International Organisation of Employers
Organisation Internationale des Employeurs
Organización Internacional de Empleadores

The Global Voice of Business

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Three important ISO developments

There are three important developments regarding the work of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) on social responsibility - two ongoing and one new - which require employers and business' urgent and ongoing attention and action:

1. Ongoing: Systematic review of ISO 26000 (a guidance tool for companies and organisations on social responsibility).
- The ISO Technical Management Board will decide on whether to "revise" or "confirm" ISO 26000 on 19 September 2017.
- **Requested action**:
  - o If you have not already done so, please get in touch ASAP with your country's member of the ISO Technical Management Board (TMB) and lobby them to "confirm" ISO 26000 during the meeting on 19 September and NOT "revise" (NOT even a "light revision").

2. New: Proposal for a new and permanent ISO Technical Committee on Social Responsibility – *see side panel.*
- The Swedish ISO member, SIS, has submitted an even more worrying and far-reaching proposal to create a new and permanent ISO "Technical Committee on Social Responsibility."
- Such a Committee could allow ISO to further change the nature/scope of ISO 26000 and create a raft of new standards, some of which would likely be certifiable and apply to management systems on social responsibility.
- The deadline for national standards bodies to vote on this proposal is: 10 October 2017.
- **Requested action**:
  - o We urge you to immediately lobby your national standards body ASAP to vote against this terrible proposal. Please contact them early in case they decide to vote in the coming weeks.
  - o Please contact other relevant stakeholders in your country, including your members, and urge them to also lobby the national standards body to vote against this proposal.
  - o See IOE's more detailed position on this in the side panel!

3. Ongoing: New standard on occupational health and safety management systems (ISO 45001)

USEFUL LINKS

IOE's detailed position on all 3x ISO developments (in English only)

Proposal on a new ISO Technical Committee on Social Responsibility

IOE CONTACTS

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Pierre Vincensini, Adviser (New standard on occupational health and safety management systems - ISO 45001)

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- In July, ISO members approved a problematic "Draft International Standard" (DIS) on occupational health and safety management systems.
- The relevant ISO Committee (ISO/PC 283) is holding one (possibly last) meeting to go through the draft standard in Malaysia from 18 to 23 September.
- **Requested action**:
  - We urge our members, especially those based in Southeast Asia, to attend and actively participate in the ISO Committee meeting in Malaysia.
  - It is the last opportunity for employers to introduce changes to make the standard more acceptable for companies

!! IMPORTANT: Please read the IOE's more detailed position on these developments in the side panel !!

All these developments have big implications for employers and business, especially the new proposal for a permanent Technical Committee on Social Responsibility. They also present challenges in terms of how to limit the proliferation of ISO standards on social responsibility that will likely result in divergent approaches with other authoritative standards; blunt instruments to address social issues/risks; and unrealistic/unfair burdens on companies, especially SMEs.

To put this in context, these ISO developments come on the heels of attempts by other international organisations to re-formulate business' responsibilities on social issues, including:
- The OECD's development of general "due diligence guidance" for responsible business conduct
- The UN Global Compact / GRI / PWC's initiative to develop a business "reporting platform" on the Sustainable Development Goals and
- The ILO's programme of action on "global supply chains".

All risk creating divergent approaches from authoritative standards, such as the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and existing ILO labour standards, and unfair/unrealistic expectations of business, especially in the absence of effective Government leadership.

For more information, please contact:

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ISO 26000 and Proposal for a Technical Committee on Social Responsibility	New standard on occupational health and safety management systems (ISO 45001)
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