

AUSTRALIAN FORESTRY STANDARD LIMITED

Setting the Standard

for Sustainable Forest Management

Policy 03

V1.3-08/2010



[Australian Forestry Standard Limited (AFSL) has developed two Australian Standards® within the Australian Forest Certification Scheme which address wood production from sustainable forest management and the tracking of certified products in the wood and forest products supply chain by a chain of custody mechanism. These Australian Standards® were developed by and are maintained by AFSL Standard Reference Committees which comprise of representatives of nominating organisations/associations and individuals with a nominated Chair and secretariat support from AFSL.]

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1 Purpose of Document

These document details AFSL policies to regarding the role that Australian Forestry Standard Limited (AFSL) has in developing and maintaining standards within its scope.

1.1 *Management System*

This manual is limited to the definition of policy only. Detailed processes and instructions further establish and explain how the policies defined in this document are to be enacted.

This document applies to the development of a Guideline, Rule, Code of Practice or a Standard. However, from this point forward, the term 'Standard' will be used to refer to each of the four aforementioned documents

This document identifies the essential elements of the Management System (MS) that has been established and maintained in order to control the process of development of Standards by AFSL. This manual also communicates the policy and processes that will be observed by all staff.

1.2 *Distribution and Maintenance*

This document is controlled in accordance with the document control policies outlined in the AFSL Management System Policy

The current released version is held on the AFSL network and published to the Web Site.

References

AFSL Management System Policy (POL-01 AFSL Management System, 2010).

1.3 *Definitions*

All terms and abbreviations are defined in the AFSL Glossary of Terms, Abbreviations and Definitions (AFSL Glossary, 2010)

2 Background

The Australian Forestry Standard (AFS) project was an initiative sponsored by the Primary Industries Ministerial Council (through the Forestry and Forest Products Committee of its Primary Industries Standing Committee), the National Association of Forest Industries, the Plantation Timber Association of Australia and the Australian Forest Growers during the developmental phase from 2000 to mid 2003.

The development of the standards was supported initially by a steering committee containing representatives of the above sponsors, together with representatives of the Natural Resources Management Ministerial Council's Natural Resources Management Standing Committee and the Australian Council of Trade Unions

Both the Steering Committee and Australian Forestry Standard Limited (AFSL) were accredited by the Accreditation Board for Standards Development Organisations (ABSDO) to oversee the development of the forestry standards.

3 AFSL's Standing in the Forestry Industry

3.1 About Australian Forest Standard Limited

Australian Forest Standards Limited (AFSL) is a national not-for-profit public company founded in July 2003 that is committed to promoting Sustainable Forest Management in Australia through independent third-party certification.

The vision of AFSL is "To make the Australian Forest Certification Scheme the pre-eminent forest certification scheme of choice for the forest products supply chain from forest to consumer in Australia".

The objects of AFSL are to:

- Promote sustainable forest management in Australia's forests through an Australian Forestry Standard;
- Support and maintain the development of the AFS, and other related or complementary standards;
- Maintain accreditation as a Standards Development Organisation;
- Support and facilitate the use of the AFS, and any related standards, for forestry certification within Australia through the Australian Forest Certification Scheme; and
- Maintain mutual recognition for the AFS internationally.

With 27 members and approved national forestry standard and chain of custody standard and approved national certification schemes (Australian Forest Certification Scheme – AFCS), AFSL is the largest Australian forest certification system and one of the largest in the Southern Hemisphere. There is currently over 10.2 million hectares of forest certified to AFS and currently over 120 AFS Chain of Custody certificates in use.

This represents 90% of the potential private and public certifiable forests in Australia.

AFSL is a member of the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes (PEFC) Council (PEFC, 2010) - one of 31 countries on the Council including seven non-European countries (Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Gabon, Malaysia and the USA) with 21 endorsed schemes.

The Forest Management Standards fully comply with the PEFC requirements and will be revised every five years as per the PEFC Guidelines.

The Australian Forest Certification Scheme (AFCS)

- Provides Australian and overseas consumers with an independent, internationally recognised third-party certification scheme for forest management in Australia; and
- Promotes a culture of 'continuous improvement' of the sustainable forest management practices in Australia.

AFSL provides the structure and framework within which the Australian Forest Certification Scheme is implemented, maintained, reviewed and promoted to all stakeholders interested in forest certification and wood and wood products chain of custody.

3.2 Management of AFSL

AFSL is managed by a board who are representative of all sectors of the Australian forestry industry. The register of board members is testament to the broad representation in the management of AFSL.

References

Membership of AFSL Board (AFSL Board Register, 2010)

3.3 Membership of AFSL

Membership of AFSL is open to any individual or organisation that supports the objects of AFSL. The four membership categories are:

1. Government,
2. Forest and Wood Products Sector,
3. Employee Representative Organisations,
4. General

All other stakeholders are included in the General membership category.

Members are invited to all general meetings of AFSL and provide guidance on issues affecting the Australian forestry industry.

References

- *AFSL Constitution* (AFSL Constitution, 2009)
- *Work Instruction – Company Membership* (Company Membership, 2010)

3.4 Interested Parties

AFSL makes every effort to ensure that the Standards Reference Committee comprises a balanced representation from all major stakeholder interests relevant to the Standard.

No one interest may have disproportionate representation or exercise undue influence.

No relevant interest group with a bona fide desire to participate is excluded from the standards development process.

The interest categories relevant to the Standard are defined in SD Procedure SRC Representation. The balance between these interests is clearly defined.

Reference – SD Procedure SRC Representation (SRC Representation, 2010)

3.5 Continual Improvement

AFSL's commitment to continual improvement of its operations and services is aimed at:

- Ensuring an energetic, continuing focus on the needs of AFSL's members and stakeholders.
- Meeting or exceeding the expectations of investors, Members and customers.
- Achieving high levels of staff performance, satisfaction, health and safety.
- Ensuring AFSL personnel have the necessary skills to ensure continuous improvement.
- Providing important controls for corporate governance.

Reference - (Corporate Governance, 2010) Section 3.2

AFSL seeks to continually improve its operations through:

- Improvement in performance;
- Improvement in the standard of its documentation;
- Improvement in its systems and resources.

AFSL monitors and improves its operational systems and resources through

- Internal and external audits. (AFSL Audit Schedule, 2010);
- Review of complaints and grievances (Complaints Register)

4 Resources for Standards Development

AFSL maintains the capacity and resources to develop and to maintain standards within its area of accreditation.

All AFSL activities consume resources in the form of:

- Human resources;
- Financial resources; and
- Information.

These resources are managed effectively and efficiently to produce the best outcome for AFSL's Staff and the Forestry Industry.

4.1 Human Resources

AFSL maintains a core staff and co-opts specialist staff as required on either a casual or a contractual arrangement.

AFSL undertakes a selection process to ensure that specialist staff are involved in the development or ongoing management and review of standards within its area of accreditation.

All personnel working in areas affecting the quality of AFSL's Standards Development and Management Operations shall be competent on the basis of appropriate education, training, skills and experience, or work under the close and direct supervision of a competent supervisor.

References

- Corporate Governance Manual (Part 6) (Corporate Governance, 2010)
- Procedure for Purchasing - Sub Contractor (Sub-contractor Purchase, 2010)

4.2 AFSL Business Model

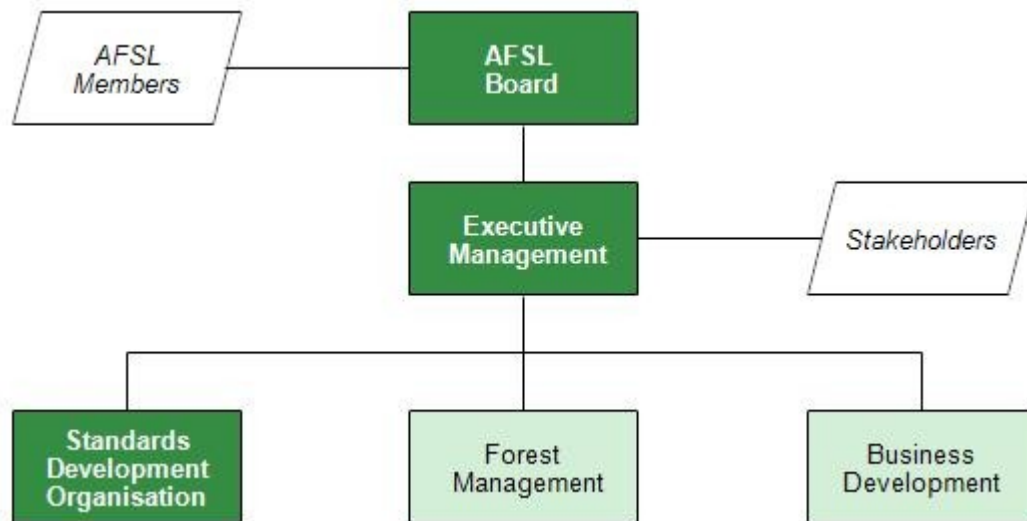


Figure 1: AFSL Business Model

4.3 *Financial Resources*

AFSL financial processes ensure that funds are available through the budget process. This includes staff costs as well as capital and recurrent costs.

The CEO ensures that financial records are retained including all financial forecasts, and progress reports showing actual budget against the forecast.

References

AFSL Business Plan – Funding Plan (AFSL Business Plan, 2010)

4.4 *Information Resources*

The aim of Information Management is to:

- Identify key knowledge for the organisation;
- Catalogue and store this knowledge and make it available to interested parties; and
- Communicate changes to interested parties who have a requirement to utilise the information.

AFSL is developing a Web portal to centralise all external information either by way of public access or secured log on.

It is proposed that this information will be managed through the implementation of MS SharePoint.

4.5 *Capacity to engage with Key Stakeholders*

AFSL has procedures in place to achieve engagement with all key stakeholders.

AFSL will not however allow a group's refusal to engage to impact on its processes to effectively develop and manage its Standards.

Credible attempts will be made to involve significant interests and, as far as reasonably practicable, to achieve meaningful engagement. As a minimum, AFSL will inform these parties about the Standards development activity, and take pro-active steps to encourage their involvement.

AFSL makes all efforts to engage with all stakeholders, and retains evidence of this engagement.

Where a major sector does not accept the invitation to participate, AFSL will determine whether the obstacle is due to:

- Lack of resources;
- Lack of interest in the subject; or
- Lack of confidence in the structural or procedural aspects of the process.

Where one of these issues is the obstacle, AFSL makes reasonable efforts to address the obstacle.

References

Stakeholder Communication Management Plan (SDO Comm Plan, 2010)

5 International Participation

AFSL participates in international forums and workshops addressing the development of consistent and credible international guidelines for sustainable forest management.

AFSL is a member of the **Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes (PEFC) Council** (PEFC, 2010) - one of 35 countries on the Council including seven non-European countries (Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Gabon, Malaysia and the USA) with endorsed schemes.

The Secretariat of the PEFC Council is based in Switzerland. In 2009 AFSL was re-endorsed by PEFC.

Internal and external stakeholder funding is provided for AFSL to participate in these events.

References

AFSL Policy on International Participation (AFSL Policy Int Part)

6 Standards Development

6.1 Standards Australia

Standards Australia (Standards Australia, 2010) is the nation's peak non-government Standards organisation. It is charged by the Commonwealth Government to meet Australia's need for contemporary, internationally aligned Standards and related services.

The work of Standards Australia enhances the nation's economic efficiency, international competitiveness and contributes to community demand for a safe and sustainable environment.

It leads and promotes a respected and unbiased standards development process ensuring all competing interests are heard, their points of view considered and consensus reached.

Standards Australia also recognises, rewards and promotes excellence in design and innovation through the Australian International Design Awards program and other design promotion initiatives.

6.2 Benefits of standards

Standards make a sustained contribution to national wealth, improving quality of life, increasing employment, improving safety and health (at home, work and play) and using our resources more efficiently. Standards deliver these benefits in the following ways:

- Offer an alternative to regulation, with less red tape and business costs, while still providing security for families, business and consumers;
- Give businesses and consumers confidence that goods and services are safe, reliable and will do the job they were intended for;
- Help consumers make everyday choices between one product and another;
- Support Australian innovation by providing a platform on which to build new ideas;
- Reflect the latest technologies, innovations and community needs;
- Boost Australian production and productivity;
- Save businesses time and money and cut production costs;
- Help cut energy bills and foster new technologies;
- Enable small businesses to become more efficient and grow by using standards, guidelines and handbooks developed by industry experts;
- Make Australian businesses more competitive - products that comply with standards have a competitive edge over products that don't;
- Using international standards, provide exporters with a head start in overseas markets;
- Ensure products manufactured in one country can be sold and used in another;
- Reduce technical barriers to international trade, increase the size of potential markets and position Australian firms to compete in the world economy;
- Complement regulation and make markets work better;
- Help make laws and regulations consistent across Australia - by using a standard, a consumer law in one jurisdiction becomes consistent with a fair trading regulation in another.

6.3 *Cooperation with Accreditation Board for Standards Development Organisations (ABSDO)*

The Accreditation Board for Standards Development Organisations (ABSDO)³ operates to encourage and accredit Standards Development Organisations (SDO) in Australia to produce internationally aligned Australian Standards.

Accreditation ensures that Australian Standards retain the quality inherent in the rigorous, transparent and internationally aligned development process.

AFSL fully cooperates with ABSDO in the audit process and makes available all records required to demonstrate on-going compliance.

References

Policy 04 Relationship with ABSDO (AFSL Relationship ABSDO, 2010)

6.4 *Cooperation with the National Standards Office*

The National Standards Office⁴ (NSO) is a dedicated office within Standards Australia that carries out Standards Australia's responsibilities as Australia's peak standards body. This includes being the Australian member of international bodies such as ISO and IEC and maintaining agreements with other national and regional Standards bodies and the Commonwealth.

The National Standards Office (NSO) is the body responsible for the oversight, co-ordination and governance of Standards development and related activities.

AFSL co-operates and liaises with the NSO with the intent of enhancing communication and co-ordination of Standards development activities across industry and government.

References

Policy 08 Relationship with NSO (AFSL Relationship NSO, 2010)

7 Standards Development Projects

The process used by AFSL to develop standards has been accredited by ABSDO with the aim of ensuring that AFSL developed standards:

- Have a high level of integrity and credibility;
- Have the support of the industry and stakeholders;
- Are developed in an open and transparent manner.

The processes that are used are documented in the SDO Procedures Manual (SDO Procedures Manual, 2010)

7.1 *Current approved Australian Forestry Standards*

AFSL currently has previously developed two approved Australian Standards

- AS 4707 – Australian Standard for Chain of Custody of Wood and Wood Products
- AS 4708 – Australian Standard for Sustainable Forest Management

7.1.1 AS 4707 - Australian Standard for Chain of Custody of Wood and Wood Products

Compliance with the Australian Standard for Chain of Custody of Wood and Wood Products (CoC) will provide assurance that forest and wood products can be tracked through the supply chain from their origin in a certified forest through to end use by a consumer.

7.1.2 AS 4708 – Australian Standard for Sustainable Forest Management

The Australian Standard for Sustainable Forest Management (AFS) embodies forest management performance criteria and requirements that support continual improvement towards sustainable wood production in Australia's native forests and plantations.

8 Standards Development Process

The authority to approve a development project lies with the AFSL Board. At the time of approving the standards project, the AFSL Board will also:

- Approve the establishment a Standards Reference Committee (SRC) as soon as practicable, unless the work fits within the scope of an existing SRC;
- Approve terms of reference for the SRC;
- Approve the allocation of resources required for the SRC to undertake its work program;
- Determine a priority ranking for the standards project;
- Set reasonable target dates for achieving the milestones of draft for public comment and committee agreement on the final content of the document.

8.1 *New Development Project*

A new development project may be:

- To develop a new standard in areas that are not covered by an existing standard;

- To develop a new standard to complement or to support existing standards;
- To revise or amend an existing standard, where the content may not be current or appropriate;
- To adopt certain categories of Australian, industry, or international standards or guidelines.

The inclusion of new development projects in AFSL's work program is an important aspect of the process. Standards development projects can be triggered by requests from any of the following sources:

- The Board of AFSL;
- An external source such as government, industry, trade association, professional body, business, consumer organisation, or individual;
- An existing Standards Reference Committee (SRC);
- Standards Australia.

AFSL will evaluate plan, and prioritise all new projects as detailed in the SDO Procedures Manual (SDO Procedures Manual, 2010).

8.2 *Submission of new work item to NSO*

Once AFSL has approved a standards development project, AFSL will submit documentation about the new work item to NSO.

References

Policy 08 Relationship with NSO (AFSL Relationship NSO, 2010)

8.3 *Standard Reference Committees*

The AFSL Board will appoint Standard Reference Committees to oversee the development or review of the standard.

Each SRC will have a balanced membership representing a broad spectrum of relevant interests (SRC Representation, 2010) and is supported by an AFSL appointed Secretariat. (SDO Procedures Manual, 2010).

8.4 *Planning and Management of the Process*

The AFSL Board appoints project management consultants and provides the resources for each SRC to undertake the development or review of the standard.

The SRC is responsible for the technical content of a draft standard. However most of the necessary drafting work is done offline by the consultants, subcommittees and expert working groups.

The SRC meets regularly to discuss progress, co-ordinate work programs and seek to maintain consensus in the technical content of the emerging draft.

The process to develop or review the standard is outlined in the SDO Procedures Manual Section 5 (SDO Procedures Manual, 2010).

8.5 *Public review and stakeholder feedback*

It is essential that anyone who feels that they can contribute to a draft standard is provided with an opportunity to comment on its provisions. The availability of draft standards is publicly announced and the drafts widely circulated via the AFSL website.

A three month public consultation period is allowed for AFSL developed draft standards.

At the expiry of the public consultation period, the SRC considers all comments on the draft standard in detail and if necessary undertakes further drafting.

The SRC conveys the outcome and justification of its decisions in relation to each public submission in writing.

The process for public comment is outlined in the procedure SD-PROC-06 SRC Public, (SD Public Comment, 2010) Recorded in the Comments Form. (Public Comments Form, 2010).

8.6 *Achieving and Demonstrating Consensus*

The SRC chair attempts to gain a consensus decision at all stages of the standards development or review process.

Consensus occurs when all of the major interests involved with the subject of the standard have collectively accepted the content of the document and have voted affirmatively.

Conditions for consensus are outlined in the (SDO Procedures Manual, 2010) and in SD Procedure on Achieving Consensus (SD-PROC-06-SRC-consensus)

The AFSL Board arbitrates on whether the criteria for achieving a consensus have been met. Where the AFSL Board deems that consensus has not been achieved it may recommend a process to resolve the impasse.

8.7 *Regular review and maintenance of standards*

AFSL is firmly committed to maintaining and reviewing the current Australian Standards® as well as any future Australian Standards® which it develops within its scope of accreditation.

In cognizance of maintaining the current Australian Standards®, AFSL recognises that inquiries concerning the interpretation of specific requirements/clauses of the Australian Standards® may fall into one of the following groups:

- *Opinion* – a response to a query which is supplied by AFSL and is based on experience with the workings of the relevant Standard Reference Committee;
- *Interpretation* – when a response to a query is agreed upon and supplied by the relevant Standard Reference Committee on a one-off basis on matters which are not regarded as having a wide area of application; and
- *Ruling* – when the relevant Standard Reference Committee provides an interpretation on a matter which has a wide area of application, but generally, does not contain specific requirements suitable for inclusion in the relevant Australian Standard®.

Based on the commitment to maintain and review the Australian Standards® as the basis of the AFCS, AFSL shall:

1. Maintain the current Australian Standards® by undertaking amendments to the Australian Standards® where such a requirement is demonstrated to and approved by AFSL;
2. Continually monitor emerging issues that relate to Australian forests and react appropriately should these issues impact on the content of the standards;

3. Provide a formal rulings process of the requirements/clauses of the Australian Standards® where the relevant standard reference committee provides interpretation of the requirements/clauses of the Australian Standards® or supplements to the Australian Standards® and the ruling is made available to the public;
4. Undertake any rulings process throughout the life of the Australian Standard®;
5. Regularly review the technical content its current Australian Standards®, supplements or other documentation as per the schedule included as 8.7.1 - Schedule of Reviews of Standards.
6. Conduct the review process in cognizance of the requirements of the NSO and ABSDO;
7. Initiate the review process for Australian Standards® so that the revised version of the Australian Standards® is to be available before the expiry of the current version of the Australian Standards® expires based on 3. above; and
8. Ensure that its Standard Reference Committees are regularly notified of the application of the Australian Standards® to provide a forum to discuss any suggested revisions or amendments to the Australian Standards®.

8.7.1 Schedule of Reviews of Standards

Year	Status and Activity
2002	Original Version of AS 4707 - Australian Standard for Chain of Custody of Wood and Wood Products
2003	Original Version of AS 4708 – Australian Standard for Sustainable Forest Management
2006	Review of AS 4707 - Australian Standard for Chain of Custody of Wood and Wood Products
2007	Review of AS 4708 – Australian Standard for Sustainable Forest Management
2011	Scheduled review of AS 4707 - Australian Standard for Chain of Custody of Wood and Wood Products
2012	Scheduled review of AS 4708 – Australian Standard for Sustainable Forest Management
2016	Scheduled review of AS 4707 - Australian Standard for Chain of Custody of Wood and Wood Products
2017	Scheduled review of AS 4708 – Australian Standard for Sustainable Forest Management

8.8 Regular Review of Standards Development Process

AFSL will prior to every review of its standards review and continually improve its standards development process (WI_SDP_Review, 2010).

All changes to the standards development process will be tracked and advice given to ABSDO of the changes on request.

8.9 *Audit by interested parties*

AFSL is subject to audits by ABSDO to maintain its SDO status and promotes transparency of its standards development process within its standard reference committees.

AFSL considers that other stakeholders need access to its standards development processes to provide the assurance of transparency and consensus.

The AFSL standards development process is available for audit by other interested parties.

Reference Audit of Standard Development Process by Other Stakeholders (Audit - Other Stakeholder, 2010).

9 **AFSL Process Records Management**

AFSL retains records to demonstrate compliance for 7 years from the date of publication of the Standard

Process Records are maintained:

- where the absence of such records would reduce confidence in the quality of the product and/or service supplied by AFSL; and
- to demonstrate compliance to ABSDO Requirements.

Process Records are legible and identifiable, clear in intention and are self explanatory or supported by documentation that provides precise descriptions of each entry contained on the record.

Records are stored and maintained in such a way that they are readily retrievable in facilities that provide a suitable environment to prevent damage or deterioration and to prevent loss.

Retention times of Process Records are established and recorded. Process Records are made available for evaluation by the ABSDO Auditor and other interested parties.

Note: Records may be in the form of any type of media, such as hard copy or electronic media

Reference

Records Management Policy (Records Mgmt Policy, 2010)

10 **Administrative Procedures**

10.1 *Document Management Policy*

AFSL maintains a management system which is based on the ISO 9001 framework.

Maintenance of the Management System is focussed on ABSDO compliance and improving the effectiveness and efficiency of all AFSL operations.

Reference

AFSL Management System Policy (AFSL Management System Policy, 2010)

10.2 *Records Management Policy*

Australian Forestry Standard Limited (AFSL) recognises its responsibilities to provide a framework to initiate and maintain record keeping practices to meet its needs and accountability requirements that are compatible with relevant standards and reflect prevailing community concern for best practice.

The AFSL Records Management policy supports the company's business in an efficient and accountable manner as well as supports and document decision-making processes.

References

- AFSL Management System Policy (AFSL Management System Policy, 2010)
- Records Control Procedure (SM PROC-01 Records Control , 2010)
- File Naming Procedure (AFSL Procedure SM PROC 07 File Naming, 2010)

10.3 Audit of Administrative Procedures

AFSL conducts an internal audit of all processes to ensure ongoing compliance. Administrative processes are updated accordingly where necessary.

Reference

- Internal Audit Procedure (Internal Audit, 2010)
- AFSL Audit and Review Plan (AFSL Audit Schedule, 2010)

10.4 Audit of Administrative Procedures by Other Parties

The AFSL administrative procedures are available for audit by any interested parties.

Reference

- Audit of Standard Development Process by Other Stakeholders (Audit - Other Stakeholder, 2010)

11 Neutrality and Independence

11.1 Objectivity and impartiality

AFSL is operated to safeguard the objectivity and impartiality of the individuals and groups responsible for Standards Development.

AFSL has a privacy policy in place to respects the privacy of its members and is committed to complying with the requirements of the National Privacy Principles which are contained in the *Privacy Act 1988* and subsequent amendments to the Act. (Privacy Policy, 2010)

AFSL ensures that there is a balanced representation of all stakeholder groups on the Standards Reference Committees in the Standards development process. (SRC Representation, 2010).

11.2 Delegation of Authority by AFSL Board

A clear separation of roles in relation to the maintenance of the two Australian Forestry Standards has been made between the AFSL Board and the Standard Reference Committees through a board resolution of 17 May 2010.

The AFSL Board delegates authority to the Standard Reference Committees:

- To act with independence and with authority on the review and maintenance of the standard and technical matters relating to the standard; and
- To approve amendments to the Australian Forestry Standards subject to the committees compliance with relevant policies, the committees' budgets, and procedures adopted by the AFSL Board and the terms of AFSL's accreditation as a Standards Development Organisation.

The AFSL Board, as the accredited Standards Development Organisation, will:

- i. Set policies and the committees' budgets, and procedures for the operation of the Standard Reference Committees for the development and maintenance of the Australian Forestry Standards; and
- ii. Ratify the Standard Reference Committees decisions subject to the committees' compliance with the Board's policies and procedures and the terms of AFSL's accreditation as a Standards Development Organisation.

11.3 Communication between governance structure and the SRC

Any communication concerning the content of a Standard between the governance structure of the organisation and the Standards Reference Committee is documented, open and available for audit.

Any communications arising from the Standard Reference Committees are a standing item on all AFSL Board agendas. The chair of each SRC provides a status report to each board meeting on progress and issues that may require a Board resolution.

Reference

- SDO Communications Plan (SDO Comm Plan, 2010)

12 Complaints Procedures

Australian Forestry Standard Limited (AFSL) recognises that disagreements may arise against the organisation or against the standards development process.

All complaints and grievances are addressed in a timely manner. All complaints are fully addressed and tracked as per the AFSL Complaints Procedure.

The AFSL complaints procedure outlines the type of grievances and complaints which may occur and the steps taken to resolve them.

Reference Complaints Procedure (Complaints Procedure, 2010).

A register of complaints is maintained which is available for audit and to any interested parties.

- **Reference** - Complaints and Grievances Register (Complaints Register)

13 Existing Rights and Obligations

AFSL has previously fully researched and developed Standards AS 4707 and AS4708.

Prior to developing any additional standards, AFSL will do full due diligence on any existing rights and obligations with other parties and will retain details of any agreements reached in relation to existing standards within the relevant scope of accreditation.

14 Intellectual Property

All intellectual property rights created by AFSL are owned by AFSL (unless otherwise agreed between parties).

The Standard(s) developed by AFSL do not infringe the rights of any third party (including without limitation any intellectual property rights).

14.1 Copyright

The copyright of all AFSL developed standards is negotiated prior to the standard being published. In the absence of an agreement the copyright is normally vested in AFSL.

It is the responsibility of SRC members to ensure that any material put forward for inclusion in a standard does not infringe a third party's copyright. Material covered by a third party's copyright may be included in a standard only after permission has been obtained from the copyright holder.

Where SRC members submit material that they, their employers or nominating organizations have originated, and where such material is subsequently included in a standard, the right of the originator of the material to continue to reproduce that material in the form in which it was originally submitted is recognised.

14.2 Patents

A standard does not confer a monopoly on one section of industry to the detriment of another that can provide an equally satisfactory article. Nonetheless, on exceptional occasions, technical reasons may justify inclusion in the standard of items or services covered by patent rights. There is no objection in principle to this, provided that certain rules are adhered to. The rules governing patented items in standards are those adopted by ISO and IEC.

The most important rule is that, before use of material known to be the subject of a patent is made a requirement of a standard, it is to be ensured by means of a formal statement that the owner of the patent has agreed to make licences available to all who apply on reasonable and non-discriminatory terms.

14.3 Trade marks

All trademarks developed and owned by AFSL will be registered with IP Australia (IP Australia).

The AFSL trade mark is registered for the following goods and services:

- Paper, cardboard and goods made from these materials including packaging and wrapping material printed matter, stationery being goods in class 16
- Building materials (non-metallic) especially derived from wood either in solid or composite form being goods in class 19
- Forestry products not included in other classes being goods in class 31
- Forestry services being services in class 44

15 Publishing the Standard

15.1 Publishing date

In the course of development and implementation of standards, three significant dates apply:

Approval Date

This is the date on which the SRC approves the document for publishing. For Australian Standards it is the date on which the document is approved by or on behalf of the relevant Standards Sector Board or Standards Development Board.

Publication Date:

This is the date that the standard becomes publicly available. It is also the date on which the standard comes into effect.

Implementation Date

This is the date that a standard becomes effective, where that date differs from the publication date. For example, when there is a need to provide a period of grace to allow products and practices to be modified or upgraded. Occasionally, legislation or certification programs may also require a later date of implementation for a standard than its publication date.

15.2 *Referencing other standards*

References to other standards must be valid and relevant to the standard being prepared. Do not reference specific clauses as they may change in subsequent editions. Only the current edition of another standard may be referenced. The applicability of subsequent editions or amendments of referenced standards is a matter for determination by the users of the standard. References must be dated unless it is accepted that it will be possible to use all future changes of the referenced document for the purposes of the referring document or for informative references.

15.3 *Amending standards*

After a standard has been published, new information may be presented or errors found in the printed document. When this occurs an amended issue of the standard may be issued.

Correction amendments may correct misprints or production faults in the document but not add new material or affect the application of the standard. Revised text amendments add new material or change existing requirements that affect the application of the standard.

15.4 *New editions of standards*

When a SRC votes on the approval for publication of a standard, there is an implied rider that this approval is for a finite period and that the standard will be revised or withdrawn at some time in the future as circumstances and technologies change.

Once a new edition of a standard is published, the previous edition is deemed to be superseded in terms of representing current practice. Occasionally, copies of the superseded edition may be kept publicly available for special purposes, for instance during a phased implementation or for servicing of older equipment.

15.5 *Automatic withdrawal of standards*

To ensure that all standards represent current practice, even those in slow-moving areas of technology or ones that are not widely used any standard older than 15 years will be a candidate for automatic withdrawal.

The intention to withdraw these standards is announced well in advance of the proposed withdrawal date, so that users are afforded the opportunity to nominate those standards that they feel are still valid and should not be withdrawn. Where there is sufficient interest in retaining the standard it will be revised and reissued (revision may be simply updating references, the content remaining unchanged). Where there is no interest in retaining the standard it will be withdrawn.

15.6 Availability of standards

Any standard bearing the name Australian or New Zealand or Australian/New Zealand Standard is available through SAI Global and Standards New Zealand.

16 Interpretations and rulings

Although individual SRC members may reasonably express their own point of view on the background and intent of standards that they have been involved in developing, they do not have the authority to present an official interpretation of provisions in the standards, unless specifically requested and authorized to do so.

In furtherance of this policy, committee records are treated as confidential and the identity of individual committee members is not divulged to any person seeking an interpretation of a standard.

17 Valuable Websites

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8. Standards Australia (2010); Standardisation Guide – Standards Development Policies and Procedures SG-006 - Rules for the Structure and Drafting of Australian Standards; available online http://www.standards.org.au/downloads/SG/SG006_Rules_for_the_structure_&_drafting_of_Australian_Standards.pdf
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15. Standards Australia (2010); Standardisation Guide - Standards Development Policies and Procedures SG-017 - Drafting of Standards that may be referenced under Occupational Health and Safety Legislation; available online <http://www.standards.org.au/downloads/SG/SG-017-1.pdf>
16. Standards Australia (2010); Standardisation Guide - Standards Development Policies and Procedures SG-020 - Participation by Consumers in Standardization; available online <http://www.standards.org.au/downloads/SG/SG-020.pdf>

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