



Governing Body

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GB.323/INS/11/2(Add.)

Institutional Section

INS

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ELEVENTH ITEM ON THE AGENDA

Report of the Director-General

Second Supplementary Report: Developments in the relationship between the ILO and the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), including in the field of occupational safety and health

Addendum

1. This update concerns developments in relation to the pilot implementation of the ILO–ISO Agreement since the publication of document GB.323/INS/11/2, and specifically the ILO–ISO collaboration to develop an ISO standard on Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems (ISO 45001) in ISO Project Committee (PC) 283.
2. On 23–24 February 2015, the ISO Technical Management Board (ISO/TMB) reviewed the ILO’s communication about recent developments of concern in ILO–ISO collaboration and its request to facilitate effective cooperation by ensuring that ISO standards that relate to issues within the ILO’s mandate should use international labour standards and guidelines (ILS) as the source of reference in case of conflict as provided in the Agreement.¹ By Resolution 30/2015 (see appendix), the TMB confirmed its view that the process being followed in ISO/PC 283 is consistent with the ISO’s obligations under the Agreement.
3. The TMB Chair and ISO Central Secretariat officials met with the ILO Deputy Director-General for Policy on 16 March 2015. Following an exchange on the meaning of the Agreement and its implementation in the Committee,² the ISO has expressed that, in its view, the Agreement requires the ISO to ensure systematic consideration of ILS in the process of standardization but does not require that ISO standards defer exclusively to ILS in case of conflict. The ILO believes that the ISO’s position is not consistent with the

¹ See GB.323/INS/11/2, para. 10.

² See GB.323/INS/11/2, para. 9.

Agreement's plain language: the wording on "using ILS as *the* source of reference ... in case of conflict" and not only as a possible source of reference was negotiated to mean deference to ILS to avoid conflict, and the procedures for ILO comments set out in the Agreement are intended to facilitate that use of ILS.

4. In light of the above, it appears that, at the moment, the ISO does not accept responsibility under the Agreement to defer to ILS in developing standards under its own rules and, in particular, under its own new work item proposal for ISO 45001. This situation puts into question the fulfilment of the conditions that the Governing Body had required for ILO–ISO collaboration.³ The coming months of collaboration, if approved by the Governing Body, will confirm whether the ILO and ISO can reach a mutual understanding satisfactory to the ILO and the results will be reported to the Governing Body at its next review of the matter.

³ See GB.323/INS/11/2, para. 2.

Appendix

Technical Management Board Resolution 30/2015

Response to letters from the International Labour Organization (ILO)

The Technical Management Board,

Noting the letters from the ILO addressed to the TMB Chair dated 15 and 30 January 2015 which express concerns about the draft occupational health and safety management systems standard (ISO 45001) in PC 283,

Further noting the input from the PC 283 leadership,

Recalling the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the ILO and ISO in August 2013 (MoU),

Thanks the ILO for advising the TMB of its concerns, but

Confirms that the ISO standards development processes must be followed in any ISO project, including ISO 45001, and that the process followed thus far is consistent with ISO's obligations under the MoU,

Entrusts the PC 283 leadership with the responsibility of continuing to enforce the MoU in the development of ISO 45001, while ensuring that due ISO process continues to be followed,

Requests the ISO Central Secretariat to draft a response to the ILO from the TMB Chair which should include this TMB resolution and to prepare an information package for ISO members about the MoU, and

Recognizing that the ILO continues to have serious concerns about the implementation of the MoU,

Further requests that the ISO Central Secretariat organize a meeting with the ILO, the TMB Chair, the ISO Central Secretariat and BSI in Geneva in order to discuss their concerns.