

Document type Working Group guide

Title Commenting guide (Version 4)

Source ISO/IEC JTC 1/SC 7/WG 7 Secretariat

Status Final

Reference

Action ID FYI or ACT

Executive summary

1. Use the most recent version of the commenting template.
2. Do not modify the template e.g. by adding columns or merging cells as this causes problems with database import.
3. Identify comments in the requested manner.
4. Provide a clear and complete description of the problem plus the rationale for the proposed change.
5. Provide Proposed text to help understanding and to facilitate acceptance of the comment. (Comments that define a problem but that provide no proposed solution may be Rejected as having "Insufficient information for implementation of a solution".)
6. Provide a single option in each comment. Instead of e.g. "delete or modify", separate the alternate ideas into separate comments.
7. Don't refer in isolation to previous material. Instead provide it as an associated attachment.
8. Understand the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 3. *Rules for the structure and drafting of International Standards* so that invalid comments are not submitted.
9. Use the Editorial category only for grammar, missing or duplicated text, missing or incorrect cross-references, spelling and punctuation problems.
10. Readability problems i.e. those that relate to localization problems should be Technical Low.
11. Where major issues exist, include a General initial comment (XXX-1) that summarizes these issues so that this information can be used during comment disposition to classify comments.
12. Don't provide other General comments especially for mature documents. If General comments must be submitted, provide the full Proposed text for all affected Clauses.
13. Comments that affect more than one part of the document should be cross-referenced with an absolute reference e.g. AUS-123 (not "see next comment" or "following comments") after final numbering. Relative cross-referencing fails when comments are sorted into other sequences.
14. Do not use any non-character highlighting e.g. strike through, bolding, italics, colour, type face or point size. (Quoting characters such as " or ' may be used.)
15. Submit individual comments through one organization only i.e. Liaison or National Body.
16. To facilitate the submission of Proposed text through Cut and Paste, a Word version of the document under ballot should be provided to National Bodies.

ISO/IEC directives

The ISO/IEC Directives, Part 3, *Rules for the structure and drafting of International Standards* are available from the Internet. Please ensure that you are familiar with these before commenting. These Directives define the presentation and punctuation styles.

Please also note that the Oxford English Dictionary (OED) is the standard ISO/IEC reference and that this dictionary uses English spelling with “ize” e.g standardize.

Commenting template

Large numbers of submitted comments mean that even simple analysis tasks become extremely time consuming if done manually. The use of a template greatly accelerates the initial processing of comments and allows more time to review and analyze the comments prior to comment disposition.

It would be appreciated if comments are only submitted electronically and using the commenting template that is provided. This template is made available in accordance with SC 7 Resolution 574 as an Excel 97 spreadsheet. (Excel 95 format has limitations in terms of the number of characters of text that can be entered in a single cell, possibly resulting in the truncation of data.) If comments are not provided using the Excel 97 commenting template, conversion errors and truncation of text could occur.

Note that the data in the spreadsheet is imported into an Access 97 database for comment processing. This imposes constraints upon the formatting that can be successfully taken from Excel to Access.

Packaging comments

Following these points helps to facilitate accurate management and manipulation of the comments, particularly where multiple documents are being commented.

1.	Excel 97 format is used so that it is possible to take advantage of the expanded cell capacity. (If necessary, for Excel 95, a long comment can be provided in two parts by repeating the comment identification, but with the next (unique) ID number. It is recommended that e.g. "(AUS-123 cont)" should be inserted at the start of the continuing comment text.)
2.	The submitted spreadsheet file should be named to facilitate tracking and import into the database e.g. AUS_N1234 where AUS is the three character country code and N1234 is the number of the document being commented upon.
3.	Large amounts of text and figures should be provided individually as a separate attachment for each comment. They should be identified so that they can be easily traced to the source comment e.g. for comment AUS-1 use AUS-1_Figure_1.ppt or AUS-1_additional_text.doc.
4.	The spreadsheet footer should not be changed as it: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• identifies the soft copy filename so hard copy and soft copy can be easily matched• identifies how many pages of comments exist.

Commenting template fields

The Commenting template provides for the following fields. Completion of these fields is mandatory to ensure understanding, accurate comment analysis and disposition.

National Body	Enter the appropriate three letter code from Table 1 - ISO 3166 country codes e.g. AUS, JPN, USA. (A full list of codes may be found in ISO 3166:1997 "Codes for the representation of names of countries and their subdivisions".) Additional codes are provided for Liaison organizations. (Conformance facilitates database import and sorting.)
ID	Enter a unique, sequential number starting from 1 to the number of comments. This can be done after the comments have been finalized using the Microsoft Excel "Edit, Fill, Series" command. Do not use calculations to produce the numbering. (Conformance facilitates database import and sorting.)
Category	Classify the comment as: TH Technical High TL Technical Low E Editorial G General Note: If possible, avoid using the General category especially for mature documents. General comments should be covered instead by multiple specific comments to ensure that each and every instance is addressed. (Conformance facilitates database import and sorting.)
Clause, Sub-Clause	It is preferable to always complete this field i.e. by avoiding General comments. Identify the Clause or Sub-Clause exactly as it appears in the source document e.g. Introduction, 4.2.1 or Annex B.1. Avoid using "All" or "Global". (Conformance facilitates database sorting.)
Paragraph, Figure, Table	Identify the Paragraph number, Figure number or Table number from the source document e.g. Paragraph 2, or Figure 1, or Table 2. (Conformance facilitates database sorting.)
Comment and rationale	State the details of the comment and the rationale (why the comment exists). The rationale may be important in assisting understanding at the comment disposition meeting. (Conformance facilitates database import and problem definition.)
Proposed new text	Provide new/alternative text, exactly as it is intended to appear in the revised document. This helps to convey good understanding of the intent of the comment, simplifies decision making and facilitates easier implementation of the changes by the Project Editor. If Proposed text is missing, much unproductive time can be spent trying to understand and resolve what was intended. In cases where no text is provided, the comment may be Rejected for the reason "Insufficient information for implementation of a solution". (Conformance ensures understanding, assists accurate comment analysis and disposition.)

SC 7 comment identification

SC 7 Resolution 478 provides that the comment identifier be CCC-N XX where:

CCC	National Body identifier using the ISO 3166 three character country code
N	Sequence number for the comment set
XX	Comment category: E Editorial G General TL Technical Low (minor)

	TH Technical High (major)
--	---------------------------------

SC 7 comment categories

Where comments are not accurately categorized, they may not be accorded the appropriate level of attention intended by the commentator.

E	Editorial	Covers grammar, missing or duplicated text, missing or incorrect cross-references, and spelling and punctuation problems. These are matters that should be able to be resolved offline by the Project Editor. Terminology changes are not Editorial e.g. Enterprise versus Organization. Proposed new text should be provided to facilitate document updating.
G	General	Avoid use of this category if at all possible. If the comment is Editorial, it will greatly assist the Project Editor if each occurrence is identified. If it is Technical, then it will be important for every contributing item to be addressed (by individual comments).
TL	Technical Low	Minor problems. For example, earlier Clauses (1, 2, 3), Activity/task modification or relocation. Readability (including localization) problems should be TL. These problems are often of a more significant nature than a simple editorial change. Proposed new text is mandatory for additions and strongly recommended for modifications.
TH	Technical High	Major problems. For example, Definitions, Architectural (Stage, Process level), Activity/task deletion or addition. Proposed new text is mandatory for additions and strongly recommended for modifications.

Clause field guidance

1.	Ensure that every row of the comment spreadsheet refers to the relevant Clause. Merging cells to allow separation by rows of different comments against a single entry for a Clause will prevent database import.
2.	Do not precede the Clause by a "Carriage return" (Enter) or "_ , -, +" character, as the sort function will sort the comments by this character in preference to the Clause number.
3.	Do not precede the Clause by typing words such as "Clause" as this also disrupts sorting.
4.	Do not use words for the Clause, e.g. do not use "Scope" instead of "1" as inconsistency causes sorting problems. For those items where a word description is appropriate (e.g. Title, Foreword, Annex), enter the word in full.
5.	Ensure that the numbers for an individual Clause are correctly separated by "full stops" or "periods" e.g. do not use colons or dashes as this causes sorting difficulties.

Comment field guidance

To facilitate effective implementation of comments as intended, please note these points.

1.	Each comment and its associated proposed alternative text should be self-contained i.e. it should not make broad reference to previous or other documents. Instead, include the complete exact proposal for alternative text.
2.	It is preferable to repeat text, rather than cross-reference sets of related comments as the disposition may vary because of other related comments.
3.	If it is necessary to cross reference another comment in the same set, do this with an absolute cross-reference after the full comment set has been uniquely numbered.
4.	During the disposition process, comments will be grouped and sorted into other sequences, thus rendering

follow-on comments incomprehensible.

Comment language guidance

To avoid distraction of individuals and the Working Group with peripheral matters, please note these points.

1.	State comments objectively and unemotionally.
2.	Do not question the competence or motives of individuals or organizations associated with the document.
3.	Depersonalize comments. Refer to, for example, “the Standard”, “the Clause”, “the concept” instead of “you” or “they” etc.
4.	Recognize that the standard has been drafted in response to agreed Project Requirements. Avoid criticizing the standard for not being what it was never intended to be.
5.	Recognize that a standard is intended for application globally and may relate to a wide variety of business sectors, acquirer-supplier contexts, types of agreement, business practices, value systems and cultural norms. Avoid submitting comments that are inconsistent with this general applicability of the standard. Conversely, any aspect of the standard that works against general applicability of the standard should be commented upon.

Major issue summary comment

Where major issues exist, include a General initial comment (XXX-1) that summarizes these issues so that this information can be used during the comment disposition process to classify comments into appropriate groups for joint consideration.

For example, major issues in a life cycle process standard could be associated with:

- Life cycle definition
- Processes and activities
- Standards usage and relationships
- Concepts and explanations.

Template formatting constraints

In summary, do not do anything to the template apart from entering the comments.

1.	Use the default font of Times New Roman, Regular, 10 point with no Underlining, Automatic colour and No effects. Where other fonts are used, the comments will be converted to the default font. This may cause misalignment between columns or loss of information e.g. due to Strikethrough or Highlight changes.
2.	Do not merge, split or adjust cell formatting. This will cause severe distortion of the collated tables of comments, requiring much rework and possible loss of contextual information.
3.	Do not apply additional formatting conditions to the tables.
4.	Do not 'Hide' rows to remove them.
5.	Ensure that any blank rows are deleted from within the comment set.
6.	Do not add columns to provide other information as this causes database import errors.

Country codes

Table 1 - ISO 3166 country codes plus liaison codes

Code	Official name	Common name
ARG	Argentine Republic	Argentina
AUS	Australia	Australia
AUT	Republic of Austria	Austria
BEL	Kingdom of Belgium	Belgium
BRA	Federative Republic of Brazil	Brazil
CAN	Canada	Canada
CHE	Swiss Confederation	Switzerland
CHN	People's Republic of China	China
COL	Republic of Colombia	Colombia
CSK	Czech Republic	Czech Republic
DEU	Federal Republic of Germany	Germany
DNK	Kingdom of Denmark	Denmark
EGY	Arab Republic of Egypt	Egypt
ESP	Kingdom of Spain	Spain
EST	Republic of Estonia	Estonia
FIN	Republic of Finland	Finland
FRA	French Republic	France
GBR	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	United Kingdom
HUN	Republic of Hungary	Hungary
INC	International Council of System Engineering Category A liaison to SC 7	INCOSE liaison
IRL	Ireland	Ireland
ISR	State of Israel	Israel
ITA	Italian Republic	Italy
JPN	Japan	Japan
KOR	Republic of Korea	Korea
L27	ISO/IEC JTC 1/SC27 liaison to SC 7	SC 27 liaison
L65	IEC TC 65/SC 65A liaison to SC 7	SC 65 liaison
MEX	United Mexican States	Mexico
NLD	Kingdom of the Netherlands	Netherlands
NOR	Kingdom of Norway	Norway
NZL	New Zealand	New Zealand
PRT	Portugese Republic	Portugal
ROM	Romania	Romania
RUS	Russian Federation	Russian Federation
SGP	Republic of Singapore	Singapore
SVN	Republic of Slovenia	Slovenia
SWE	Kingdom of Sweden	Sweden
THA	Kingdom of Thailand	Thailand
UKR	Ukraine	Ukraine
USA	United States of America	United States
ZAF	Republic of South Africa	South Africa