



ANSI/ASA Working Group Chair FAQs

What are the responsibilities of a WG Chair?

Organize the WG, hold meetings, respond to ASA Standards Office requests, meet document maintenance deadlines, complete and submit a once per year status report (click thru form), drive/project manage standards revisions and new standards development, keep the WG membership list updated (annually). TAG Chair may request that the WG Chair coordinate comments on related IEC or ISO draft standards.

What are the responsibilities of a secretary or vice-chair?

This position is not required but may prove useful for busy or large WGs, or for WGs with a large number of documents to manage. This person could be appointed to handle meeting minutes, post and update the WG ftp site, and manage the successive revisions and editing of draft standards. That is but one formulation. Organize the WG in a way you feel will be most effective.

What are the responsibilities of the working group?

Respond to the requests of the WG Chair for input in a timely manner, provide input to standards drafts and revisions, provide comments for related IEC or ISO work if needed, any other homework you assign, and read through and provide feedback on drafts. Note the scope and purpose of a WG is "to create and maintain standards related to [the scope of that particular working group]". Enthusiastic participants who have not seen their counterparts for a while may want to discuss or present interesting but non-relevant items (w.r.t. the aforementioned scope). You will want to keep an eye out for this. Those can easily be taken up informally outside of the meeting.

What are the criteria for WG membership?

Only a material interest in the subject matter of the WG.

What are the criteria for voting?

There are no criteria for informal polls within the WG, but organizational membership in ASA Standards is required to cast an official vote on balloted US ANSI/ASA drafts. This includes ALL standards drafts within your S Committee. Organizational membership in the US TAG is required to officially comment on IEC and ISO drafts and recommend the US position.

WG Meetings

How should I prepare for a WG meeting?

This should be the same as preparing for any internal business meeting you've ever run or called. Have an agenda, stick to it, mind the clock, take notes (or appoint someone to do this). After the meeting, edit and send out the minutes in a timely manner, including the assignment of homework (as appropriate) with deadlines.

How often should the WG meet?

If active, once per year is probably the minimum in order to update the ASA Standards office with your status and membership roster. During a document revision, more frequent, shorter meetings (60-90 minutes every month) often work best. Meetings do not have to take place in person. WebEx or other collaborative tools have proven very effective for revision work. ASA does not provide on-line meeting resources at this time. You may wish to solicit a sponsor organization from your WG membership to provide this.



Is the WG obliged to follow Robert's Rules of Order for meetings?

As Chair, you control the meeting flow as you see fit in order to get the work done, but with fair and equal treatment to ensure that the voice of anyone and everyone participating is heard. The goal is consensus, not necessarily unanimity, so that does not mean anyone with a contrary opinion can hold things up. You can elect to resolve an impasse by casting the deciding vote (like the VP in the US Senate...). An effective WG rule has been that anyone who objects must offer a compelling alternative – in writing as a contribution when it involves a standard draft or revision. Their contribution is then open to comment by the other members. That in itself generally resolves 98% of disagreement. Constructive conflict can be very productive, but everyone participating implicitly gives their consent to the process – that means that you can move on if need be, even if everyone does not agree. As with managing people, you will be on solid ground as long as you can provide a rationale for your decision(s).

In general, unless there is some point of order, you can simply follow the meeting agenda. WG members generally respect that and are happy to participate in a well-run meeting. Most WGs are run fairly informally.

One useful technique recently employed by ASA Committees is to add a 'Consent Agenda' as the second item on the full agenda (after roll call or introductions). This lists all the things that are pre-approved and won't be discussed at the meeting unless there is a serious concern, error, or missing item. Things like approval of the previous minutes, written reports, previous voting results, or any other pro forma things that you don't have time for during the meeting. This, of course, pre-supposes that everyone has read all of the distributed or posted materials prior to the meeting. You may need to check that assumption with your WG members...

What topics should be covered regularly at WG meetings?

Status and deadlines of all documents the WG is responsible for. Update summaries from related work in IEC or ISO. Updates from related work in ANSI. Updates from any subcommittees or task forces within your WG. If possible, and if the size of the group is small enough, much of the time should probably be spent going over any document that is currently under revision – BUT you don't have to edit in real time. Many WG meetings are too large for that sort of 'working meeting'. To edit the document, you can hold monthly or bi-monthly WebEx meetings of 60-90 minutes. You can also assign a smaller task force to do revisions if you have many documents to manage. Or you can just solicit contributions, compile these, and fold these into the document (showing the revision marks). Then post or send it out via Email for comments. Whatever you feel most comfortable with that gets the work done by the deadline.

Communications from ASA or ANSI

Which of these are directed to me?

All of them, unless otherwise stated. Some may be 'bulk' to US TAG members, or to all S Committee members, or to all WG Chairs, but we will not spam you.

Which of these can I share with the WG membership?

All of them, unless otherwise stated – however, in practice many are not relevant to the WG members. A short summary from you at the WG meeting or in the meeting minutes is probably sufficient.

Officially, IEC and ISO drafts are only to be distributed to paying US TAG members. The ASA Standards office takes care of this, so you don't have to. You can find the ASA Standards member organizations list on the ASA Standards website. For contact persons, ask the ASA Standards Office.

Which of these am I responsible for sharing with the membership?

Officially, only the things related to US ANSI/ASA drafts and revisions within the scope of the WG. If in doubt, contact the ASA Standards office.

Communications from other standards bodies

What IEC documents or email can or should I share with membership?

see above...

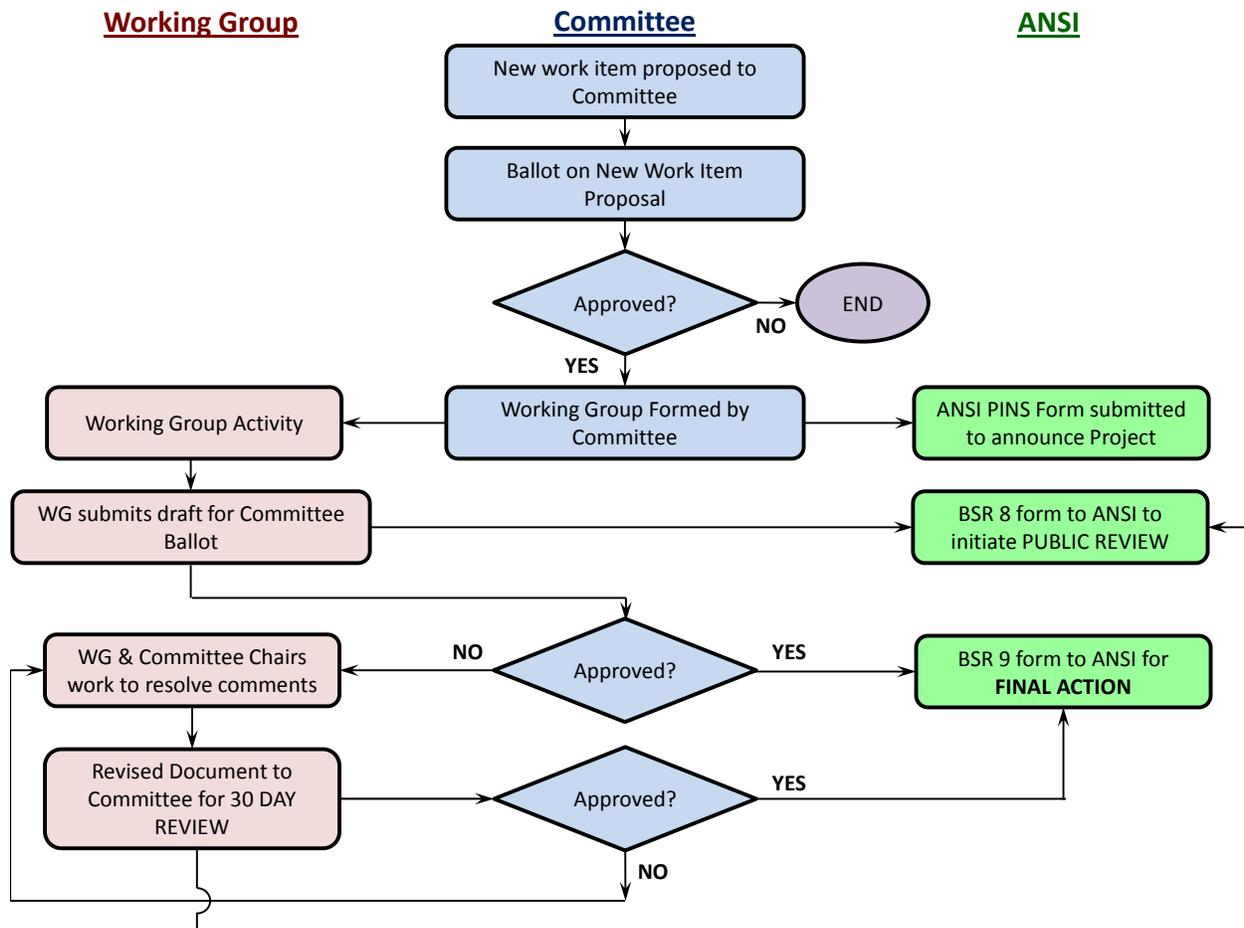
Maintenance of existing standards

Do all committee members get copies from me, or do they need to obtain them on their own?

You share and distribute via email or post these to the WG ftp site for use by WG members. WG members are not to share these outside the WG.

What is the workflow for maintaining documents? How does the ANSI voting process work?

The diagram below shows the standards development process form New Work Item proposal through final approval.



How far in advance should the WG begin to solicit comments for a revision?

This depends upon at what pace your WG works... One revision was completed in 10 months – but that was exceptional. You can take comments anytime in the 5-year cycle period. Don't lose them and be organized about this if they come in early. Generally, the revision, if not extensive, begins about 2 years before the deadline. For some WG Chairs, this is a more or less continuous process, starting a new revision document shortly after the publication of a balloted revision and just keeping the contributions that way. This also depends upon how often the WG meets to do the revision work. Generally, more frequent, shorter meetings (60-90 minutes every month) work best. The ASA Standards office will provide you with the schedule for all docs your WG is responsible for.

How should I solicit comments?

Verbally at the meetings, or as 'balloon' comments by you or the document editor within the document itself. You can assign homework or ask for contributions. Generally the person with the comment should propose an alternative formulation – in writing!

What is a PINS form?

Project Initiation form. This is completed at the start of the process for initiating a new standard project or a revision. Again, the ASA Standards Office will work with you on this. It's a fill out form, where you check the appropriate boxes and write a paragraph generally corresponding to the abstract in the standard. There are some other questions about who the stakeholders/customers/audience is for this standard. It's very straightforward. The ASA Standards office handles official submission of the PINS form to ANSI.

What is the formal process for maintaining a standard?

Besides doing a full revision for major changes, there are three 3 other options, depending upon the circumstance:

1. Reaffirmation

The document is simply approved as is with no changes for another 5-year cycle. You can solicit an informal poll within the WG for this, and then just let the ASA Standards office know in response to their prompt as the deadline approaches.

2. Errata

Any serious errors that would cause a user to generate incorrect results or cause harm can be addressed by issuing an errata. This is drafted by the WG and balloted in the same way as a standard. It is usually very short, addresses only the specific clause, and is generally written in the form "In clause X, replace "Y" with "Z"". When approved this publishes as a PDF and is available for download free of charge. Any new purchasers of the standard get this along with the standard itself. If there is less than 1 year before the 5-year deadline, a full revision is generally recommended rolling this into the other changes. If errata exist for a document under revision, it is expected that these will be incorporated into that revision.

3. Addendum

Any important missing information or any clauses required to address changing conditions or regulations that happen after the release of standard can be addressed with an Addendum. This is like an Errata, but is supplemental, rather than a replacement. Everything else about errata applies in this case as well: When approved, this publishes as a PDF and is usually made available for download free of charge. Any new purchasers of the standard get this along with the standard itself. If there is less than 1 year before the 5-year deadline, a full revision is generally recommended. If an addendum exists for a doc under revision, it is expected that these will be rolled into that revision.



What is the formal process for initiating a vote?

The ASA Standards office handles all of this once you submit the final draft. You will work with them on this and they will keep you apprised of progress through the various stages.

How do I communicate with ANSI and ASA through this process?

All communications are sent through the ASA Standards office, generally via email at

asastds@acousticalsociety.org.

New standards development

Under what circumstances is a new standard appropriate?

Someone or some entity proposes a standard and demonstrates a need that has not yet been addressed as well as support for the work to develop it and last, but not least, a market for a sufficient number of customers to purchase it to justify the work. The aforementioned PINS form covers much of this.

How does someone propose a new standard?

The proposer fills out a New Work Item Proposal form (available from the ASA Standards office or the acousticalsociety.org website) covering the aforementioned items and submits it to the S Committee Chair and/or to the ASA Standards office.

How does the WG Chair communicate with ANSI and ASA through this process?

Through the ASA Standards office, generally via Email – perhaps a call if necessary. As a WG Chair, you are also invited to attend the annual ASACOS, Plenary, and S committee meetings in person held at the ASA Spring Meetings. You can present your summary at the S Committee meeting, which is detailed on the WG status report form you submit once per year (see above).

Is there an updated standards style guide or template?

The ASA Standards office has the latest style guides and can also provide a template or MS Word version of the current standard for use in a revision.

Where can I find more information about the ASA Standards Program?

<http://acousticalsociety.org/introduction-to-asa-standards-program/>