Getting *started*

ISO/CASCO membership

Contents

This brochure is going to teach you how to get the most out of your CASCO membership. Welcome to ISO/CASCO.

ISO/CASCO is the ISO Committee on conformity assessment. It is responsible for developing and making recommendations on conformity assessment policy to the ISO/CASCO membership and for developing conformity assessment standards (CASCO toolbox).

Why is it important to **participate** in CASCO?

Non-acceptance of test reports and certificates of conformity is a major non-tariff obstacle to trade. The policy and standards developed by CASCO contribute to harmonizing conformity assessment practices and provide international benchmarks for the technical competence of conformity assessment bodies (CABs) and accreditation bodies (ABs). The use of these standards therefore positively impacts the market and helps to overcome trade barriers.

As a new CASCO member, the following brochure may provide you with an introduction and general guidance on the work of ISO and the different roles in the technical community :

My ISO job
http://www.iso.org/iso/
my_iso_job.pdf

Participating in CASCO allows you to:

- Contribute to the development of CASCO standards
- Bring your country's perspective
- Facilitate import and export in your country
- Help technology transfer

What is CASCO's **mandate**?

CASCO reports to the ISO Council and has the following terms of reference and objectives:

- To study means of assessing the conformity of products, processes, services and management systems to appropriate standards or other technical specifications
- To prepare International Standards and other deliverables related to the practice of testing, inspection and certification (products, processes and services) and to the assessment of management systems, testing laboratories, inspection bodies, certification bodies, accreditation bodies and their operations and acceptance
- To promote mutual recognition and acceptance of national, regional and global conformity assessment systems, and appropriate use of International Standards for testing, inspection, certification, assessment and related purposes

Who are CASCO's **members**?

CASCO membership is open to all ISO members, including full and correspondent members.

Currently, out of ISO's 161 members, 139 are represented in CASCO; that includes both developed and developing countries. Of that number, 104 are participating (P) members and 35 are observer (O) members [1].
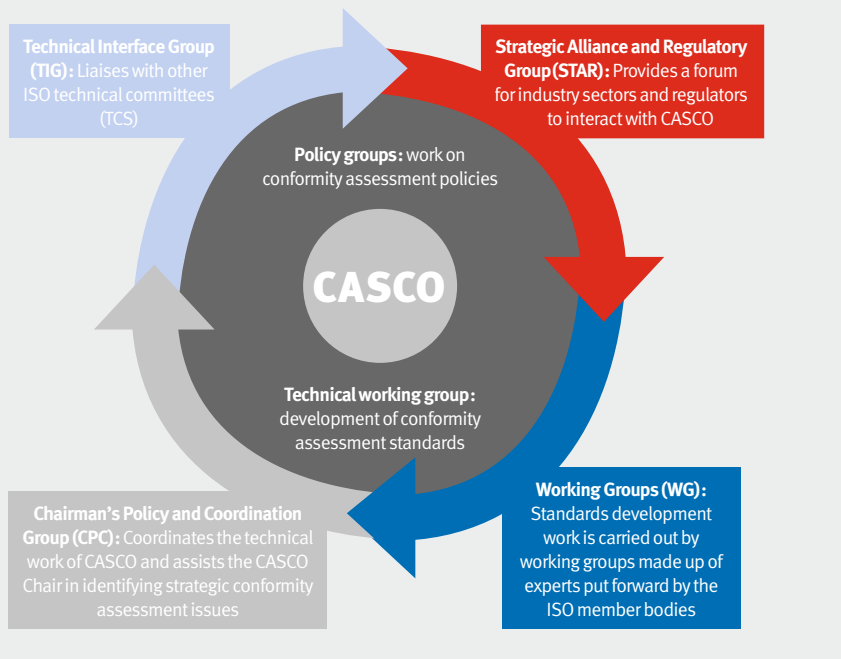
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1) These figures are subject to change; to see the current ISO/CASCO membership, visit the CASCO page.

CASCO has also established **liaisons** with international organizations that are active in conformity assessment. The aim of many of these liaisons is to promote the **CASCO toolbox** and the harmonization of conformity assessment activities throughout the world. Details can be found in the full list of organizations in liaison with CASCO.

CASCO also works with different **ISO technical committees** whose work is related to conformity assessment. Details can be found in the full list of technical committees in liaison with CASCO.

CASCO has an active collaboration with ISO's standardization partner, the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC). IEC is responsible for International Standards in the electrical, electronic and related areas, as well as operating a number of global certification schemes for products in its field. The majority of CASCO documents are published as joint ISO and IEC documents.

Technical Interface Group (TIG): Liaises with other ISO technical committees (TCS)

Strategic Alliance and Regulatory Group (STAR): Provides a forum for industry sectors and regulators to interact with CASCO

Policy groups: work on conformity assessment policies

CASCO

Technical working group: development of conformity assessment standards

Working Groups (WG): Standards development work is carried out by working groups made up of experts put forward by the ISO member bodies

Chairman's Policy and Coordination Group (CPC): Coordinates the technical work of CASCO and assists the CASCO Chair in identifying strategic conformity assessment issues

How is CASCO **organized**?

CASCO is made up of different groups that take care of different tasks. The entire work of CASCO is coordinated by the CASCO Secretariat, which is part of the ISO Central Secretariat (ISO/CS) in Geneva. The **CASCO Secretariat** is composed of the CASCO Chair, a Director of conformity assessment, who also acts as Secretary of CASCO, two managers and an administrative assistant.

CASCO holds one annual plenary meeting, either in Geneva or in a host country upon invitation of a CASCO member. This usually takes place in April or May depending on the priorities of the host and other international meetings. A workshop is organized each year in conjunction with the plenary and deals with a theme decided in consultation with the host.

CASCO standards development work is carried out by working groups (WGs) of experts put forward by the CASCO member bodies. The experts do not always belong to the member body but represent an expertise required by the working group. CASCO WGs organize meetings several times a year, according to the working plan established by each group. CASCO has a number of key advisory groups to complement the technical work undertaken in the WGs. Those advisory groups meet twice a year and have the following roles:

- The Chairman's Policy and Coordination Group (CPC) coordinates the technical work of CASCO and assists the CASCO Chair in identifying strategic conformity assessment issues.
- The Technical Interface Group (TIG) liaises with other ISO technical committees (TCs) in order to ensure a consistent and harmonized approach to conformity assessment in those TCs.
- The Strategic Alliance and Regulatory Group (STAR) provides a forum for industry sectors and regulators to interact with CASCO.

How to **participate** in CASCO?

There are three member categories in ISO:
- Full members
- Correspondent members
- Subscriber members

CASCO membership is open to all ISO member bodies as participating (P) or observer (O) members and to correspondent members as observer (O) members. Detailed provisions for membership are stated in the **ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1**, under Clause 1.7.1.

Nevertheless, each category of members has different participation rights in CASCO.

P-members may nominate experts to CASCO working groups and policy groups, attend meetings and have the obligation to vote on consultations. They can also appoint convenors to WGs by decision votes. For more information about candidates for convenorship, consult the **Toolkit for working group convenors** and the **ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1 and Consolidated ISO Supplement**, Clause 1.12.

New Rights Programme

Correspondent members may join CASCO as O-members and may comment on projects and issues.

NOTE : Following Council Resolution 03/2013, correspondent and subscriber members were allowed to participate in a maximum of five committees, for a two-year trial period 2014-2015. The pilot project has been extended for four more years with the current rights but with increased training and support to members participating in this programme (Council Resolution 22/2015).

CASCO also accepts **internal and external liaison** members in accordance with the conditions described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1, Clause 1.17.

For more details about members' rights and obligations, see the **ISO membership manual**, as well as the **ISO/IEC Directives**.

Rights and obligations

As a CASCO delegate

Members of CASCO (P- and O-members) are delegates of national standards bodies (NSBs) – the members of a country's delegation are drawn from its national mirror committee and they represent the views of their national members on the international stage.

Committee level decisions : *one country = one vote*

Participating members

Participating members (P-members) have the obligation to contribute to meetings and to vote on all questions formally submitted for voting by CASCO. They receive automatic reminders to vote from ISO/CS while ballots are open.

If a P-member fails to vote, they will receive a warning from ISO/CS and membership can be downgraded to O-member status, if no explanation is given. If a P-member is persistently inactive, it is the responsibility of the Secretariat to notify ISO/CS, which then contacts the member. If there is no response and change in behaviour, the P-member will be downgraded to O-member.

Observer members

Observer members (O-members) follow CASCO work and receive the documents. They have the right to submit comments and to attend meetings, but not to vote in CASCO ballots.

For detailed information about participation in the work of ISO technical committees, see **ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1, Clauses 1.7.4 and 1.7.5**.

As an expert in a CASCO working or advisory group

Members of CASCO working groups (WGs) are experts who have been nominated by their national standards body and should be aware of their national point of view, but act in a personal capacity and contribute with their expertise. They are appointed by CASCO P-members (also by A- and D-liaisons).

Working group level decisions: *one expert = one voice*

For detailed information about participation in the WGs of ISO technical committees, see **ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1, Clause 1.12**.

CASCO advisory groups (CPC, STAR or TIG) have specific rules and obligations that are detailed in the **CAS/PROC 01** for each of the groups. Members and organizations in liaison interested in taking part in any of the groups are invited to contact the CASCO Secretariat (**casco@iso.org**) for additional information.

- *ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2*
  Principles for how to structure and draft documents intended to become International Standards, Technical Specifications or Publicly Available Specifications.

- *How to write standards*
  This document provides simple guidance on how to write clear, concise and user-friendly ISO International Standards and other publications. It should be used in conjunction with the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2.

The ISO Code of Conduct

The ISO Code of Conduct is an obligation for CASCO members participating in ISO work – participants in ISO committees, working groups or consensus groups are asked to work to the principles in the Code of Conduct during all aspects of the technical work of CASCO: **www.iso.org/iso/ codes_of_conduct.pdf**

The ISO Technical Management Board has developed some suggestions for implementation of the ISO Code of Conduct: **www.iso.org/iso/suggestions_for_ implementation_of_the_iso_code_of_ conduct.pdf**

Resources

ISO rules and procedures

The ISO/IEC Directives

The ISO/IEC Directives define the basic procedures to be followed in the development of International Standards and other publications. The ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1 and Consolidated ISO Supplement, in particular, will be your key point of reference for procedures related to committee work: **www.iso.org/directives**.

- *ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1 and Consolidated ISO Supplement*
  Official procedures to be followed when developing and maintaining an International Standard and procedures specific to ISO.

- **CAS-PROC 01***, ISO Committee on Conformity Assessment (CASCO), Structure, process and rules of operation*
  This document provides a description of the structure, process and operational rules used in CASCO to enable the achievement of its objectives and in line with the terms of reference of each of the policy groups as well as the CASCO terms of reference approved by the ISO General Assembly in 1997.

- **CASCO-PROC 33***, Common elements in ISO/CASCO standards*
  This document is intended for use by CASCO WGs in the development of ISO/CASCO standards and other deliverables specifying requirements for bodies performing conformity assessment. It defines the wording for the obligatory and recommended elements of "impartiality", "confidentiality", "complaints and appeals" and "use of management systems".

- **CASCO toolbox**
  This is the set of conformity assessment standards developed by CASCO for the operation of:
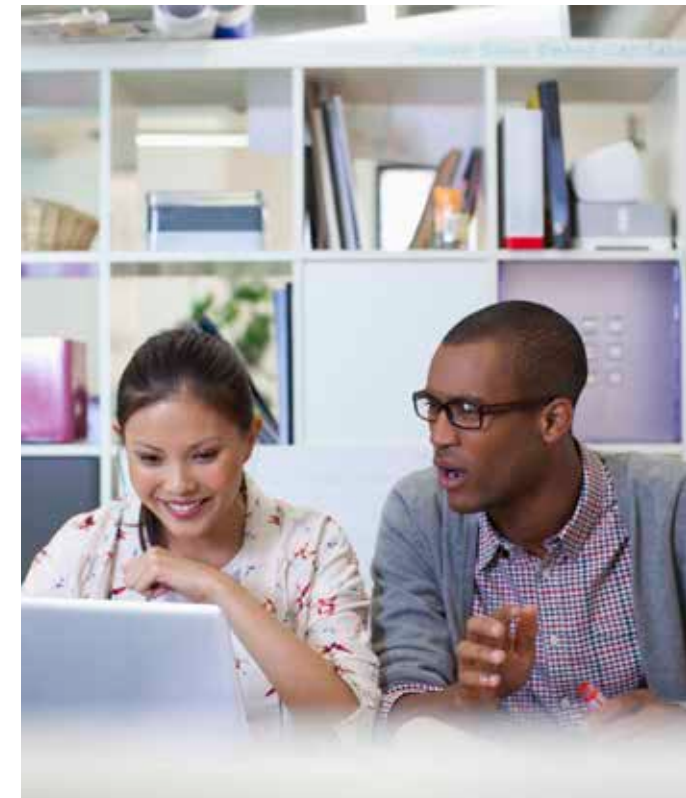 - Conformity assessment bodies, laboratories, certification bodies and inspection bodies
  - Accreditation bodies
  - Peer evaluation and other associated activities

- *Conformity assessment for standards writers – Do's and don'ts*
  This booklet provides guidance to ISO/TCs and SCs on the drafting of documents specifying conformity assessment arrangements.

- *Building trust – The Conformity Assessment Toolbox*
  This document is a comprehensive, user-friendly handbook covering all aspects of conformity assessment and its role in international trade, and will be useful for business managers, regulators and consumer representatives.

Where to **get help** ?

Questions related to:

- Participation in CASCO WGs, policy groups or meetings: **casco@iso.org**
- Electronic applications: **helpdesk@iso.org**
- DIS, FDIS or SR votes: **votes@iso.org**
- Committees and meeting management: **agendas@iso.org**
- Copyright and trademarks: **logo@iso.org**
- Webex and web/phone conferencing: **webconferencing@iso.org**

Abbreviations

CASCO
Committee on conformity assessment

COPOLCO
Committee on consumer policy

DEVCO
Committee on developing country matters

PDC
Policy development committee

ISO/CS
International Organization for Standardization/
Central Secretariat

NP
New Work Item Proposal

NSB
National standards body

IEC
International Electrotechnical Commission

CD
Committee Draft

DIS
Draft International Standard

FDIS
Final Draft International Standard

TC
Technical committee

CASCO CPC
CASCO Chairman's Policy and Coordination Group

CASCO STAR
CASCO Strategic Alliance and Regulatory Group

CASCO TIG
CASCO Technical Interface Group

**Need more help
with ISO jargon ?
See the online Glossary**

Definitions

Conformity assessment
Demonstration that specified requirements relating to a product, process, system, person or body are fulfilled.

Chair
A person with overall responsibility for a committee, who leads experts and delegates to consensus, makes sure everyone's views are heard and remains neutral. Usually comes from the sector concerned and acts to promote ISO's work in that sector.

Convenor
Person who leads a working group (WG) towards consensus, making sure projects are properly managed and delivered on time. Usually comes from the sector or industry concerned.

Secretary
Administrative manager of a committee who ensures the smooth running of projects, prepares and manages meetings, circulates documents/communications and upholds ISO principles and practices. Employed by the national standards body that holds the secretariat for that committee.

Expert
Person from a particular field or industry who contributes to the development of a standard.

Working group (WG)
Specialized group within a committee that is responsible for drafting a particular standard or set of deliverables. It is usually quite small, composed of experts and headed by a convenor.

Council
Group that governs ISO operations. It consists of the ISO Officers, Chairs of CASCO, COPOLCO and DEVCO and 20 elected member bodies. It also appoints the Treasurer and 14 members of the Technical Management Board and decides on the annual budget of ISO/CS.

About **ISO**

ISO (International Organization for Standardization) is an independent, non-governmental international organization with a membership of 161 national standards bodies. Through its members, it brings together experts to share knowledge and develop voluntary, consensus-based, market-relevant International Standards that support innovation and provide solutions to global challenges.

ISO has published more than 22 000 International Standards and related documents covering almost every industry, from technology to food safety, to agriculture and healthcare.

For more information, please visit **www.iso.org**.

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International Organization for Standardization

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