

Consultation Paper

STANDARDS
Australia

August 2025

Introduction

Standards Australia is undertaking an independent, future-focused review of our standards development process. This is a critical opportunity to ensure our standards system remains robust, transparent, and fit-for-purpose, with a focus on addressing rapid technological change, evolving policy needs, and international alignment needs. Your feedback will be essential in shaping recommendations to strengthen the future of standards development in Australia.



This consultation paper outlines the scope of the review and the key areas we are seeking feedback on. It forms part of a broader engagement process, including workshops, interviews, and written submissions.

Background

As Australia's peak national standards body, Standards Australia is responsible for developing and maintaining technical standards that serve the public interest. We do so in partnership with industry, government, and consumers. Our standards must reflect local needs while aligning with international practices, particularly under our obligations as a signatory to the World Trade Organization (WTO) Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade.

Recognising the need to adapt and improve, Standards Australia has commissioned an independent review of its end-to-end development process. This review is jointly backed by the Standards Development and Accreditation Committee (SDAC) and the Board of Standards Australia.

The purpose of the review is to ensure our processes are modern, inclusive, and responsive—supporting high-quality outcomes across all sectors, including those that are emerging or undergoing significant transformation.

About the Reviewer

The review is being led by **Gareth Dando**, an experienced strategy consultant, innovation expert, and artificial intelligence (AI) specialist. Gareth brings over 35 years of international experience, including senior roles with the Boston Consulting Group, LEK, and OC&C. He has worked extensively in organisational transformation, standards development, and technology-led innovation, and previously advised Standards Australia on innovation and process redesign.

Gareth will be supported by a small team of independent external consultants, led by Kenneth Weldin, Partner Audit and Assurance, PKF Melbourne.

Scope of the Review

The review will focus on the full lifecycle of standards development, and policies and procedures within the scope of SDAC ([Charter](#)), including:

- Identification, initiation and prioritisation of standards proposals
- End-to-end workflows, timelines, decision points, and quality assurance
- Committee structures, composition, governance, and integrity
- Stakeholder engagement and public consultation
- Role and structure of the Standards Development team
- Integration of digital tools, including the potential role of AI
- Benchmarking against international practices
- Obligations under WTO agreements, including alignment to international and overseas standards, and national reform agenda

Key Themes and Questions

We are seeking stakeholder views on three core pillars of the review. You are welcome to respond to all or only those most relevant to your role or expertise. These questions are intended as prompts and not limitations—stakeholders are encouraged to raise any other issues or ideas they believe relevant.

1. Prioritisation and Assessment of Needs

- How well does our current process identify and prioritise emerging needs or gaps in the standards landscape?
- Are the criteria and processes for accepting and assessing new proposals clear and appropriate?
- How can we better balance local priorities with international alignment?
- What mechanisms should we introduce to ensure early and ongoing visibility of sector-wide needs?

2. Efficiency and Effectiveness of the Development Process

- What aspects of the current end-to-end process work well, and what are the key friction points?
- Are there stages in the process that could be accelerated or simplified without compromising quality or consensus?
- How could we enhance the transparency and predictability of timelines?
- Are there alternative pathways to developing or adopting standards that should be explored?

3. Governance, Integrity and Committee Composition

- How effective is our governance structure in ensuring accountability and transparency?
- Are our technical committees adequately representative of the relevant sectors and stakeholder interests?
- What improvements could be made to manage real or perceived conflicts of interest?
- Are our policies, rules and procedures clear, consistent and proportionate?

Other Areas for Input

We are also inviting input on:

- How digital tools, including artificial intelligence, could be used to improve drafting, consultation or quality assurance
- How we can better support contributors and reduce barriers to participation
- What lessons can be drawn from other national or international standard-setting organisations
- Any other insights, challenges, or opportunities you believe would enhance the integrity, efficiency, and future-readiness of the standards development process.

Please note: Access to standards is not within the scope of this review, as not within the scope of SDAC, and the organisation is progressing this matter through other mechanisms.

How to Contribute

There are several ways to participate in the consultation:

- **Written submissions** can be sent to stdsconsult@exigiant.com.au by **Friday 19 September 2025**.
- **Workshops** will be held in various locations throughout August and September. Please register your interest via the links below:

Face-to-face

Location	Date	Time (local)	Registration Link
Perth	25 August 2025	14:00–16:00	Click to register for Perth
Canberra	28 August 2025	09:00–11:00	Click to register for Canberra
Brisbane	5 September 2025	10:00–12:00	Click to register for Brisbane
Adelaide	8 September 2025	14:00–16:00	Click to register for Adelaide
Melbourne	9 September 2025	10:00–12:00	Click to register for Melbourne
Sydney	10 September 2025	10:00–12:00	Click to register for Sydney

Remote

Date	Time (AEST)	Registration Link
1 September 2025	13:00–15:00	Click to register
2 September 2025	09:00–11:00	Click to register

- **Interviews and focus groups** will be conducted by the review team. You may nominate yourself or your organisation for participation by contacting us at stdsconsult@exigiant.com.au.

We welcome and value your input. Your insights will directly inform outcomes of the review and will share the findings of this review and its recommendations. A summary of the outcomes will be made available publicly following completion, ensuring transparency and accountability.

Next Steps

Findings and preliminary recommendations will be presented to SDAC in November 2025, with further consultation to follow, and a final action plan presented to SDAC and the Board in February 2026. A summary of outcomes will be shared publicly following completion of the review.