

# Standards Actions

Technical Standards Program Newsletter

June 2021



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF  
**ENERGY** | OFFICE OF  
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### Publishing Organization

Office of Nuclear Safety  
Office of Environment, Health,  
Safety and Security  
Department of Energy  
1000 Independence Ave., S.W.  
Washington, DC 20585-1290

### Editor-in-Chief

Jeff Feit: 301-903-0471  
jeffrey.feit@hq.doe.gov

### General/Compiling Editor

Kathy Knight: 301-903-4439  
kathy.knight@hq.doe.gov

[www.standards.doe.gov](http://www.standards.doe.gov)

## TECHNICAL STANDARDS ACTIVITIES

### Update on Revising Functional Area Qualification Standards

Within the Department of Energy's Technical Standards Program, there are currently 29 Functional Area Qualification Standards (FAQS) that establish common performance competencies for DOE personnel in functional areas and programs that involve providing assistance, direction, guidance, oversight, or evaluation of contractor technical activities that could impact the safe operation of DOE's defense nuclear facilities. These FAQS are one of the types of technical qualification standards included in the DOE's Technical Qualification Program (TQP) described in DOE Order 426.1B, *DOE Federal Technical Capabilities*, and are developed and maintained under the leadership of DOE's Federal Technical Capabilities Panel (FTCP).

The FTCP continues to implement a multi-year effort to streamline and improve the content of FAQS by revising them using the Systematic Approach to Training methodology that starts with conducting a functional area analyses to identify the key job tasks and the knowledge required to perform these job tasks. These results are then used to develop performance competencies that include knowledge requirements and any associated mandatory performance activities. In addition, the updated FAQS include recommended DOE National Training Center training courses in a new Appendix A to support attainment of the qualification standard performance competencies and a new Appendix B that includes recommended continuing training courses to support maintenance of qualification following initial qualification.

The FTCP overall goal is to maintain a smaller more effective set of FAQS as part of the DOE TQP. So far, updated FAQS have been completed for the Senior Technical Safety Manager, Facility Representative, and Nuclear Safety Specialist functional areas, with Safety System Oversight Specialist, a new FAQS, expected to be issued within the new few months. The FTCP is currently updating the General Technical Base Part A Qualification Standard and Emergency Management FAQS, and within the next 6 months will be starting the update of the Criticality Safety and Radiation Protection FAQS, and development of new Environmental Oversight and Worker Safety and Health FAQS.

If you are interested in participating as a subject matter expert on any of the FAQs efforts starting soon, please contact Al MacDougall of the NTC at [amacdougall@ntc.doe.gov](mailto:amacdougall@ntc.doe.gov) or at (505) 845-5549.

**Written by Andy Delapaz, Nuclear Engineer, AU-30 and Al MacDougall, Nuclear Safety Training Program Manager, EA-50**

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## **Benefits and Challenges of the Implementation of PL 104-113, Office of Management and Budget Circular A-119**

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To Technical Standards Managers (TSMs), it will come as no surprise that the U.S. federal government's use of standards is quite vast. For perspective, the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) states that, "[t]he U.S. federal government is the largest single creator and user of specifications and standards - current estimates point to more than 44,000 distinct statutes, technical regulations, or purchasing specifications. Decisions about which standards are most appropriate for U.S. government use are left to the discretion of individual agencies, though recent trends indicate that voluntary consensus standards (VCS) from both national and international sources are being increasingly referenced by U.S. agencies and regulatory bodies." The increasing use of VCSs demonstrates the active implementation of The National Technology Transfer and Advancement Act (Public Law (PL) 104-113) and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-119, "Federal Participation in the Development and Use of Voluntary Consensus Standards and in Conformity Assessment Activities." PL 104-113 under OMB Circular A-119, transitions the Executive Branch of the Federal Government from a developer of internal standards to a customer of external standards. Section 12, "Standards Conformity," of the act states that, "All Federal agencies and departments shall use technical standards (defined as "performance-based or design-specific technical specifications and related management system practices") that are developed and adopted by voluntary consensus standards bodies, using such technical standards as a means to carry out policy objectives or activities determined by the agencies and department." The act further states that "...Federal agencies and departments shall consult with voluntary, private sector, consensus standards bodies, and shall participate with such bodies in the development of technical standards."

This act mandated agencies like the Department of Energy (DOE) to move from developing their own standards when industry standards already existed. Agencies also started contributing their own expertise for complex standards consistent with the OMB Circular. There were numerous benefits that agencies with the adoption of VCSs compared to internally developed standards such as avoiding duplication, leveraging industry expertise, and providing true standardizations for processes across various subject domains.

The DOE Technical Standards Program (TSP) adheres to OMB Circular A-119 where it states that, "[y]our agency must use voluntary consensus standards, both domestic and international, in its regulatory and procurement activities in lieu of government-unique standards, unless use of such standards would be inconsistent with applicable law or otherwise impractical. In all cases, the agency has the discretion to decline to use existing voluntary consensus standards if the agency determines that such standards are inconsistent with applicable law or otherwise impractical."

1. "Use" means incorporation of a standard in whole, in part, or by reference for procurement purposes, and the inclusion of a standard in whole, in part, or by reference in regulation(s).
2. "Impractical" includes circumstances in which such use would: fail to serve the agency's program needs, be infeasible, be inadequate, ineffectual, inefficient, or inconsistent with the agency's mission; or impose more burdens, or be less useful than the use of another standard.

The DOE TSP implements this regulation by noting a specific VCS-related question on the Project Justification Statements (PJS) for developing DOE Technical standards and by conducting a yearly data call for use and

participation in Standards Developing Organizations (SDO) and VCSs. Both activities demonstrate compliance to regulations.

One of the challenges identified by TSMs is finding appropriate VCSs. The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) website lists many online resources. One is the Standards Search Engines which searches collections of major standards developers worldwide (ASTM, ISO, UL, etc.) from databases such as: Document Center Inc., IHS, SAI Global Standards Infobase, and TechStreet.

However, there is an inability to fully read a standard for applicability without either purchasing it or having an existing subscription. This is because only abstracts are public due to copyright issues. ISO stated "...the more than 50,000 standards estimated to come from the private sector in America and the nation's total inventory of standards quickly approaches 100,000. These documents are produced and maintained by nearly 600 standards organizations in the United States, over 200 of which are accredited by ANSI as developers of American National Standards (ANSs). In addition, the full catalogues of ISO and IEC have the potential to be used or referenced in regulation by U.S. federal government agencies if deemed appropriate."

Some SDOs provide read-only access to standards referenced within Regulations. One example is ANSI. ANSI provides a limited set of read-only standards in their tool called Incorporated by Reference (IBR) Portal. The IBR provides access to standards that have been incorporated by reference in the U.S. Code of Federal Regulations (CFR). These standards incorporated by the U.S. government in rulemakings are offered at no cost in "read-only" format and are presented for online reading. There are no print or download options. In addition to the standards available directly through the portal, several SDOs are offering free access via their own website. For a complete list of the SDOs participating, view the ANSI website <https://ibr.ansi.org/>

Q&A section:

Why do SDOs Charge for Standards?

The answer is that every standard is a work of authorship, and is copyright protected under U.S. and international law, giving the owner certain rights of control and remuneration that cannot be taken away without just compensation.

Does incorporating standards by reference deny adequate public access or give SDOs an improper monopoly over the law?

Everyone should have the right to access standards referenced into law and be able to review such work, at a minimum, at government facilities and libraries on a read-only basis. Depending on the nature of the standard and its intended use, many such standards are also electronically available for free viewing on either a long or short-term basis.

Reasonable access, however, does not mean that everyone has the right to own a free copy. Copyright protection must be afforded to standards developers for their original works of authorship.

In making the selections of [standards] listed in this section, NIST attempted to ensure that documents were consistent with the guiding principles, including that they be open and accessible. This does not mean that all standards and specifications are available for free, or that access can be gained to them without joining an organization (including those organizations requiring a fee). It does mean that they will be made available on fair, reasonable, and nondiscriminatory terms, and conditions, which may include monetary compensation.

TSMs are finding it increasingly challenging to access and cite particular VCSs, primarily due to increasing copyright restrictions. Therefore, sharing lessons learned and continuing to submit accurate yearly OMB data calls will strengthen the TSP, and assist TSMs in making informed decisions regarding applicable VCSs.

To aid in the information sharing the TSP is setting up a forum on the Organizational Excellence Website. This forum will provide a platform for TSMs to share experiences, ideas, and challenges. Information and responses will be retained in the forum so that others can benefit. Additionally, if broad cross-cutting issues appear in the forum, there is the potential for the DOE Standards Executive to bring the concerns to the Interagency Committee on Standards Policy (ICSP).

As TSMs, your feedback and knowledge helps continual improvement and your TSM peers. Please continue this discussion to provide your experiences with VCS usage and compliance with PL 104-113, OMB Circular A-119, and performing exhaustive searches for the Project Justification statements at:

<https://orgex.energy.gov/forums/technical-standards-program-tsp/general-discussion/challenges-accessing-and-use-voluntary>

Registration is easy if one has a .gov email address and contractors can get access through the Register feature. If you experience any issues with registration or access, please contact [William.Studniarz@hq.doe.gov](mailto:William.Studniarz@hq.doe.gov)

References:

1. <https://policy.iso.org/usa.html>
2. <https://policy.iso.org/usa.html>
3. <https://ibr.ansi.org/>

**Written by Bill Studniarz, Program Director of Information, Data Support Services, Project Enhancement Corporation**

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## DOE Technical Standards Updates

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The following is an overview of recent Technical Standards actions for February, March, April and May 2021. A complete list of on-going DOE Technical Standards actions can be found on the “Monthly Status Reports” posted on the Technical Standards Program website: [www.standards.doe.gov](http://www.standards.doe.gov)

### Project Justification Statement (PJS) Posted in RevCom for 15 day Review:

PJS to develop DOE-STD-XXXX-YR, *Control and Release of Property with Residual Radioactive Material*,  
POC: Mike Stewart, AU-20, Office of Environment, Protection and ES &H Reporting, Phone: 202-586-6444

### In RevCom for 60 Day Review:

DOE-STD-1149-2016 Safety and Health Program for DOE Construction Projects, POC: Maurice Haygood,  
AU-11, Office of Worker Safety and Health, Phone: 301-903-1787

### Approved:

DOE-STD-1237-2021, *Documented Safety Analysis for DOE Reactor Facilities*  
POC: Carolyn Garzon, AU-31, Office of Nuclear Safety, Phone: 301-903-827

DOE HDBK-1240-2021, *Institutional Controls Implementation Handbook for Use with Use of Institutional Controls*  
POC: Katharine McLellan, AU-22, Office of Public Radiation Protection, Phone: 202-586-0183

DOE-STD-1192-2021, *Security Risk Management (OUO)*  
POC: Gary White, AU-52, Office of Security, Phone: 301-903-6874

### FTCP approvals were submitted to the TSP (The following FTCP Qualification Standards have been approved and have been published on the FTCP website) and the TSP Portal:

- FTCP-PSQS-1178, *Technical Program Manager/Program Liaison Program Specific Qualification Standard (PSQS)*, Approved June 12, 2020
- FTCP-PSQS-1165-2020, *Aviation Safety PSQS*, Approved June 23, 2020
- FTCP-PSQS-1171-2020, *Safeguards and Security PSQS*, Approved August 3, 2020.
- FTCP-PSQS-1125, *Weapons Quality Assurance Professional PSQS*, Approved January 19, 2021

### Cancellations:

Nothing to report

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## Upcoming Events and Workshops

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### **NFPA 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Conference Series** **Safety All Year Long-A Safer World Starts Here**

**When:** May 2021-March 2022

**Where:** Virtual Series

### **ANSI Executive Committee (ExCo) Meeting**

**When:** July 22, 2021

**Where:** TBD

### **ASME Power Conference** **Responsible. Reliable. Power for All.**

**When:** July 20-22, 2021

**Where:** Virtual Conference

### **ASME QNDE 48<sup>th</sup> Annual Review of Progress in Quantitative Nondestructive Evaluation**

**When:** July 28-30, 2021

**Where:** Online, Virtual

### **ASME ICONE 28 - 28<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Nuclear Engineering** **Nuclear Energy the Future Zero Carbon Power**

**When:** August 4-6, 2021

**Where:** Virtual Conference

### **ANSI Board of Standards Review (BSR) Meeting**

**When:** August 5, 2021

**Where:** Webex Virtual Meeting

### **ANS Utility Working Conference and Vendor Technology Expo**

**When:** August 8-12, 2021

**Where:** Marco Island, FL JW Marriott Marco Island

### **ANS 2021 International Topical Meeting on Probabilistic Safety Assessment and Analysis (PSA 2021)**

**When:** August 29-September 3, 2021

**Where:** Columbus, Ohio

### **ANSI World Standards Week (WSW)**

**When:** October 25-29, 2021

**Where:** Washington, DC

For more information on the listed meetings or events, please see their organization's website listed below:

<http://www.ans.org/>

<https://www.ansi.org/>

<https://www.asme.org>

<https://www.nfpa.org/>

**To learn more about the DOE Technical Standards Program or to view  
the *Standards Actions* newsletters,  
visit the website: [www.standards.doe.gov](http://www.standards.doe.gov)**