



## CONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE JOINT MEETING OF THE COPOLCO WORKING GROUPS ON CONSUMER PARTICIPATION AND TRAINING

ISO Central Secretariat, Geneva – 27 October 2011

---

**Co-Chairs:** Ms. Anne Ferguson (BSI – UK) Co-chair Consumer Participation WG  
Ms. Caroline Warne (BSI – UK) Co-chair Training Group

**Members:** Ms. Karin Both (DIN – Germany)  
Ms. Sondra Bruni (SCC – Canada)  
Mr. Bill Dee (SA – Australia)  
Mr. Libor Dupal (UNMZ – Czech Republic)  
Ms. Robyn Easton (SA – Australia)  
Ms. Benedicte Federspiel (DS – Denmark)  
Mr. John Furbank (SA – Australia)  
Mr. Jay Jackson (SCC – Canada)  
Prof. Sri Ram Khanna (BIS – India)  
Mr. Darryl Kingston (SCC – Canada)  
Ms. Norma McCormick (SCC – Canada)  
Mr. Takashi Nakakuki (JISC – Japan)  
Mr. Rémi Reuss (AFNOR – France)  
Ms. Ashwini Sharma (SA – Australia)

**ISO CS:** Ms. Dana Kissinger-Matray, Secretary of COPOLCO  
Ms. Micheline Le Breton, COPOLCO Secretariat

**Apologies:** Ms. Ratna Devi Nadarajan (DSM – Malaysia)  
Ms. Jai Ok Kim (KATS – Rep. of Korea)  
Mr. Robert Duncombe (SNV – Switzerland)  
Ms. Sadie Homer (CI)  
Ms. Maria Leiva (ICONTEC – Colombia)  
Mr. Guillermo Zucal (IRAM – Argentina)

---

### 1 Introductory remarks and adoption of the agenda

Anne Ferguson, also on behalf of Caroline Warne, welcomed the participants. She opened the meeting and invited participants to identify themselves and their role, in relation to the standards body and consumer association.

Takashi Nakakuki reported that the biggest challenge in Japan was to interest consumer organizations in standards beyond the scope of product safety standards.

Rémi Reuss is Secretary of a consumer committee within AFNOR, composed of representatives from consumer organizations. Most activity is in the mirror committee because most do not speak English.

Karin Both is a staff person at DIN but is Secretary of the DIN Consumer Council. A government ministry pays most of her salary.

Libor Dupal described the standardization "Cabinet" supported by UNMZ, a model of consumer participation, which is generating interest from other COPOLCO members.

Sondra Bruni is a consumer representative and volunteer engaged with SCC's work.

Jay Jackson is a senior policy analyst with the Office of Consumer Affairs, a Branch of Canada's federal Department of Industry. He works with standards and regulatory agencies in Canada to promote consumer interests in public policy. He is also the OECD Committee on Consumer Policy delegated liaison person to ISO COPOLCO.

Darryl Kingston is a staff person coordinating input to ISO and IEC, within Standards Council of Canada which is undergoing restructuring. He mentioned funding for consumer participation as a challenge.

Ashwini Sharma is a Project Management Team Leader at Standards Australia. She has a number of operational responsibilities including the Consumer sector.

SA provides the following support for consumer engagement for Standards development:

1. Funding for consumer attendance and engagement for standards development.
2. On line premium service subscription for downloading Australian and joint Australian/New Zealand standards funded jointly by Standards Australia and SAI Global
3. Establishment of a national fora for consumers to raise standards development issues impacting consumers.
4. Allocation of a National Sector Manager for consumer products and services.

John Furbank represents the Consumers Federation of Australia (CFA). CFA noted that Standards Australia provided funding support to CFA to engage one part-time staff who organizes representatives on different standards committees and representatives' attendance at technical committee meetings.

Robyn Easton comes from the Consumer's Federation of Australia, through which she participates in 15 committees, including 3 international committees. Funding is the main challenge.

Sri Ram Khanna acts as the consumer representative on the COPOLCO national mirror committee for BIS, which has a number of representatives on different technical committees. Non-BIS staff receive funding support to participate.

Caroline Warne indicated that she chaired the work of volunteers for BSI and then was Chair of COPOLCO (note: from 2002-2006). She has been a volunteer consumer representative since 1983.

In addition to being the present COPOLCO Chair, Norma McCormick chairs the Consumer and Public Interest Panel (CPIP). She participates in three national standards committees and two international committees: the Strategic Advisory Group on Security and the ISO TC 223 on Societal Security. Canadian Standards Association supports her participation in the TC work and SCC supports her participation in COPOLCO.

The Agenda was adopted as proposed.

## **2 Barriers to consumer participation and sharing good practice - Discussion**

Anne Ferguson, convenor of the participation group, gave a presentation (see Annex 1).

The participants noted that mirror committees of COPOLCO play a key role and suggested that some guidelines for running a mirror committee might be useful. The main issue was getting the consumer interests properly engaged and participating actively.

Participants mentioned the following challenges:

- consumer organizations' interests do not overlap with standards work
- language barrier
- funding needs
- recognition of need for government support

- knowledge of how a mirror committee works (get models)
- too few active members of working groups

### **Barriers and possible solutions:**

**Travel costs:** Participants agreed on the need to promote WebEx, the new ISO teleconferencing tool.

*Secretary's note: COPOLCO 50/2011 has since been circulated.*

**Language barrier:** the participants also discussed the possibility of simultaneous interpretation for key meetings, but noted that it was a general issue for ISO. Most international meetings take place in English and are not translated.

### **Low response rates to consultations:**

- 1) Circulate key consultations both to COPOLCO and DEVCO, but not too often. There are more chances of getting a response, but the same NSB might also send two different responses.
- 2) Raise awareness by presenting the issues at meetings (good experience with toy safety).
- 3) The COPOLCO Secretariat is also running the activity of COPOLCO on the ISO TC server and using reminders to reach committee members registered there (more exist here than on ISODOC).
- 4) Make surveys shorter and less complex: otherwise it is sometimes difficult to get a volunteer to fill it in (e.g. the financial services survey was long and complicated). It is also harder to translate into the local languages.
- 5) Specify in the cover letter for respondent to ask regulatory authority to assist in some cases: this was done in the UK and Canada for the financial services survey.

**Low national interest:** promote participation in working groups where issues of concern are dealt with.

The participants noted an update on the Process Evaluation Group of the Technical Management Board. The COPOLCO Secretary reported that early in 2011, the PEG had produced two publications Guidance for national standards bodies – Engaging stakeholders and building consensus, with a similar publication for liaison organizations, (see [http://www.iso.org/iso/guidance\\_nsb.pdf](http://www.iso.org/iso/guidance_nsb.pdf)). These had been circulated to all of the ISO members and the liaison organizations at the time. However, very few of the participants had heard of these publications.

The Secretary mentioned that further efforts were under way. In September, the TMB approved a comprehensive report of the PEG emphasizing the long term strategic importance of stakeholder engagement and outlining a series of measures. Notably, in a 2012 update of the Global Directory, there would be an additional field that Member Body User Administrators would fill in, specifying the stakeholder category of the nominated expert. This was an excellent way to identify consumer representatives and other stakeholders. It would be used for especially for standards work where stakeholder participation played a key role.

### **Conclusions of breakout groups:**

The participants broke up into discussion groups to discuss good practices and notable successes and failures. There were two groups; the detailed discussions appear at Annexes 2 and 3 respectively.

The participants agreed that breaking out into discussion groups was a useful exercise. The main areas of focus were on funding and recruitment issues. All agreed it was necessary to make more use of the ISO Directory.

**Recruitment** – the current cohort of consumer representatives is growing older. It is important to engage the next generation of standards developers through various channels: mentoring, universities, engaging in topics of appeal to all ages, use of the Web and social media, raising awareness of issues going beyond the traditional consumer areas of concern (safety and quality of goods and services are taken for granted). Ashwini Sharma noted that Standards Australia has a project whereby a number of initiatives are being considered to encourage engagement from new and younger committee members.

**Funding:** members agreed on the need to solicit government authorities in funding efforts. Without funding it is not possible to get volunteers. A copy of DEVCO's letter on requests for technical assistance, which goes to all developing country members, should also go to the COPOLCO members in order to draw their attention to the availability of technical assistance for consumer issues. Participants also noted that it is not easy to connect the brochure "Developing Talent" to the different sections and areas proposed on the Technical Assistance application form.

**Expert representation:** the participants discussed whether a working group expert represents an individual view or that of the member body. According to ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1: Procedures for the technical work, clause 1.12 Working Group "The experts act in a personal capacity and not as the official representative of the P-member or A-liaison organization by which they have been appointed with the exception of those appointed by D-liaison organizations. However, it is recommended that they keep close contact with that P-member or organization in order to inform them about the progress of the work and of the various opinions in the working group at the earliest possible stage."

**Training:** Universities are a valuable resource to raise awareness of consumer participation in standards. The group will investigate programmes about standards at the University of Geneva; or the University of Guelph (contact: Anne Wilcox [anne@histovet.com](mailto:anne@histovet.com)), and the University of Alberta (contact: Stan Karapetrovic [Stanislav.Karapetrovic@ualberta.ca](mailto:Stanislav.Karapetrovic@ualberta.ca)) to see if they could usefully include such material. Standards Australia reported on a training/capacity building project that involved hosting standards professionals from the National Standards Bodies of Botswana, Ghana, Namibia, Swaziland and Trinidad and Tobago in 2011.

The participants continued the discussion that had taken place in the Priorities Group meeting on 20 October regarding the DEVCO CAG's support for priority areas, of which five were particularly interesting for COPOLCO: ISO/TC 34, *Food products*, TC 207, *Environmental management*, TC 242, *Energy management*, PC 245, *Cross-border trade of second-hand goods*, and PC 241, *Road-traffic safety management systems*.

### 3 Developing Talent

The Co-Chairs of the COPOLCO TG had developed the paper TG 05/2011 as an analysis and discussion paper addressing areas of ISO's Developing Talent activities where there could be scope for addressing consumer involvement. The Co-Chairs were very aware that input was needed from DEVT to inform on the current situation. Beer Budoo, Director of Development and Training services, attended this part of the meeting. The information he provided included details of the about sponsorship activity in DEVT, and more insight into the process of this support programme as well as the range of activities. Information relevant to this and other activities of the CP WG and the TG is summarized below.

Mr. Budoo indicated that 89 requests for technical assistance came in from developing country ISO members. None of them were for assistance with consumer participation. The DEVCO CAG had placed priority on supporting participation at a meeting of ISO PC 245 on second hand goods. A message will be sent announcing support of P members and setting the desired profile for the experts, e.g. representatives from a specialized agency rather than the NSB. It is possible to specify that the nominated representatives be consumer representatives (support is not given to WG leaders who need to have a reliable and ongoing source of funding). This is a full sponsorship and it is competitive.

This type of sponsorship contrasts with ad hoc sponsorships that NSB's can apply for on a one-off basis and which are only partial.

Mr. Budoo mentioned in particular that TC 34 would hold a meeting in Kenya in 2012, and also have a regional training workshop for representatives from African countries. Participants would then attend the PC meeting. ISO TC 223 on societal security was also holding a meeting next year and there would also be support for selected developing country representatives.

The selection criteria for choosing candidates include:

- 1) continuity of participation
- 2) evidence of national activity in that area of standardization
- 3) evidence that they are providing feedback after meeting.

The procedure is to launch invitations through the Technical Committee Secretary and rely on their feedback to see who is available.

Mr. Budoo also announced that ISO had signed a contract with the Erasmus University in Rotterdam to promote standardization in academic programmes through the construction of a database of teaching materials with standardization topics. Guidance on good practice for introducing standardization in curricula is also under development. A workshop will take place in Indonesia in 2012, using these documents.

## 4 Concluding remarks – actions summary

### ACTION POINTS

- 1) Gather case studies from several countries as examples of how consumer involvement can operate; explain existence of similar or different systems (this would build on the case studies already provided in the *Involving consumers* brochure).
- 2) For UK: to consider whether elements from reports could be used for briefings, as happens in AFNOR, and give to representatives on the TC ahead of time.
- 3) Gather information on consumer priority issues in various countries, to feed into COPOLCO priorities. For example, the COPOLCO Chair found out through outreach that Egypt is interested in call centers.
- 4) The COPOLCO Secretary will circulate the Terms of Reference of the COPOLCO Training Group and of the COPOLCO Participation Group to their respective members for comment, particularly with a view to include objectives and key activities, and ask members to indicate intention to be participating or observer members.
- 5) When Technical Assistance letter goes out, also alert the members of COPOLCO. There were no requests specifically for technical assistance with Consumer Participation in the responses to the last letter.
- 6) The Co-Chairs of the TG will, in the light of the information provided by Mr. Budoo and the discussion, develop their paper and circulate it to the TG and CP WG for comment.
- 7) The revision of the DLM will progress after comments have been received from the small Task group in February (an annotated draft was circulated for comment to the Task Group in December). The 'state of play' will be reported by the TG at COPOLCO 2012.
- 8) **Additional action item, jointly with Priorities Group** – The Secretary will send a circular mentioning the list of areas of common interest between DEVCO CAG and COPOLCO. It will ask members to confirm these five areas and suggest additional areas if necessary. This letter will also inform members of the reasons why COPOLCO chose these five areas, and explain the role and expertise of consumer representatives and importance of their participation. It will also check if there is expertise in these areas.

**List of annexes:**

- 1) Anne Ferguson's presentation – attached separately
  - 2) Summary of Breakout Discussion Group 1
  - 3) Summary of Breakout Discussion Group 2
- 

**ANNEX 2 – SUMMARY OF BREAKOUT DISCUSSION GROUP 1**

**United Kingdom:** a Steering Group directs the Consumer and Public Interest Committee

- The two staff of the *BSI Consumer & Public Interest Unit (CPIU)* support the *Consumer & Public Interest Network (CPIN)* of consumer and public interest organizations and individual volunteer *CPI reps*. The latter sit on Technical Committees and Working Groups to put forward the consumer view alongside, or instead of, representatives from specific consumer organizations.
- *Policy, including overall priorities (Inclusivity; Security, Privacy & Identity; Sustainability; Wellbeing, and Services standardization) for the CPIN is agreed at the Consumer & Public Interest Strategic Advisory Committee (CPISAC), which is made up only of representatives from consumer and public interest organizations (including the sponsoring Government department but no other stakeholder groups).*
- *The Chairman of CPISAC also sits as representative of consumer interests on the multi-stakeholder BSI Standards Policy & Strategy Committee (SPSC), the highest committee in BSI which is a sub-committee of the Board of the BSI Group.*
- *Day-to-day priorities, organization of CPI reps, etc. are undertaken by a group of 10 Consumer & Public Interest Coordinators (CPICs), volunteers who receive a small honorarium, supported by the CPIU.*
  - *CPICs meet quarterly in the Consumer & Public Interest Steering Panel.*
  - *CPICs coordinate reps working in their areas (Children's interests, Construction, Design for All, ICT, International, Materials & Healthcare, Manufacturing, Risk & Quality, Services, Sustainability) and*
  - *Liaise with relevant members of BSI staff working in those topic areas.*
- *The work of COPOLCO is mirrored by both the CPIC Steering panel and CPISAC and the role of the CPIC – International (currently Caroline Warne) is to assist two-way communication.*
- *BSI funds the BSI staff and CPICs honoraria. The Government department confusingly called BIS (Department of Business, Innovation and Skills) funds CPI reps travel & subsistence expenses.*

**Canada:** The newly-constituted "Consumer and Public Interest Panel" is made up of Consumers, provincial and federal government representative, and academics. It has funding from SCC. Darryl Kingston is the only paid staff handling consumer interests, and he has other duties. The new panel also acts as mirror committee on both national and international areas.

**Germany:** DIN has appointed the DIN Consumer Council to act as its mirror committee for COPOLCO.  
Important facts:

- Five persons work as volunteers from different consumer organizations, including Stiftung Warentest.
- Eight staff on working on consumer matters, including direct representation on technical committees.
- The Federal Ministry of Food Agriculture and Consumer Protection provides 900K Euros of funding, about 70% of the budget.

- About 60 volunteer consumer reps are directly nominated by Council for certain projects; they have travel expenses paid.
- Travel for staff and representatives costs about 95K Euros per year.
- Research and testing costs 17K per year.
- There are about 180 different projects.

**Czech Republic:** The Czech Office Standards, Metrology and Testing has a board on standardization, with all stakeholders, including consumers. The NSB has no special consultation platform where only consumers are involved. It was felt that because standards are open for everyone and UNMZ publishes plans, anyone can participate and this is already fully democratic. Of course, there are number of barriers for consumers preventing their active and smooth participation in the process.

Lately, UNMZ started to support special projects related to “standardization and consumers”; e.g, within the last three years UNMZ have supported the Czech Consumer Association to coordinate consumers of COPOLCO issues at the national level.

Two years ago the Cabinet for Standardization, a non-profit public service company was established by the Czech Consumer Association; it is backed and acknowledged by other consumer organizations including the disabled community and seniors. The Cabinet was established to channel consumer views and coordinate consumer participation in standardization. All the partners and stakeholders are represented in the Cabinet steering committee. The Czech Consumer Association represents the Czech consumers in ANEC

**France:** Around 15 consumer organizations are involved in standards; 50% of these are on AFNOR's consumer committee, along with representatives of laboratories, agencies and the National Consumer Institute (Rémi Reuss' agency). The group follows COPOLCO work, defines priority areas and nominate experts to interact with NGOs, work with disabled groups on Design for All issues, and communicate with AFNOR's Board. Rémi Reuss spends 50% of his time on consumer issues. The main purpose is to translate consumers' needs into standards work, and alert members to needed areas for consumer input.

Consumer representatives need a good level of expertise, time, and language skills (80% of documents are in English, even for work at the national level). In cases where it is not possible to have a representative the Consumer Committee will write a position paper for submission at meetings.

Funding only covers Rémi Reuss' salary. The Ministry of Industry provides a scheme to help consumers participate at the European and international levels (including COPOLCO). The National Consumer Institute manages a fund which covers the cost of travel and time spent.

**Japan:** the national mirror committee includes representatives of major consumer organizations, testing organizations, disabled persons' organizations, product safety organizations, and the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry. The representatives are interested in safety concerns but less with the wider topics currently being covered in standards.

Funding is from government, which is influenced by consumer organizations to provide it. The concern is that if consumers lose interest in standards activities, they will cease to apply for funding. The funding will then cease to exist and there will be less consumer involvement.

**Australia:** Australia has formed a national mirror committee to ISO COPLOCO, called the COPOLCO Mirror Committee (CMC). The new mirror committee is oriented to consumer bodies and includes other stakeholders that carry a consumer perspective in the supply chain. Standards Australia provides the secretariat to the CMC and also provides financial support to the Consumer Federation of Australia (CFA) representatives to allow attendance at these meetings.

Challenges are succession planning (rising age of participants) and getting sufficient stakeholder input into the work of the mirror committee (CASCO is facing a similar challenge).

**Netherlands:** Based on her experiences, Imola Ferro felt that a guidance document on setting up a mirror committee for COPOLCO would be helpful. When formulating positions it was necessary to:

- 1) Establish the position of consumer organizations, Ministries and the NSB.
- 2) Consider European issues
- 3) Look at other countries' information.

The NEN consumer policy committee had no consumer representatives as it could not engage with them. Imola Ferro hopes to build on a high level meeting which has taken place between the staff of Consumentenbond and the NSB. She stressed the importance of knowledge continuity from the past and pointed out that many consumer organizations have short term interest in topics.

## **ANNEX 3 – SUMMARY OF BREAKOUT DISCUSSION GROUP 2**

### **Good practices**

**India:** the BIS consumer mirror committee now has 12 members.

**Canada:** the Consumer and Public Interest Council (now CPIP for "Panel") is largely composed of consumer advocates, chaired by a consumer, including consumer affairs officials (enforcers, policy), industry (from a large retailer who has responsibility in consumer affairs) empathetic to understand consumer issues; consumer affairs academics and representatives of the NSB.

### **Successes/disasters**

Successes:

- 1) Working group experts can make more of an impact than members of a delegation;
- 2) It is better to be on the working group to be more effective
- 3) Training on how to be an effective representative
- 4) Consumers need easy access to research (time and resources to analyze)
- 5) Consumer reps to have the requisite technical knowledge
- 6) Selection of consumer reps who have effective negotiating and intervention skills.

Disasters:

In one case, an Indian representative to the Codex committee was picked because he was the "buddy" of the Minister.

### **Areas where help is needed:**

- 1) At the national level:
  - adequate notification of meeting
  - adequate time and circulation of papers
- 2) consumer representative must have a backbone of steel. Composed, flexible, and insult-proof. It gets down to picking the right person for the job.
- 3) Gaining respect on the committee
- 4) Early notification to consumers about getting involved on a WG or TC
- 5) A larger ongoing talent pool!

### **Urgent action areas:**

- 1) Government needs directly to support standards activity
- 2) COPOLCO needs to contact consumer organizations directly but using the NSB as the bridge (long discussion about this)
- 3) Get consumer-oriented academics involved in standards work
- 4) NSB bridge-building with academic institutions: is there a role for COPOLCO? If so, what?
- 5) MORE BRAINSTORMING