority of the membership of the formulating group dealing with Standards. If the committee is found lacking in balance, participants from underrepresented interest groups shall be sought through outreach via mailings, website postings, or other announcements.

Members who are from the same entity are permitted to have more than one voting representatives in ASC O5 on condition that: 1) each voting representative is from a separate Interest Category as defined in Section 2.5; and 2) each voting representative has met all of the requirements for being a member in good standing. No entity shall have more than one vote per Interest Category.

2.5 Interest Categories

For purposes of developing an American National Standard, all entities declare their Interest Category as either Producers, Users or General Interest representatives in accordance with the definitions below. An individual in professional practice or a consultant, retained under an agreement indefinitely continuing with an organization, shall be classified in accordance with the classification of the organization retaining the individual and shall be so identified. An entity, individual in professional practice and consultant may change their Interest Category at any time by notifying the ASC O5 Secretariat in writing.

2.5.1 Producers:

A producer or seller of wood poles/products

2.5.2 Consumers:

A user of wood poles/products

2.5.3 General Interest:

Government agencies, consulting, academia, testing laboratories, inspection, and rules-writing organizations, etc.

2.6 Membership Roster

The Secretariat shall prepare and maintain a membership roster documenting the classification of each member.

2.7 Leadership**2.7.1 Chair and Vice Chair of ASC O5**

The Chair and Vice Chair preside over the Committee and have, at a minimum, the responsibility to ensure that these Operating Procedures are followed and that meetings are conducted in a fair and efficient manner. The Chair and Vice Chair should remain neutral in all discussions and should not influence the disposition of issues and events based on his/her leadership position. The Committee may agree by consensus to select two Co-Chairs rather than a Chair and Vice Chair where work area, responsibilities, and available resources require a split of the leadership authority.

2.7.1.1 Terms and Limitations

The Chair and Vice Chair (or Co-Chairs) are elected by the Committee, in accordance with Section 2.8 of these Operating Procedures. Each Chair and Vice Chair (or Co-Chair) shall serve two years in his/her position, with a limit of two consecutive terms. Candidates shall come from the Committee participants and should have previous Committee and industry experience. Should no qualified Committee member choose to seek the position of Chair or Vice Chair, the leadership may serve additional terms if elected by the Committee.

2.7.2 Co-Chairs of a Committee

Co-Chairs preside over each meeting of a Committee and have, at a minimum, the responsibility to ensure that these Operating Procedures are followed and that meetings are conducted in a fair and efficient manner. The Co-Chairs should remain neutral in all discussions and should not influence the disposition of issues and events based on his/her leadership position. A Committee may agree by consensus to select a Chair and Vice Chair rather than Co-Chairs where work area, responsibilities, and available resources require.

2.7.2.1 Terms and Limitations

The Co-Chairs (or Chair and Vice Chair) are elected by the Committee, unless delegated by the Committee to the subtending Committee, in accordance with Section 2.8 of these Operating Procedures. Each Co-Chair (or Chair and Vice Chair) shall serve two years in his/her position, with a two consecutive term limitation. Candidates should come from the Committee participants and should have previous Committee and industry experience. Should no qualified Committee member choose to seek the position of Co-Chair, the leadership may serve additional terms if elected by the Committee.

2.7.3 Leader(s) of Task Group

The leadership of a Task Group may be elected in accordance

with Section 2.8 of these Operating Procedures, or appointed by the Committee.

2.7.3.1 Terms and Limitations

The term of a leader of a Task Group is for the life of the Task Group or one year, whichever is longer. The Task Group leadership position shall be reviewed by the Committee on a yearly basis when reviewing the need for the continuation of the Task Group.

2.7.4 Exception to Leadership Term Limits

If, after the announcement of an election and the solicitation of nominations pursuant to Sections 2.8 and 2.8.1 of these Operating Procedures, there are no candidates for a Chair or Vice Chair position in ASC O5 or a chair or co-chair to a committee, the existing leader(s) may continue to serve as the “acting” leader(s) for up to one (1) year. During this one (1) year period, an election will be held if a nomination for this leadership position is received. If no nominations are received during this year, the “acting” leader may be nominated to serve as leader and shall be eligible to serve up to two (2) consecutive terms as described above in Sections 2.7.1.1 and 2.7.2.1.

2.8 Election of Leadership

Committee, Subtending Committee, and Task Group (where not appointed) leadership elections will follow the general guidelines below:

2.8.1 Announcement of Election of Leadership Position(s)

All leadership elections should be announced at the meeting prior to the election, but must be announced at least 30 calendar days in advance of the election. The election announcement shall be distributed by e-mail exploder to the relevant electing body.

2.8.2 Nominations

Nominations shall be solicited from the appropriate electing body following an election announcement. Nominations shall also be sought from the floor at the time of the election where an election is conducted at a duly called meeting.

2.8.3 Elections

The election of leadership at a meeting is by secret ballot, unless there is one candidate in which case the election may be by acclamation. The election of leadership is by a simple majority of those members in good standing and present at the time of election; each has one vote. For purposes of determining the simple majority, abstentions or invalid ballots are not counted. If there are multiple candidates and no one candidate receives a simple majority on the first ballot, a second ballot is held between the top two vote-receiving candidates. Proxies are not permitted, unless a quorum requirement is invoked as provided for in Section 3.4 of these Operating Procedures.

Elections outside a duly called meeting may be held via electronic mail or other forms of electronic balloting. In order for a valid election to have occurred via electronic means, at least one half of the members must vote in the election. The election of leadership is by a simple majority of those members who voted; each member has only one vote. A minimum of 10 business days must be allowed for a member to vote via electronic means.

3 MEETINGS

3.1 Frequency

ASC O5 will meet to develop American National Standards and/or to conduct relevant Committee business on an as-needed basis. ASC O5 will meet for a minimum of two times per year in a combination of face-to-face and/or virtual meetings.

3.2 Notification

Where possible, all face-to-face meetings shall be announced via the e-mail exploder and posted to the ASC O5 website no less than four (4) weeks prior to the meeting date. All other meetings, including virtual meetings and conference calls, should be announced via the e-mail exploder and posted to the ASC O5 website no less than two (2) weeks prior to the meeting date. Special exceptions for extraordinary circumstances may be made on an as-needed basis. When an exception for extraordinary circumstances is necessary, the ASC O5 Leadership will announce the meeting as soon as practicable. A draft agenda shall be prepared and distributed with any meeting notice.

3.3 Open Meetings

All meetings shall be open and attendance by any interested party shall be welcome, subject to any relevant membership requirement (e.g., regarding registration, meeting fee if required, etc.). Non-Committee members shall not have the right to vote.

3.4 Quorum

One-third of the members shall constitute a quorum for conducting business at a meeting. Proxies are not permitted unless a quorum requirement is invoked. Proxies are counted only in determining whether a quorum requirement is met. If a quorum is not present, actions on agenda items may be taken but shall be subject to ratification by the Committee.

3.5 Meeting Notes

ASC O5 shall publish fair, objective, and unbiased meeting notes developed by consensus and ensure that those notes accurately reflect the activities, resolutions, and action items that result from meetings. All meeting notes shall be published in a timely manner.

3.5.1 Meeting Note Content

Meeting notes shall include at a minimum:

Date(s), type of meeting (i.e., virtual meeting, conference call, face-to-face), leadership, person taking the notes;

Attendance list;

Approved agenda;

Identification of issues discussed at the meeting and their status;

A notation of corrections/additions made to a previous meeting record;

Points noted/alternatives discussed including opposing viewpoints;

Agreements reached;

Action items indicating responsible party and due date;

Participants' contributions or similar documents or, a reference to where those documents are available on the ASC O5 website; and

Copies of presentations made during the meeting or, a

reference to where the presentations are available on the ASC O5 website.

3.6 Parliamentary Procedures

For any procedural issues not covered under these procedures, Robert's Rules of Order (Revised) shall apply on questions of parliamentary procedure.

4 NOTIFICATION OF STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT

Notification of Standards activity shall be announced in suitable media as appropriate to demonstrate provision of opportunity for participation by all directly and materially affected persons. Standards development activity is considered to begin when a majority of members present at a meeting of the committee vote to initiate the process of developing a new standard or to revise, reaffirm, or withdraw a current standard. After this initiation of a project to develop or revise a Standard, notification shall be transmitted to ANSI using the Project Initiation Notification System (PINS) form, or its equivalent, for listing in Standards Action. A PINS form may be submitted, but is not required, at the initiation of a project to reaffirm or withdraw a Standard. Any comments resulting from the filing of the PINS shall be addressed in accordance with clause 2.5 of the most recent edition of the ANSI Essential Requirements.

5 DISCONTINUANCE OF A STANDARDS PROJECT; WITHDRAWAL OF STANDARDS

5.1 Discontinuance

ASC O5 may discontinue the processing of a proposed new, reaffirmed, or revised American National Standard or portion thereof. ANSI shall be notified if a PINS or BSR-8 has been submitted for the project. A written justification for such an action shall be made available upon receipt of any written request received by ASC O5 within 60 days of the date of the final action.

5.2 Withdrawal

Under some circumstances, it may be necessary for the Secretariat to withdraw an approved standard for reasons including, but not limited to safety, antitrust, or other legal concerns. If it determines withdrawal is necessary, the Secretariat is authorized to withdraw ASC O5 standards without ASC O5 approval.

6 SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE

A substantive change in a Standard is one that directly and materially affects the use of the Standard. Examples of substantive changes are below:

“shall” to “should” or “should” to “shall”; the addition, deletion or revision of requirements, regardless of the number of changes; or the addition of mandatory compliance with referenced standards.

7 VOTING PROCEDURES FOR LETTER BALLOTS

7.1 Letter Ballots

Documentation associated with American National Standards will undergo the letter ballot process. New standards, reaffirmations, withdrawals and revisions with substantive

changes to current standards, as well as interpretations of all Standards, shall be approved by letter ballot of ASC O5.

Editorial changes to Standards may be decided by a majority of the members present at a regularly scheduled meeting of the Committee or by letter ballot.

7.2 Voting

Each member shall vote one of the following positions on letter ballots:

- Affirmative;
- Affirmative with comment;
- Negative, with reasons (If possible, the negative ballot shall include specific wording or actions that will resolve the negative.); or
- Abstain.

7.3 Voting Rights

The member's voting representative(s) shall ordinarily cast that member's vote. The member's voting alternate (s) shall cast that member's vote only if the member's voting representative fails to vote. In the event that the member's representative and alternate representative submit votes, only the member representative's vote shall be counted.

7.4 Proxies

Proxies are not permitted.

7.5 Voting Period

The closure date for letter ballots shall be at least 30 days from the date of the issuance of the ballots. ASC O5 Secretariat shall be authorized to grant an extension of the voting period if deemed necessary. Additionally, ASC O5 Secretariat will provide members who have not voted with follow-up notifications approximately 10 days prior to the closing of the letter ballot.

7.6 Approved Actions

Approvals of new standards, reaffirmations, withdrawals and revisions with substantive changes to current standards, as well as interpretations of all Standards, shall be considered approved when all of the following conditions have been met:

- At least 50 percent of the members have returned their letter ballot;
- At least 75 percent of the votes cast, excluding abstentions and negatives without reasons, are affirmative; and
- All negative votes with reasons have been addressed in accordance with Section 8.

7.7 Reporting Votes

The results of each vote on all Standards shall be reported to ANSI on the BSR-9 form as follows:

Number of members;
Number of members voting affirmatively;
Number of members voting negatively with reasons;
Number of members voting negatively without reasons;
Number of members abstaining; and
Number of members not returning ballots.

7.8 Negative Votes Without Reasons

A negative ballot shall be required to be accompanied by a reason. A negative ballot not supported by a reason is not required to be recirculated but is recorded as a negative without reason and shall be counted as returned for the purpose of establishing a quorum.

8 CONSIDERATION OF VIEWS AND OBJECTIVES

ASC O5 shall use the following procedures in attempting to resolve negative votes and public objections:

8.1 Resolution and Disposition

All negative ballots with reasons and public objections will be considered by ASC O5 for response and resolution. ASC O5 will draft the response. Negative ballots and objections may be judged as valid, invalid or nongermane. Valid negative votes or objections may result in substantive or editorial revisions. Only substantive revisions are subject to recirculation.

8.2 Negative Voter/Objector Response

The committee's response to all negative ballots with reasons and public objections (whether valid, invalid, or nongermane) shall be comprehensive and provided in writing with reasons therefore to the negative voter or to the objector. The negative voter or objector is permitted to change their negative vote or withdraw their objection in writing within 15 calendar days. If the negative vote is not changed or the objection is not withdrawn, these negative votes and or objections will proceed to recirculation.

8.3 Recirculation Ballot

All unresolved negative ballots and public objections and the committee's responses and reasons therefore will be submitted to ASC O5 along with any substantive changes via recirculation ballot to give all members of ASC O5 the opportunity to respond, reaffirm, or change their vote. The recirculation ballot shall be open for a period of 15 days. All substantive changes shall be submitted to ANSI via the BSR-8 for further public review.

8.4 Notification of Unresolved Negative Voters or Objectors

Voting members or public review participants who have unresolved negative votes or objections shall be notified in writing of their right to appeal and of the appeals process.

9 CONSIDERATION OF UNRELATED COMMENTS RECEIVED ON A LETTER BALLOT

Upon receipt of comments on a letter ballot or public review comments that are outside the scope of the problem under consideration, the ASC O5 Secretariat will work with ASC O5 Leadership to ensure that the comments are brought forth as a new item for consideration at the next meeting of the ASC O5, with notification to each person submitting unrelated comments regarding consideration of the new item. It will be noted on the Comment Consideration Report that these comments will be brought forth to the committee at its next session.

10 INTERPRETATIONS

10.1 Processing Interpretations

Requests for interpretations of Standards shall be submitted in writing to the Secretariat and shall be forwarded by the Secretariat to Committee Leadership. Proposed interpretations may be prepared by any Committee member with particular expertise on the subject in question. All proposed interpretations shall be prepared in writing and shall be submitted to the Secretariat for a letter ballot of the

Committee. Interpretations shall be approved in accordance with section 7.

10.2 Notification of Interpretations

Notification of approved interpretations shall be sent in writing to the requester. Notification shall also be given to other users of the Standards via the appropriate Committee e-mail exploder list(s) and posted on the ASC O5 website.

11 METRIC POLICY

In accordance with 3.4 of the ANSI Essential Requirements, ASC O5 accepts ANSI's Metric Policy which states that, "Units of the International System of Units (SI), the modernized metric system, are the preferred units of measurement in American National Standards." While SI units are preferred, either SI units or Imperial units may be used as the primary unit of measure in the O5 Standards.

12 COMMERCIAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS POLICY

The ANSI Commercial Terms and Conditions Policy, as outlined in Section 3.2 of the ANSI Essential Requirements, is hereby adopted.

13 ANTITRUST POLICY

The ANSI Antitrust Policy, as outlined in Section 3.3 of the ANSI Essential Requirements, is hereby adopted.

14 PUBLIC REVIEW AND COMMENT

Proposals for new Standards or reaffirmation, revision, or withdrawal of existing Standards shall be transmitted to ANSI for listing in *Standards Action* for comment. The Secretariat shall determine whether listing of proposed standards actions shall be concurrent with the final committee letter ballot and whether announcement in other suitable media is appropriate. If requested by an interested party, a period of at least 60 days shall be allowed for the submission of public comments. In this case, the deadline for comments shall be established by the Secretariat to ensure a minimum 60-day public comment period. All public comments objecting to the new standard or reaffirmation, revision, or withdrawal of an existing standard that are received shall be considered by the Committee pursuant to Section 8, and the commenter shall be notified, in writing, of the Committee's decision/response and reasons therefore.

15 INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS POLICY

15.1 General Policy Statement

In all matters of intellectual property rights, it is the intention of ASC O5 and the Secretariat to benefit the public while respecting the legitimate rights of intellectual property owners.

15.2 Confidentiality

As a general rule, neither ASC O5 nor the Secretariat shall consider any contributions, presentations, or other documentation that is subject to any requirement of confidentiality or any restriction on dissemination. Neither ASC O5 nor the Secretariat assume any obligations of confidentiality with respect to any contribution, presentation,

documentation, or other submissions. Exceptions to the general rule are determined on a case-by-case basis by the Committee Leadership in conjunction with AWPAs and are only appropriate where the work cannot be accomplished through other means. Prior to the distribution or discussion of any materials accorded exception status and considered as confidential or otherwise restricted, full disclosure of the status must be made to the Committee.

15.3 Copyright

15.3.1 Copyright Policy

In order that AWPAs may facilitate, promote, and disseminate the work of ASC O5, it is necessary that each contributor grant AWPAs the rights necessary to adapt, copy, and publicly distribute any contribution or submittal made to ASC O5. In accordance with this policy, each contribution or document submitted is subject to an unlimited perpetual, non-exclusive, royalty-free, world-wide right and license to AWPAs of any copyrights in such contribution. This license includes the right to copy, publish, and distribute the contribution in any way, and to prepare derivative works that are based on or incorporate all or part of the contribution, the license to such derivative works to be of the same scope as the license of the original contribution.

15.3.2 AWPAs Deliverables

All ASC O5 guidelines, standards, and other deliverables are copyrighted by AWPAs. Except as expressly permitted by AWPAs, no ASC O5 guideline, standard, or other deliverable, or any portion thereof, may be reproduced or distributed in any form, without the prior express written permission of AWPAs.

15.3.3 Notice

The following copyright notice shall be included in all ASC O5 guidelines, standards, or other deliverables:

"Copyright © AWPAs [date of publication]. All Rights Reserved."

15.4 Patents

ASC O5 has adopted the ANSI Patent Policy, as outlined in section 3.1 of the ANSI Essential Requirements.

16 CORRESPONDENCE

16.1 Committee Correspondence

Correspondence from a Committee member to the entire membership of the Committee shall be forwarded to the Secretariat for screening and distribution. All official Committee correspondence, including meeting notices, agendas, reports, and letter ballots, shall be distributed by the Secretariat. Copies of all other correspondence between Committee members, relating to ASC O5 Standards activities, shall be forwarded to the Secretariat.

16.2 External Correspondence

All official Committee correspondence to external parties must be approved by the Committee or its delegated representative and distributed by the Secretariat. Inquiries relating to the Committee and Standards shall be directed to the Secretariat. Committee members should advise individuals who contact them that responses to all inquiries are handled by the Secretariat.

17 APPEALS**17.1 Complaint**

Persons who have been or may be affected by any Committee action or inaction shall have the right to appeal such action or inaction. Appeals are limited to allegations of procedural defect. The appellant shall file a written complaint with the Secretariat within 30 days after the date of notification of any action, or at any time with respect to inaction. The complaint shall state the nature of the objection, the procedures that are at issue, the action or inaction at issue, and the specific remedial action(s) that would satisfy the appellant's concerns.

Previous efforts to resolve the objections and the outcome of each shall be noted.

17.2 Response

Within 30 days after the receipt of the complaint, the Secretariat shall respond in writing to the appellant, specifically addressing each allegation in the complaint to the extent possible. The Secretariat shall attempt to resolve, informally, the complaint of the appellant.

17.3 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 15 working 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 appellant and at least two shall be acceptable to the Secretariat.

17.4 Conduct of the Hearing

The appellant has the responsibility of demonstrating improper action or inaction, the adverse effects there from, and the efficacy of the requested remedial action. The Secretariat has the responsibility to demonstrate that the Committee took all actions in question in compliance with these procedures.

17.5 Decision

The appeals panel shall render its decision in writing within 30 days of the hearing, based upon a preponderance of the evidence, stating its findings of fact and conclusions with reasons therefore, and citing the evidence. The Secretariat shall notify the appellant and the Committee of the decision of the appeals panel in writing, which shall be binding and final on all concerned.

18 REVISIONS TO PROCEDURES

These Operating Procedures are maintained by AWPA. Proposed revisions to these Operating Procedures may be submitted in writing by any ASC O5 Member to AWPA along with the supporting rationale for the proposed change. AWPA will review the proposed revisions and present them to the ASC O5 members for review and consideration. If substantive changes are made, the revised procedures are then submitted to ANSI for public comment, and ANSI review and approval. Any approved revisions to these Operating Procedures shall be effective upon publication. The Secretariat shall be responsible for the interpretation of these Operating Procedures