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HA EU WATCH

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## ITS in Europe – Identifying Opportunities for the HA

## Standards and Standardisation Fact Sheet


### Summary

The word "standard" is often misunderstood and misused. A dictionary definition of standard may refer to "a level of quality or attainment" or "falling within an accepted range". A technical specification, a code of practice or a widely used practice may also be loosely referred to as standards. These are actually examples of de facto (which means "in fact") standards.

However, this guide is concerned with more formal standards that are de jure (an expression that means "based on law") and the result of the formal standardisation process. Such Standards might be called Standards with a capital "S".

There is a wealth of information available on the process and products of standardisation. The British Standards Institution (BSi) should be the formal point of enquiry, although BSi staff are involved in the process more than the content of standardisation. Often the most useful information is unpublished and only available to those directly involved in its development; the information then becomes available when it approaches its final form and the draft standards are circulated for comment or vote.

The following is a brief guide to Standards and standardisation and although every care has been taken in compiling the information, users of this text should not rely on its accuracy or completeness.



### Key Words

Standards; Standardisation

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### What are Standards?


A Standard is a specification approved by a body recognised at the regional, national or international level and made available to the public.

The development of Standards is based on a formal process of development, review and ratification. The work is carried out by experts on a voluntary basis, with the support of their employers. Development of the text of a Standard proceeds by consensus of the parties involved and ratification is subject to voting at national and international levels. Development of a full Standard takes at least 3 years, although useful results are often available well before the final ratification date.



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As well as full Standards – British Standards (identified as for example BS 16104), European Standards (e.g. EN 14892) and World Standards (e.g. ISO 14825), there are a number of other standardisation "products":

- Additional European (CEN) deliverables include Technical Specifications (TS), Technical Reports (TR), and CEN Workshop Agreements (CWA)
- Additional (ISO) deliverables include Internal Technical Reports, Published Technical Reports, Technical Specifications, Publicly Available Specifications (PAS) and National Standards

## Benefits of Standards

Standards contribute significantly to:

- Diminishing trade barriers
- Promoting interoperability of products, systems and services
- Promoting common technical understanding
- Supporting the EU's policies of free technical integration and protection of the consumer

Being able to claim conformance to a Standard may also be considered to endow commercial, ethical or moral advantage.

## What Organisations are Involved in Development?

British Standards Institution (www.bsi-global.com) is the British standardisation body, which develops and votes for the ratification of European and world-wide Standards produced by CEN, CLC, ISO and IEC. It must adopt European Standards prepared by CEN and CLC as national Standards (these are identified as BS EN___), and withdraw any conflicting national Standards on the same subject. It may adopt ISO and IEC Standards where there is a British need or interest (these are identified as BS ISO___). BSI can only develop national standards where there is no interest in developing a European standard. It is expected that any national standards are based on any existing ISO standards; these cover all of the ITS area and explain why the effort in the UK is targeted at CEN and ISO developments. Whereas BSI provides process-related standardisation support, the technical contributions to and positions on proposals are formed by British experts working through the national committee BSI/EPL 278. These experts secure their own funding for their participation in the Standards work, although there is limited funding for BSI delegates attending some formal Standards meetings overseas.

Apart from being BSI's counterpart in the Netherlands, the Dutch Standardisation Institute (Nederlands Normalisatie-instituut) has the Secretariat of and ensures the process-related support for the technical committee (CEN/TC278, www.nen.nl/cen278) that is responsible for ITS standardisation in Europe.

European Committee for Standardisation (Comité Européen de Normalisation, www.cenorm.be/cenorm/ ) has the mission to promote voluntary technical harmonization in Europe in conjunction with its partners in Europe and worldwide bodies. In Europe, CEN works in

partnership with the European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardisation (CENELEC, www.cenelec.org) and the European Telecommunications Standards Institute (ETSI – see below). European ITS standardisation work is primarily, but not exclusively, carried out under CEN (and its technical committee TC 278 on Road Transport and Traffic Telematics).

European Telecommunications Standards Institute (www.etsi.org) is a not for profit organisation whose mission is to produce the telecommunications Standards that will be used for decades to come throughout Europe and beyond. ETSI plays a significant role in ITS standardisation, in particular in the development of telecommunications tests Standards.

International Organisation for Standardisation (www.iso.ch) is the world's largest developer of Standards. ISO is a network of national Standards institutes from 147 countries working in partnership with international organisations, governments, industry, business and consumer representatives. ISO is the source of 13,700 International Standards for business, government and society, although its principal activity is the development of technical Standards. ISO (and its technical committee TC204) develops ITS Standards in collaboration with CEN (and its TC278).

Information Communications Technologies Standards Board (www.ictsb.org/home.htm) is a collaboration of the European Standardisation Organisation and other organisations whose key aspiration is to support an effective European standardisation system. Its Intelligent Transport Systems Steering Group (ITSSG) aims to provide a strategic focus and direction in the ITS area.

## What is the Legal Position of Standards?

In most cases, a Standard should be regarded as a voluntary code. However, there are situations where the use of a Standard is required across Europe to enable the European Single Market to operate fairly or in support of pan-European Health, Safety, or working conditions. Such measures are formulated in "Directives" which must be adhered to by EU member countries. The Directives (particularly the new approach Directives where the Directive itself contains only the policy objectives and is designed to be supported by other documents containing the essential requirements and technical detail (www.newapproach.org) are often backed by the development of "harmonised" Standards, in which the required aspects to fulfil the requirements of the Directive are defined. In these circumstances the EU will sometimes pay for the preparation of essential standards. The Standards are not mandatory, but products manufactured according to such 'harmonised' Standards involve a 'presumption of conformity' and compliance results in the right of the product to bear the CE marking of conformity and for market release throughout Europe.

Within any country, a Government can require adherence to an International, European, or National Standard, and in fact this is not uncommon. However, within Europe, EU member countries are obliged to ensure that the use of such National Standards does not inhibit the European Single market.

There is also a requirement that in public tendering within EU countries, "relevant" Standards have to be taken into account. However "relevant" does not appear to be defined, and "taken into

account" means that they need not be used if there is a reason for developing another specification.

Information concerning Standards and intellectual property can be accessed at: http://www.nssf.info/resources/documents/Standards_and_Intellectual_PR.pdf

## WHERE CAN I GET FURTHER ADVICE?

If the information and web links do not provide the required information, or you would like further advice, it may be helpful to talk to someone directly involved in standardisation.

The formal route is via BSi and through the Secretary of EPL/278 (that is the UK group most directly involved in ITS matters), Manjit Matharu:

Email: manjit.matharu@bsi-global.com

Tel: 020 8996 7127 Fax: 020 8996 7143.

An alternative contact point is the Chairman, Terry Sullivan:

Email: t.sullivan@blueyonder.co.uk

Tel: 0117 987 9297

Note that BSI does not normally provide any information about individuals and some of the information and documentation is confidential or restricted.

## GLOSSARY

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| BSi | British Standards institution |
| CE | CE marking is a declaration by the manufacturer that the product meets all the appropriate provisions of the relevant legislation implementing certain European Directives. |
| CEN | European Committee for Standardisation (Comité Européen de Normalisation) |
| CENELEC | European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardisation |
| CWA | CEN Workshop Agreement |
| ETSI | European Telecommunications Standards Institute |
| EU | European Union |
| ICTSB | Information Communications Technologies Standards Board |
| IEC | International Electrotechnical Commission |
| ISO | International Organisation for Standardisation |
| ITS | Intelligent Transport Systems |
| PAS | Publicly Available Specifications |
| TR | Technical Report |
| TS | Technical Specification |
| NEN | Dutch Standardisation Institute (Nederlands Normalisatie-instituut) |