

**Procedures for Organization, Development, and Maintenance of Challenge Course
Standards by the Association for Challenge Course Technology (ACCT)**
**(Following the guidelines as designated in the *ANSI Essential Requirements: Due process
requirements for American National Standards*)**
Amended June 2006, following comments from ANSI Committees

1 General

These procedures apply to the development, approval, revision, reaffirmation, and withdrawal of consensus standards for the challenge course industry developed by the Association for Challenge Course Technology (ACCT) in accordance with the *ANSI Essential Requirements*.

Scope: ACCT's scope of standard involvement is to develop and maintain consensus standards for the challenge course industry.

2 Organization

2.1 Board of Directors.

ACCT is governed by an elected, voluntary Board of Directors who are current members of the Association, each serving a three-year term per the ACCT by-laws. The number of Directors constituting the entire Board of Directors shall not be less than five (5) nor more than nine (9).

2.2 The Secretariat.

The Association for Challenge Course Technology and its Board of Directors is designated as the Secretariat. The Secretariat shall

- a) organize the Consensus Group.
- b) apply for accreditation by ANSI and maintain accreditation in accordance with the *ANSI Essential Requirements*, including submission of the Consensus Group roster.
- c) oversee compliance with these procedures.
- d) maintain rosters of the Consensus Group and any Sub-Committees and a list of standards for which the Consensus Group is responsible.
- e) perform administrative work and support services, including arranging meetings, preparation and distribution of agendas, minutes, draft standards, and maintaining adequate records.
- f) distribute proposed standards, as initially proposed, from the Sub-Committees to the Consensus Group.
- g) submit proposed standards approved by the Consensus Group and any other required information to ANSI for review and approval as American National Standards.
- h) perform other administrative functions as required by these procedures.
- i) manage the support systems for the Consensus Group and Sub-Committees.
- j) publish approved standards and subsequent revisions.

2.3 Consensus Group.

The Consensus Group shall be established by ACCT and will be responsible for

- a) reviewing standards proposed by the Sub-Committee and making any changes to the proposed standards.
- b) voting on approval of American National Standards within its scope.
- c) maintaining the standards developed by the Consensus Group.
- d) complying with policy and procedures for interpretations of the standards developed by the Consensus Group.
- e) responding to requests for interpretations of the standard(s) developed by the Consensus Group.
- f) other matters requiring committee action as provided in these procedures.

3 Consensus Group Officers

A chair and vice-chair shall be nominated by the individual members of the Consensus Group, subject to approval by a majority vote of the Consensus Group. The Consensus Group will review officer positions every two years, and a majority vote of the Consensus Group is required for approval. Each officer will serve until a successor is selected and ready to serve. The vice-chair shall carry out the chair's duties if the chair is temporarily unable to do so. The secretary shall be appointed by the Secretariat.

4 Membership

Membership on the ACCT Consensus Group is open to all interested parties having a direct and material interest in the activities of the Consensus Group and shall be sufficiently diverse to ensure reasonable balance without dominance by any single interest group.

4.1 Initial Committee Membership. ACCT Secretariat shall initially select one-half of the Consensus Group. The remainder of the individuals shall be elected from materially affected interests by the Consensus Group. Membership selection by the Secretariat and by the Consensus Group shall give consideration to

- a) the need for active participation by members of each interest group,
- b) the need for balance and the potential for dominance by members of a single interest group,
- c) the extent of interest expressed and the willingness to participate, and
- d) qualifications and ability to materially contribute to the work of the Consensus Group.

4.2 Application. Individuals seeking membership on the Consensus Group shall submit a written request to the Secretariat indicating their interest in the work of the Consensus Group and their qualifications, willingness to participate, and affiliations that might affect their classification. Applicants shall identify their interest category. (See *4.3 Interest Categories*.)

4.3 Interest Categories. All members of the Consensus Group shall be classified as Vendors (Producers), Users, or General Interest representatives in accordance with the following definitions:

- a) Vendor. This category includes representatives of interests directly involved in the construction of and inspection of challenge courses.
- b) User. This category includes representatives of interests directly involved in using challenge courses. Examples include, but are not limited to, schools and universities, camps, hospitals, outdoor education organizations, community service organizations, social service agencies, insurance agencies, and equipment suppliers.
- c) General Interest. This category includes representatives with a variety of perspectives that are neither vendors nor users. Examples include, but are not limited to, educators, researchers, regulatory agencies, technical societies, consumer groups, environmental groups, and non-profit organizations.

4.4 Processing Applications. The Secretariat shall promptly process the applications, making sure balance is maintained, and send all applications on to the Consensus Group. The Consensus Group shall accept or reject all applications.

If space is unavailable on the Consensus Group (See *4.6 Consensus Group Size.*), applicants who are accepted shall be put into a queue for the next available position.

Rejected applicants shall have the right to appeal in accordance with Section 11, *Appeals*. In accepting or rejecting applicants, consideration shall be given to the following:

- a) the need for active participation by members of each interest group,
- b) the need for balance and the potential for dominance by members of a single interest group,
- c) the extent of interest expressed and the willingness to participate, and
- d) qualifications and ability to materially contribute to the work of the Consensus Group.

4.5 Balance. The standards development process should have a balance of interests. Participants from diverse interest categories shall be sought with the objective of achieving balance. Criteria for balance are that

- a) no single-interest category constitutes more than one-third of the membership of the Consensus Group dealing with safety-related standards, or
- b) no single-interest category constitutes a majority of the membership of the Consensus Group dealing with other than safety-related standards.

No single interest category shall constitute more than one-third of the voting membership of the Consensus Group. However, temporary imbalance can exist due to membership resignations, illnesses, or other unforeseen circumstances. No ballots will be issued during periods of any Consensus Group imbalance.

4.6 Consensus Group Size. The Secretariat shall consider and may recommend reasonable limits on the size of the Consensus Group. To ensure administrative manageability of any group or committee, the suggested maximum is 15.

4.7 Review of Membership. The ACCT Secretariat shall review the membership list annually with respect to the criteria of this Section 4, *Membership*. Members are expected to fulfill obligations of active participation. Where a member is found in repeated default of these obligations, the ACCT Secretariat shall direct the matter to the Consensus Group for appropriate action, which may include termination of membership.

4.8 Membership Roster. The ACCT Secretariat shall maintain current and accurate Consensus Group and Sub-Committee rosters and shall distribute the roster to the members at least annually and otherwise on request. The roster shall include the following:

- a) title of each committee and its designation
- b) scope of each committee
- c) Secretariat: name of organization, name of secretary, and address(es)
- d) officers: chair and vice-chair
- e) member names, addresses, and business affiliation of members of each committee
- f) classification of each member in the Consensus Group
- g) an accounting of classifications in the Consensus Group: total of voting members and subtotals for each interest category
- h) for each Sub-Committee: title, chair, and names and addresses of all members

4.9 Sub-Committees. Sub-Committees shall be established by the Secretariat, as needed, or at the request of the Consensus Group, for the purpose of proposing standards and identifying modifications, clarifications, additions, and deletions in the standards.

4.9.1 Membership on Sub-Committees is open to all persons who have expertise in the duties delegated to the Sub-Committee and shall not be members of the Consensus Group.

4.9.2 Balance is not required for Sub-Committees and shall be made up of from one (1) to ten (10) persons, as necessary. A roster of all Sub-Committees shall be maintained by the Secretariat.

4.9.3 Upon forming a new Sub-Committee or adding new members to an existing Sub-Committee, Chairs make recommendations of members for Secretariat approval.

4.9.4 Sub-Committee chairpersons may not be members of the main Consensus Group and shall be recommended by the members of the Sub-Committee. Sub-Committee Chairs will be voted on by the Secretariat.

4.9.5 Sub-Committee decision-making is based on consensus from all Sub-Committee members present at meetings.

5 Meetings

Consensus Group meetings are held to conduct business, such as making assignments, receiving reports of work, considering draft standards, resolving differences among Sub-Committees, and considering views and objections from any source.

5.1 Open Meetings. Meetings of the Consensus Group and all Sub-Committees shall be open to all members and others having a direct and material interest. At least four weeks notice of meetings shall be given by the Secretariat. The notice shall describe the purpose of the meeting and shall identify a readily available source for further information. An agenda shall be available and shall be distributed in advance of the meeting to members and to others expressing interest. The Secretariat may optionally maintain a permanent mailing list of other interests. Meetings shall be held at a location convenient for the majority of the Group or may be conducted by conference calls or by simultaneous video-linked locations.

5.2 Quorum. A majority of the entire authorized number of members of each committee shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. If a quorum is not present, actions may be taken subject to confirmation by letter ballot or at a subsequent meeting.

6 Voting

6.1 Vote. Except in regard to votes on membership and office-related issues, each member of the Consensus Body shall vote one of the following positions:

- a) affirmative
- b) affirmative, with comment
- c) negative, with reasons (the reasons for a negative vote shall be given and if possible should include specific wording or actions that would resolve the objection)
- d) abstain

6.2 Voting Period. The voting period shall end four weeks from the date of issue or as soon as all ballots are returned, whichever comes earlier. An extension may be granted at the Chair's option, when warranted.

A follow-up letter requesting immediate return of the ballot shall be sent, as appropriate, to members and alternate members whose votes have not been received within ten working days before the ballot closes.

6.3 Actions Requiring Approval by a Majority. The following actions require approval by a majority of the membership of the Consensus Group either at a meeting or by letter ballot:

- a) confirmation of officers
- b) recommendation of formation of a sub-committee to the Secretariat., including its procedures, scope, and duties
- c) recommendation of disbandment of sub-committee
- d) addition of new Consensus Group members and designation of their interest categories
- e) issuance of a formal interpretation of a standard or information relating to a standard
- f) issuance of a response to a negative comment

The following actions, by committee vote at a meeting, require approval by a majority of the members present:

- a) approval of minutes
- b) authorization of a letter ballot

6.4 Actions Requiring Approval by Two-Thirds of Those Voting. The following actions require a letter ballot or an equivalent, formal, recorded vote with approval by at least a majority of the membership and at least two-thirds of those voting, excluding abstentions. All members of the Consensus Group shall be given the opportunity to vote on the standards-related actions described below. When votes for the items below are recorded at a Consensus Group meeting, those members who are absent shall be given opportunity to vote before or after the meeting, with the actual vote being verified:

- a) approval of a new standard or reaffirmation of an existing one
- b) approval of revision or addendum to part or all of a standard
- c) withdrawal of American National Standards

6.5 Authorization of Letter Ballots. A letter ballot may be authorized by any of the following:

- a) majority vote of those present at a Consensus Group meeting
- b) the Chair
- c) the Secretariat
- d) petition of five or more members of the Consensus Group

6.6 Public Review.

6.6.1 Notification That Standard Will Be Developed. At the initiation of a project to develop or revise an American National Standard, notification shall be made to ANSI using the Project Initiation Notification System Form (PINS). Any comments arising from the PINS will be addressed in accordance with Section 2.4 of the *ANSI Essential Requirements*.

6.6.2 Public Review of Standard. Proposals for new American National Standards or reaffirmation, revision, or withdrawal of existing American National Standards shall be transmitted to ANSI for listing in *Standards Actions* for comment and shall be posted on the Association for Challenge Course Web site, and may be published in other

Association publications.

6.6.3 Processing Comments. Written comments shall be accepted for sixty days, unless the proposed standard is available electronically, then comments need only be accepted for forty-five days. To be considered, negative comments must include a reason and, preferably, specific wording or actions which would resolve the objection. Within thirty days of the close of this period of public review, the Secretariat shall report the responses, including negative views, to the chairperson.

6.7 Disposition of Views and Objections. All objections submitted during a public comment period or consensus body vote shall be referred to the Consensus Group Chair or to the Sub-Committee responsible for the part of the standard in question to attempt resolution. The Consensus Group may request the Secretariat to obtain further information from the objector or attempt to correspond with the objector directly and reach resolution. If substantial changes to the standard are required, then the changes are subject to letter ballot, and a new public review period. If changes are not made to the standard, then the response to the negative comment is subject to approval by vote of the Consensus Group and the objector is informed in writing of the response. In addition, the objector shall be informed of the appeals process. Any unresolved objections and attempts at resolution shall be reported to the consensus Group in order to afford all members of the Consensus group an opportunity to respond, reaffirm, or change their vote.

6.8 Report of Final Result

The final result of the voting shall be reported, by interest categories, to the Consensus Group.

7 Submittal of Standard.

Upon completion of the procedures for voting, disposition of views and objections, and appeals, the proposed standard shall be submitted to ANSI by the ACCT Secretariat. The timeliness of this submittal shall be in accordance with the *ANSI Essential Requirements*. If the Secretariat does not submit to ANSI within a reasonable period of time, any member(s) of the committee may make the submittal.

7.1 Information Submitted. The Secretariat shall submit to ANSI all the necessary evidence of compliance with ANSI's criteria of approval of an American National Standard in accordance with Section 4.2.1.1 in the *ANSI Essential Requirements*.

7.2 All introductions, commentary, and appendices of these challenge course standards are not subject to ANSI-accredited procedures and therefore are not considered to be part of the ANSI document.

8 Termination of Committee

Requests to terminate the Consensus Group shall be made in writing to the ACCT Secretariat and shall include at least the following:

- a) reasons why the committee should be terminated
- b) the name(s) of the organization(s) that will assume responsibility for maintenance of any existing American National Standard(s) that are the responsibility of the Consensus Group

9 Withdrawal of Standard

When approved by the ACCT Board of Directors, the Secretariat shall notify ANSI with the request to withdraw the standard. Procedures for withdrawal shall comply with Section 4.2.1.3.2 of the ANSI Essential Requirements.

10 Interpretation of Standards

Requests for formal interpretation of a standard shall be in writing and directed to the Secretariat. The Secretariat shall acknowledge the request within thirty days of receipt and may issue a tentative interpretation or refer to a previous interpretation. No interpretation is binding unless it is approved by a majority of the Consensus Group in a meeting or by letter ballot in accordance with Section 6.1, *Vote*. The chairperson of the Consensus Group shall appoint a task committee or an ad hoc committee to develop a proposed interpretation for vote by the Consensus Group.

11 Appeals

Persons who believe they have been or will be adversely affected by a standard within the committee's jurisdiction, or by the lack thereof, shall have the right to appeal substantive or procedural actions or inactions of the Consensus Group or the Secretariat. Procedural actions include affording due process to technical issues. Appeals may also be filed for procedural complaints, including whether a technical issue was afforded due process.

11.1 Complaint. The complainant shall file a written complaint with the Secretariat within thirty days after the date of notification of action or at any time with respect to inaction. The complaint shall state the nature of the objection(s) including any adverse effects, the section(s) of these procedures or the standard that is at issue, actions or inactions that are at issue, and the specific action(s) that would satisfy the complainant's concerns. Previous efforts to resolve the objection(s) and the outcome of each shall be noted.

11.2 Response. Within thirty days after receipt of the complaint, the Chair or Secretariat representative shall respond in writing to the complainant, specifically addressing each allegation in the complaint to the extent possible. The Secretariat shall attempt to resolve the complaint informally.

11.3 Appeals Panel and Hearing. If the Secretariat or Chair is unable to informally resolve the complaint, it shall appoint an appeals panel to hold a hearing on a date agreeable to all participants, with at least 15 working days notice. The appeals panel shall consist of three individuals who have not been directly involved in the dispute and who will not be materially

affected by any decision made in the dispute. At least two members of the panel shall be acceptable to the complainant and at least two shall be acceptable to the Secretariat.

11.4 Conduct of the Hearing. The complainant has the responsibility of demonstrating improper actions or inaction, the adverse effects therefrom, and the efficacy of the requested remedial action. The Secretariat has the responsibility to demonstrate that the Consensus Group took all actions in question in compliance with these procedures and that the requested remedial action would be ineffective or detrimental.

11.5 Decision. The appeals panel shall render its decision in writing within 30 days, stating its findings of fact and conclusions, with reasons therefor, and citing the evidence. The Secretariat shall notify the complainant and the Consensus Group of the decision of the appeals panel, which shall be binding and final on all concerned.

11.6 Further Appeal. Further appeal shall be made directly to ANSI, but only if the above process has been followed to its conclusion. If the complainant gives notice to ACCT that such a further appeal to ANSI is intended, all relevant materials, including the decision made by the appeals panel set forth above, shall be submitted to ANSI by ACCT.

12 Parliamentary Procedures

On questions of parliamentary procedure not covered in these procedures, *Robert's Rules of Order* (latest edition) may be used to expedite due process.

13 Metric Policy

Any units found in ACCT standards will be either English units plus standard international units (metric units) or standard international units alone.

14 Patent Policy

ACCT's Patent Policy shall be in accordance with the ANSI Patent Policy, as specified in the *ANSI Essential Requirements*, Section 3.1.

14 Record Retention Policy

Records shall be prepared and maintained to provide evidence of compliance with these procedures. Records concerning new, revised, or reaffirmed American National Standards shall be retained for one complete standards cycle.

Records concerning withdrawals of all American National Standards shall be retained for at least five years from the date of withdrawal.

15 Commercial terms and conditions Policy

ACCT will comply with ANSI's Commercial terms and conditions Policy as set forth in the *ANSI Essential Requirements*.