

**INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR  
STANDARDS AND CONSUMER EXPECTATIONS  
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SESSION 1 International experience

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Dear ladies and gentlemen.

I am happy to be here at this seminar and I am looking forward to our discussions during the day.

Picture 1

Norwegian consumers expect standards to give safe products and services with good quality and with sustainable aspects included such as environment and "design for all".

But who make sure they do?

Certainly not the industry alone.

Consumer representatives need to be involved in the standard making process, from start to end, to make sure that consumer requirements are included. Consumers can really make a difference by attending the consensus process. And a mixed group of experts is necessary to identify all aspects on a subject.

Picture 2

There are different levels of involvement in standardisation (as shown on this slide) depending on time/cost and what you would like to achieve:

- Policy level
- Delegate at TC-meetings
- Working-group
- National mirror committee
- ANEC working group
- Watching and commenting

Picture 3

Norwegian consumer organisations are well represented in committees at the national level. This table shows the degree of involvement from the Norwegian consumers at national, European (CEN) and global (ISO) level. The number of representatives decreases the further you move from Norway. Our challenge is to increase the interest among consumers to join international committee work.

#### Picture 4

Standards Norway is a private, independent, non-profit organization of standardisation and is the national member of CEN and ISO. Our role is to ensure Norwegian participation in important areas industry, authorities and consumers. We appoint delegates and organize national mirror committees following the international work. We also make national standards – especially in the building area.

Consumers have always been an important part of our work and in 2005 we established a consumer board and a consumer secretariat inside our organisation. The secretariat is financially supported by the Ministry of consumers and family affairs (50 %), The Norwegian consumer council (25%) and Standards Norway (25 %). It is organized as a project and counts 750 hours per year. The role is to inform about relevant consumer projects, get the different consumers organizations involved and to teach them about the process. Last year the Ministry of consumers and family affairs started to fund travel costs for consumer representatives as well, approximately 50.000 NOK (= 6.000 EUR) each year. This is important to be able to increase the international involvement. Because of this we have a Norwegian expert in the ISO 26000 committee on social responsibility, ISO/COPOLCO and in a CEN committee on textiles.

#### Picture 5

Important tasks for the consumer organizations is to

- Choose the relevant projects (what is important and what is on the agenda)
- Decide the level of involvement (CEN or ISO WG or national mirror committee? )
- Think in the long term (2-10 years)
- Be patient (sometimes only a small part of a standard is important)
- Be prepared at the meetings and give input before and during meetings

#### Picture 6

Standards Norway have had the pleasure to participate in a project led by the Czech Consumer Association during the last year. The aim of the project has been to create and develop a Czech model of consumer participation in standardisation. Mr. Libor Dupal will tell you more about that later today. We have had two meetings, one in Prague and one in Oslo to try to understand our different challenges and to develop a guide (handbook). And it has really been a two-way dialogue where we have learned a lot both of us. Even though this first project has reached an end, I am looking forward to follow up and continue our cooperation.

Thank you very much.