



Report of the Chair: first 90 days

Dear Colleagues:

It is my great pleasure and honour to serve as the chair of this committee. As many of you know, I have been involved in the work program of ISO/TC 197 for more than 10 years (since mid-2001) and, thus, was quite familiar with both an overall atmosphere within the TC as well as the status of individual Working Groups by the time I took office in September. Within the time period between my nomination and official approval by ISO TBM, I have received a significant number of unsolicited inputs from the TC participants and other stakeholders, for which I am very grateful, as it helped to formulate the path forward. I am continuing to further receive input and in aggregate it points in the direction of approach we've developed.

Since our appointment, Jim Ferrero and I spent some time analyzing received input and going through lessons learned making sure we'll be able to heal, in a very positive way, the sores of disappointment and frustration that have been growing within this committee for some time. The input we received clearly pointed in the direction of the following key attributes that we needed to mostly pay attention to: transparency, ethics, technical credibility, sense of collective ownership. (Same attributes are addressed in the ISO Code of Conduct for the technical work published by ISO last year).

An apt epigraph to our approach could be a famous quote from Albert Einstein (courtesy of Jay Keller):

"We can't solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them."

So, clearly, we needed to step out of the box and break away from the existing routine. We want to accomplish two things:

- Set a new direction for development of standard documents for hydrogen, and
 - In doing so, we must be a learning organization that takes into account not only its own experience but an objective reality surrounding us – we do not operate in a vacuum

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- Develop a new organizational structure for the TC

It is not possible to describe all details and rationales in a concise message like this – we will cover those in detail at our plenary meeting in Montreal next February. Here I will only point out the highlights of what we will propose to the TC in the near future.

New direction for standard documents development plays to the key strength of ISO – ability to bring together a diversified group of technical experts and other stakeholders interested in the development of consensus technical requirements (that’s what I call “collective ownership”) for emerging products and services. The approach thus is to concentrate the development of **International Standards** on component level technical requirements that are largely independent on local conditions. International standardization of so-called “listed components” is thus a corner stone of global harmonization.

And where local conditions, practices and authorities are expected to play a significant role (for example, built environment and safety) – concentrate on development of **Technical Reports** to assist stakeholders in deployment and commercialization of hydrogen infrastructure by providing them with science-based recommendations and best practices. Answering a simple question, why, after about 125 years and counting, there is no international standard for gasoline service stations, will help guide us in the right direction in this area. The recent painful experience of this committee through its WG11 unsuccessful attempt since 2003 at developing an International Standard for gaseous hydrogen refuelling plays along the answer to the above question. Guidance and guidelines, best practice options and recommended choices summarized in a Technical Report free from rigid requirements of normative language is likely a better choice consensus international document for built environment.

During this exercise, we obviously reviewed the progress of all Working Groups. Not surprisingly, two of them, WG6 and WG11, stand out due to failure to achieve their respective objectives and meet their respective timelines. It needs to be noted that those time lines have been pushed back for years, only to be failed again. We will recommend disbanding both Working Groups in accordance with ISO Directives. (I’ll be sending respective ballots in the next couple of days). I will provide more detailed information on each WG to be disbanded within its respective ballot; here, I would only like to emphasize that we intend to restart this work by initiating a call for proposals on both items but under new leadership, scope and direction. I hope you will support us in this intent.

New organizational structure gets away from unilateral decision-making (that always lacks transparency) by introducing an advisory body – Technical Advisory Board (TAB), whose purpose is to develop, discuss and coordinate all essential policy actions and technical strategy as well as critical communications and liaisons of the TC. TAB will also have regional representation as well as representation of all technical programs within the TC.

In broad strokes, other new structure components include:

- Four technical programs each led by a technical program director (TPD). These programs will constitute the entire work program of the TC.
- The leadership team: chair, secretary and 4 TPDs form a Technical Advisory Board (TAB) noted above. Although the secretary and chair will still be the “executive” function, the decision-



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making process will be entirely different. TPDs will carry regional representation functions as well as will be able to communicate effectively general concerns and outstanding issues within each program.

- The division into programs, while keeping an administrative reporting of the Working Groups to the TC, will allow us to maintain a very high technical quality of standard documents – TPDs are leaders in their respective fields – as well as maintain technical coordination between the WGs within each program under bigger umbrella / picture and thus driving technical content towards common goals, rather than following narrow interests of industry groups that may dominate individual WGs. This will not only make the standard documents more ethical, the whole process will pick up a notch on the ethics scale. TPDs will not be WG conveners, thus, keeping an arms length and avoiding a conflict of interest.
- Looking forward, division of the entire body of work into technical programs prepares the committee to the eventuality of establishing sub-committees. This will happen sooner or later. And when it happens, this TC has already established a culture of program collaboration within TAB. This will ensure that future sub-committees will not grow too independent of the main TC and each other, and will continue coordinating their work.
- Another advantage is the coordination of committee liaisons. With this structure every liaison will have a “home” and a person in charge (TPD).

We think with this approach we addressed all key points from lessons learned analysis and hope that you'll embrace it too. Detailed information on the structure along with TPD candidates' bios will be sent out before or on January 15, 2013, so you'll have sufficient time to reflect on our proposal.

As additional information, we started outreach to various international stakeholders. We scheduled a conference call with ISO/TC 58 and TC58/SC3 leadership early January, and are planning a meeting with ISO/TC 22 and EIGA leadership in March. We have also received three applications for liaisons from outside organizations, which we will be reviewing at our meeting in Montreal. It has been busy and interesting time and this is just the beginning!

I'd like to conclude my report to you with another famous quote, this time from Henry Ford:

"Coming together is a beginning, staying together is progress, and working together is success."

I wish us all great success. Jim and I are looking forward to working with you. All the best for the holiday season and thank you for your support. Happy New Year!

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Andrei V. Tchouvelev'.

Andrei V. Tchouvelev,
Chair, ISO/TC 197