

SFPE STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT PROCEDURES

Approved March, 2005
Revised April, 2008

1 General

- 1.1 **Scope.** These procedures shall govern the development of standards by the Society of Fire Protection Engineers (SFPE), including the roles of standards development committees, the Technical Steering Committee and the Secretariat. Standards developed by the Society of Fire Protection Engineers shall be limited to matters of fire protection engineering. These procedures shall not apply to the development of guides and engineering practice documents, which shall be developed in accordance with the “SFPE Guide and Engineering Practice Document Development Procedures.”
- 1.2 **Amendments.** Amendments to these procedures shall be by approval of the SFPE Board of Directors.

2 Organization and Responsibilities

2.1 Technical Steering Committee.

2.1.1 **General.** The Technical Steering Committee has overall responsibility for the administration of these procedures and the issuance of SFPE standards. The Technical Steering Committee shall appoint standards development committee members, act on appeals of actions of standards development committees, release drafts of standards for review and comment, and issue standards.

2.1.2 Membership of Technical Steering Committee.

2.1.2.1 **Appointment.** The chair, members and alternates of the Technical Steering Committee shall be appointed by the SFPE Board of Directors. When vacancies arise, the Technical Steering Committee shall identify the desired attributes of potential members and recommend a minimum of two potential candidates per vacancy. The Chair and secretariat of the Technical Steering Committee shall submit the candidates identified to the SFPE Board of Directors for consideration. Members of the SFPE Board of Directors shall not be appointed to the Technical Steering Committee.

2.1.2.2 **Balance.** The membership of the Technical Steering Committee shall be balanced in accordance with section 4.5. The Technical Steering Committee shall not act in accordance with these procedures when the Technical Steering Committee does not meet the balance requirements of section 4.5.

2.1.2.3 **Alternates.** Technical Steering Committee members may have alternates in accordance with 2.2.2.

2.1.2.4 **Terms of Membership.** Members of the technical steering committee may serve a maximum of two six year terms, with a maximum of three years of membership prior to March, 2004 counted towards the first six year term.

2.2 **Standards Development Committee.**

2.2.1 **Members.** Members shall have expertise within the scope of the standards development committee. Each member shall have an associated interest category (see section 4.5) to maintain balance among the group. Members and officers of standards development committees shall be responsible for

- Development of proposed standards within the scope of the standards development committee
- Voting on approval of standards that fall within the scope of the standards development committee
- Maintaining standards developed by the committee in accordance with section 11
- Responding to requests for interpretations of standards developed by the committee
- Considering and acting on proposed modifications and comments in accordance with sections 7.2 and 7.3.

2.2.2 **Alternates.** Each member may have an alternate, who shall be permitted to participate in the activities of the standards development committee; however, votes or ballots cast by alternate members shall only be counted in the event that the alternate's corresponding member does not vote or return the ballot. Alternate members shall represent the same organization as the member to whom the alternate is to serve.

2.2.3 **Officers.**

2.2.3.1 **Appointment of chair.** When the chair of a standards making committee is vacant, a solicitation for applications for the chair shall be posted in SFPE's newsletter and on SFPE's web page. Notice shall be provided a minimum of three months prior to appointment of a chair. Chairs of standards development committees shall be appointed from among the applicants by the Technical Steering Committee.

2.2.3.2 **Responsibilities of Chair.**

2.2.3.2.1 **Calling meetings.** The chair shall call meetings as necessary for the committee to conduct its work.

2.2.3.2.2 **Presiding at meetings.** The chair is responsible for presiding at meetings of the standards development committee. In the event that the chair, vice chair (if one has been appointed) and the secretary (if one has been appointed) are all unavailable to preside at all or part of a meeting of a standards development committee, the chair shall designate a presiding officer.

2.2.3.2.3 **Preparation of an Agenda.** Prior to each meeting, the chair shall develop an agenda for the meeting.

- 2.2.3.2.4 **Participation in Meetings.** The chair shall ensure that participation at meetings of the standards development committee is limited to members and alternate members of the committee. If people who are not a member of the committee wish to participate (see 5.2.4), the chair shall make a determination as to whether they may participate.
- 2.2.3.2.5 **Recommending New Members.** The chair shall review applications for membership on the standards development committee and shall recommend to the chair of the Technical Steering Committee whether or not the applicant should be appointed.
- 2.2.3.2.6 **Review of committee membership.** Periodically, the chair shall review the membership of the standards development committee. Chairs of standards development committees shall notify the secretariat if they become aware of any members of the standards development committee that meet any of the criteria for termination of membership contained in section 4.4.
- 2.2.3.3 **Vice chair.** The standards committee chair may appoint a vice chair from among the members of the standards development committee, who is authorized to serve as the chair in the absence of the chair
- 2.2.3.4 **Secretary.** The standards committee chair may appoint a secretary from among the members of the standards development committee, who shall record actions of the standards development committee as directed by the chair, and who is authorized to serve as chair in the absence of the chair and vice chair.
- 2.2.4 **Secretariat.** SFPE shall serve as Secretariat to each standards development committee. The Secretariat shall maintain draft documents, maintain minutes of committee meetings, maintain records of committee actions on proposed modifications and comments, and maintain records of all ballots.
- 2.2.5 **Appointment of Members and Alternates.**
- 2.2.5.1 **Solicitation.** When the Technical Steering Committee seeks to add members to a standards making committee, a solicitation shall be posted in SFPE's newsletter and on SFPE's web page. Notice shall be provided a minimum of three months prior to appointment of members by the Technical Steering Committee.
- 2.2.5.2 **Appointment.** Members and alternate members of standards development committees shall be appointed by the Technical Steering Committee, subject to the provisions of section 4. Preliminary assignment of interest represented shall be performed by the secretariat, subject to concurrence by the Technical Steering Committee.
- 2.2.6 **Working Groups.** Working groups may be designated, appointed and disbanded at the pleasure of committee chairs to divide and separate work. Committee chairs shall appoint members and chairs of working groups. Members of working groups shall not be required to be members of the standards development committee, and working groups shall not be required to be balanced.

3 Project Initiation

- 3.1 Any person or organization may propose a new standards development project by sending a request to develop a standard to SFPE Headquarters, which will forward the proposal to the Technical Steering Committee. The proposal should contain a proposed scope of the standard and state why the standard is needed.
- 3.2 All new standards development projects and scopes of standards shall be approved by the Technical Steering Committee, subject to approval by the SFPE Board of Directors. New standards development projects may be assigned to an existing standards development committee or a new standards development committee may be created for the purpose of developing the standard.
- 3.3 When a new standards development committee is created, members shall be solicited by placing a notice of the creation of the standards development committee in SFPE's newsletter and on SFPE's web page. This notice shall be provided a minimum of three months prior to appointment of members by the Technical Steering Committee, and the notice shall indicate the date by which applications must be submitted to be considered in time for appointment prior to the first meeting of the standards development committee.

4 Committee Membership

- 4.1 **Application.** Applications for membership shall identify the applicant's education and experience within the scope of the committee, an assurance of ability to actively participate in the activities of the standards development committee, an identification of what organization the person would represent, an identification of what organization would fund participation in the committee, an agreement to notify the Secretariat of any changes in employment or funding source, and whether the applicant would like to be considered for a leadership position within the committee. Membership application forms may be obtained from SFPE headquarters or from [SFPE's web page](#).
- 4.2 **Qualifications.** Standards development committees shall consist of individuals with expertise within the scope of the committee.
- 4.3 **Membership Limits.** The Technical Steering Committee may limit the number of members on a standards development committee.
- 4.4 **Termination of Membership.** Members may elect to discontinue their membership on a standards development committee at any time by indicating their desire to do so in writing to the Secretariat. Members may be removed from the membership on a standards development committee by the Technical Steering Committee due to failure to participate in the work of the committee or failure to respond to ballots. Upon a change in employer, membership on a standards making committee shall be terminated, and the individual must reapply if he or she wishes to regain membership.

4.5 **Balance.**

The membership of standards development committees shall be balanced by interest. No more than one member shall represent any company or organization, and no more than $\frac{1}{3}$ of the voting members shall represent a single interest category as listed below.

- producer or manufacturer of a product that could be affected (design, manufacture or sale) by the standard
- design engineer
- enforcement official
- research and testing, including public or private sector research organizations and academics who perform research that falls within the scope of the standard
- facilities owner or manager
- insurance interests
- specialist with expert knowledge within the scope of the standard who is not described by one of the categories above

5 **Committee Procedures**

5.1 **Roster Publication.** The Secretariat shall maintain a roster of committee members. The roster shall include the committee title and designation, scope, name and address of the Secretariat, officers, members, and alternates, member classifications, and a tally of classifications. The roster shall be published on [SFPE's web page](#).

5.2 **Meetings.**

5.2.1 **Scheduling Meetings.** Meetings of standards development committees to conduct committee business shall be held at dates decided upon by the chair. Meetings may be held at a location or via teleconference at the discretion of the chair. Meetings may be held in other formats (e.g., internet) if there is no objection from committee members. Notice of meetings shall be provided a minimum of 14 days prior to the meeting on [SFPE's web page](#).

5.2.2 **Attendance at Meetings.** Meetings shall be open to anyone who wishes to attend as an observer. Participation by observers shall be in accordance with 5.2.4.

5.2.3 **Quorum.** There is no quorum requirement.

5.2.4 **Participation in Meetings.** Officers, members and alternates shall be permitted to participate in meetings. People with a direct and material interest in the activities of the committee shall be permitted to participate at the discretion of the chair. Voting at meetings shall be limited to members and officers of the standards development committee; however, alternate members shall only be permitted to vote in the event that the member to whom they are alternate is absent or chooses not to vote.

5.2.5 **Conduct of Meetings.** Meetings shall be conducted in accordance with *Robert's Rules of Order*.

6 Preparation of Initial Draft Standard.

6.1 **Development of Draft Standard.** The standards development committee shall develop a draft of the proposed standard that is based on accepted science and fire protection engineering practice.

6.2 Release of draft standard for review.

6.2.1 **Initiation of ballot.** When directed by the chairman of a standards development committee, the secretariat shall send a draft standard to all members and alternates of the standards development committee for letter ballot.

6.2.2 **Conduct of the Ballot.** The ballot shall be conducted in accordance with section 7.4.

6.2.3 **Approval of Draft Standard.** The draft standard shall be approved by the standards development committee when the following conditions have been met:

- Ballots returned represent a majority of the members of the committee eligible to vote.
- Affirmative votes cast for each ballot item are not less than $\frac{2}{3}$ of the total ballots cast, less abstentions.

6.2.4 Review by Technical Steering Committee.

6.2.4.1 **Purpose of Review.** Following approval of a draft standard by a standards making committee, the Technical Steering Committee shall review the draft standard for consistency in meeting SFPE goals and adherence to SFPE policies and bylaws. Appendix A provides guidelines for the review.

6.2.4.2 **Review Process.** The draft standard shall be released for public review by majority vote of the Technical Steering Committee. Following release by the Technical Steering Committee, the draft standard shall be reviewed in accordance with section 7.

7 Review Procedures

7.1 **Overview.** Proposed modifications to draft standards and standards undergoing revision shall be solicited and acted upon. Following action on the proposed modifications, comments on the actions taken on proposed modifications shall be solicited and acted upon. Final issuance of standards shall be by the Technical Steering Committee.

7.2 Proposed Modifications.

- 7.2.1 **Notification of Availability for Review.** Notification of the availability of draft standards or standards undergoing revision shall be made in the SFPE newsletter and on [SFPE's web page](#). Notification shall include the deadline for submitting proposed modifications. Draft standards shall be available from [SFPE's web page](#) or by contacting SFPE headquarters.
- 7.2.2 **Duration.** Draft standards and standards undergoing revision shall be available for review and submission of proposed modifications for a minimum of 90 days.
- 7.2.3 **Submitting Proposed Modifications.** Proposed modifications shall be submitted in a manner prescribed by the Secretariat. Proposed modifications shall identify specific changes to the draft standard and a rationale for the proposed change. All proposed modifications submitted shall be catalogued by the Secretariat and distributed to all members and alternates of the standards development committee.
- 7.2.4 **Proposed Modifications by the Standards Development Committee.** The Standards Development Committee may also generate proposed modifications at the meeting where the committee acts on the proposed modifications submitted. Such proposed modifications must be developed by a motion, which must be approved by a simple majority of those present.
- 7.2.5 **Actions on Proposed Modifications.** The standards development committee shall meet in accordance with 5.2.1 to act on all proposed modifications received by the Secretariat prior to the deadline. The standards development committee shall take one of the following actions on each proposed modification:
- Accept
 - Reject
 - Accept in Principle
 - Accept in Part
 - Accept in Part in Principle

The standards development committee shall prepare a statement that is based on accepted science and fire protection engineering practice identifying the reasoning for any action other than “accept.” The standards development committee may reject any proposed modifications that do not identify specific changes or that do not contain sufficient rationale for the change. The Secretariat shall record all committee actions, and the draft standard shall be revised in accordance with the actions taken on the proposed modifications. The Secretariat shall notify the submitter of each proposed modification of the action taken by the standards development committee.

7.2.6 **Balloting of Actions on Proposed Modifications**

- 7.2.6.1 **Ballot Items.** After the standards development committee has acted on all of the proposed modifications submitted, the actions taken by the committee on the proposed modifications shall be sent to all members and alternates of the committee for letter

ballot. Additionally, a letter ballot shall be included on the full text of the standard, as modified by the actions on the proposed modifications.

7.2.6.2 **Conduct of the Ballot.** The ballot shall be conducted in accordance with section 7.4.

7.2.6.3 **Approval of Actions on Proposed Modifications.** The actions taken on the proposed modifications are approved by the standards development committee when the following conditions have been met:

- Ballots returned represent a majority of the members of the committee eligible to vote.
- Affirmative votes cast for each ballot item are not less than $\frac{2}{3}$ of the total ballots cast, less abstentions.

7.3 **Review of Changes.**

7.3.1 **General.** Following action by the standards development committee on proposed modifications, the proposed modifications and actions taken on the proposed modifications shall be made available for review and comment.

7.3.2 **Notification of Availability of Actions on Proposed Modifications for Review.** Notification of the availability of the proposed modifications and the actions on the proposed modifications shall be made in the SFPE newsletter and on [SFPE's web page](#). Notification shall include the deadline for submitting comments. Proposed modifications and the actions taken on the proposed modifications shall be available from [SFPE's web page](#) or by contacting SFPE headquarters.

7.3.3 **Duration.** Proposed modifications and the actions taken on proposed modifications shall be available for review and submission of comments for a minimum of 90 days.

7.3.4 **Submitting Comments.** Comments shall be submitted in a manner prescribed by the Secretariat. Comments shall identify specific changes to the actions taken on one or more proposed modifications, and a rationale for the proposed change. All comments submitted shall be catalogued by the Secretariat and distributed to all members and alternates of the standards development committee.

7.3.5 **Cases Where No Comments Were Received.** If no comments were received prior to the deadline for submitting comments, at the chair's discretion, a letter ballot may be sent to all members and alternates of the standards development committee suggesting that processing of the document proceed in accordance with section 9. Following a ballot period of a minimum of 14 days, if $\frac{2}{3}$ of the ballots returned from a majority of the members eligible to vote ratify the chair's recommendation, the standard shall be deemed approved by the standards development committee and processing of the document shall proceed in accordance with section 9. Any negative ballots shall be processed in accordance with section 7.4.2.

7.3.6 **Comments by the Standards Development Committee.** Comments by the Standards Development Committee shall be limited to items related to coordination required by actions taken on proposed modifications or on comments. Such comments must be developed by a motion, which must be approved by a simple majority of those present.

7.3.7 **Actions on Comments.** The standards development committee shall meet in accordance with 5.2.1 to act on all comments received by the Secretariat prior to the deadline. The standards development committee shall take one of the following actions on each comment:

- Accept
- Reject
- Accept in Principle
- Accept in Part
- Accept in Part in Principle
- Hold for the next revision

The standards development committee shall prepare a statement that is based on accepted science and fire protection engineering practice identifying the reasoning for any action other than “accept.” The standards development committee may reject any comments that do not identify specific changes or that do not contain sufficient rationale for the change. The Secretariat shall record all committee actions, and the draft standard shall be revised in accordance with the actions taken on the comments. The Secretariat shall notify the submitter of each comment of the action taken by the standards development committee.

Comments that do not relate to a proposed modification shall be held for the next revision of the standard and treated as proposed modifications.

7.3.8 **Balloting of Actions on Comments.**

7.3.8.1 **Ballot Items.** After the standards development committee has acted on all of the comments submitted, the actions taken by the committee on the comments shall be sent to all members and alternates of the committee for letter ballot.

7.3.8.2 **Conduct of the Ballot.** The ballot shall be conducted in accordance with section 7.4.

7.3.8.3 **Approval of the Standard.** The standard shall be approved by the standards development committee when the following conditions have been met:

- Ballots returned represent a majority of the members of the committee eligible to vote.
- Affirmative votes cast for each ballot item are not less than $\frac{2}{3}$ of the total ballots cast, less abstentions.

7.4 **Ballots**

7.4.1 **Voting Period.** The voting period for letter ballots shall be determined by the Secretariat, but in no case shall be less than 28 calendar days.

7.4.2 **Negative Ballots**

7.4.2.1 **Explanation Required.** Negative ballots shall be accompanied by an explanation of the reasoning for the negative ballot. Negative ballots that are submitted without an explanation shall be recorded as abstentions.

7.4.2.2 **Circulation.** At the conclusion of the voting period, all negative ballots shall be circulated to all members and alternates of the committee, who shall have 14 calendar days if they wish to change their original ballot.

7.4.2.3 **Withdrawal of Negative Ballots.** At any point, a negative ballot may be withdrawn by the originator.

8 **Appeals.**

8.1 **How to Appeal.** Any submitter of a proposed modification or comment who wishes to appeal the action taken by the standards development committee may file an appeal to the Technical Steering Committee within 21 days of notification of the action taken by the standards development committee. Such appeals shall be addressed to the Secretariat, and should identify why the action taken by the standards development committee was not correct.

8.2 **Technical Steering Committee Actions on Appeals.** The Technical Steering Committee will assemble in a manner and at a time and date to act on the appeal as directed by the chair of the Technical Steering Committee. The appellant shall have the opportunity to address the Technical Steering Committee prior to their acting on the appeal. In acting on an appeal, the Technical Steering Committee shall take one of the actions identified in section 7.3.7.

8.3 **Petitions to the SFPE Board of Directors.** In extraordinary conditions, appellants to the Technical Steering Committee may file a complaint with the SFPE Board of Directors on the action taken by the Technical Steering Committee on their appeal. Petitions to the SFPE Board of Directors shall be limited to cases where the appellant feels that the SFPE Standard Development Procedures were not properly followed. There shall be a \$1,000 fee for submitting a petition to the SFPE Board of Directors; however, this fee may be waived by decision of the Board of Directors.

9 **Approval of Standards.**

9.1 **Submission of standard to the Technical Steering Committee.** Following approval of a standard by a standards development committee, the standard will be sent to the Technical Steering Committee.

9.2 **Review by Technical Steering Committee.**

9.2.1 **Purpose of Review.** The Technical Steering Committee shall review the standard for consistency in meeting SFPE goals and adherence to policies and bylaws. Appendix A provides guidelines for the review.

9.2.2 **Final Release of Standard.** Final release of the standard, pending resolution of any appeals to the Board of Directors will be by $\frac{3}{4}$ approval of the Technical Steering Committee in a letter ballot. The ballot shall be conducted in accordance with section 7.4. If the standard is not approved by the Technical Steering Committee, comments shall be re-solicited in accordance with section 7.3.

10 **Interpretations.**

10.1 **Requests for Interpretations.** Requests for interpretations shall be made in writing to the Secretariat of the standards development committee. The request for interpretation must address a specific provision of the standard.

10.2 **Developing Draft Interpretations.** The chair of the relevant standards development committee shall prepare a draft interpretation in response to the request. The draft shall be sent to the standards development committee with a ballot on the interpretation and to the person who requested the interpretation. The person who requested the interpretation shall be informed that the draft interpretation is not the official position of the Society of Fire Protection Engineers until confirmed by the appropriate standards development committee.

10.3 **Approval of Draft Interpretations.** If there are negative ballots from members of the standards development committee, the concerns raised in the negative ballot(s) shall be addressed at a meeting held in accordance with section 5.2 and the draft interpretation will be re-balloted. The draft interpretation shall be approved by the standards development committee when the requirements of 7.2.6.3 are satisfied.

10.4 **Handling of Interpretations.** Approved interpretations shall be sent to the person who requested the interpretation and shall be posted on SFPE's web page. During the next revision of the standard, the standards development committee shall revise the standard as necessary such that the interpretation is no longer needed.

11 **Maintenance of Standards.**

11.1 **Frequency.** Standards shall be reviewed by the standards development committee within five years of publication.

11.2 **Proposed Changes.** Any changes proposed by the standards development committee shall be reviewed in accordance with section 7. Comments shall be solicited on the standard as published and on any changes proposed by the standards development committee.

11.3 **Approval.** Approval of the revised standard shall be in accordance with section 9.

Appendix A - Guidelines for Technical Steering Committee Review of Proposed Standards and Documents

TSC Document Review Checklist

Criteria	Guidance to Reviewer
1. Is the document free of substantive grammatical or technical errors?	High level review to identify substantive errors. It is not intended that the reviewer conduct a detailed grammatical or technical review.
2. Does the document advance the practice of fire protection engineering through the transfer of information and standards?	Addresses SFPE goal of Technical Excellence and Communication. If no, document may not be in-line with SFPE goals. Review all goals to assure consistency.
3. Does the document describe or affect the roles and responsibilities of design professionals during the construction phase as it pertains to fire protection and life safety?	If yes, review the policy on “The Role of Fire Protection Engineer in the Construction Process” to determine if the document is consistent with its content.
4. Does the document describe or affect the roles and responsibilities of engineers and technicians when designing fire protection systems?	If yes, review the position paper “The Engineer and the Technician Designing Fire Protection Systems” to determine if the document is consistent with its content.
5. Does the document affect the initiation, scope or details of a peer review, or the choice of a peer reviewer?	If yes, review the position paper “Guidelines for Peer Review in the Fire Protection Design Process” to determine if the document is consistent with its content.
6. Is the document’s terminology and approach consistent with that of other SFPE standards, guidelines and engineering practice documents?	If no, identify inconsistencies.