
Framework Paper: Guidance for Expert Groups on the selection of standards and the provision of associated recommendations

1) INTRODUCTION :

The CEN/Workshop 10 (WS10) project was created to provide European Defence procurement agencies with a recognized European reference system identifying “best practice” standards for use in national and multinational armament projects.

WS10 were tasked to design and deliver the European Handbook for Defence Procurement (EHDP) and to provide guidance for European Defence Project Managers in the selection and the utilization of standards in armament contracts.

During the identification of a “best practice” standard, other issues such as the application criteria of the standard and any deficiencies in that area of standardization will become the subject of discussion. The forthcoming recommendations will be key factors in determining standards to meet operational, technical and managerial requirements of armament programs.

The EHDP is being developed to contribute to a European Defence Procurement driven approach which will result in:

- a reduction in the proliferation of standards by recommending the use of common standards based on “state of the art” technology and management;
- a reduction in standards development costs through the harmonization of standardization projects and the utilization of those common standards;
- an increased market acceptance and a broader application of the selected “best practice” standards;
- a strengthened European Defence Technological and Industry Base to harmonize and consolidate the European defence equipment market;
- enhanced interoperability between systems and in a reduction in defence material acquisition costs.

The EHDP will provide a recognized European standards portfolio and guidance in Defence Procurement matters for emerging and future armament programs.

2) OBJECTIVES of the FRAMEWORK PAPER

This framework paper is intended to support WS10 Expert Groups in the selection of best practice standards/standard-like documents for each identified key area and in the development of the related recommendations which can be effectively and usefully applied by the intended EHDP users:

- The staff in the ministries of defence who are producing procurement specifications and invitations to tender
- The staff in defence companies who are responding to those requirements
As EHDP users are not necessarily experts in any of the fields addressed in the EHDP, it was considered necessary to provide clear guidance on:

- the selection of “best practice” standards from a possibly long list of applicable standards for each key area;
- the structure and the content of the related recommendations.

3) METHODOLOGY

The updated Initial Handbook is the baseline from which the “best practice” standards selection process has to be developed. Nevertheless, the Initial Handbook should not be considered as the only source of reference and experts are encouraged to access other sources and propose standards which were not included in the Initial Handbook but are deemed to meet the EHDP standards selection criteria defined hereafter:

- **Selection Process**:

  The experts will have to compare the identified standards with respect to their practical importance including “best practice” criteria such as: frequency of usage, availability, influence/broadest audience, technical excellence [stability and maturity]. Their scope should reflect the “state of the art” of best practices in technological or managerial areas.

  In order to maximise the usability of the EHDP, the Expert Groups are asked to adopt and apply the following criteria when selecting “best practice” standards, keeping in mind that the resulting output of the selection work should result in a streamlining of the recommended standards portfolio.

- **Selection Criteria** : The selection process has to be completely in line with the following set of criteria :

  - The list of selected standards should recommend Regional (e.g. EN), International (e.g. ISO) standards and globally recognized standards on a worldwide or European scale regardless of their source (NATO, US civilian and military standards,…); where there is justifying evidence, national, civilian or defence standards can also be recommended. At the end of the selection process, when a national standard has been identified as a “best practice” one, an English translation of this document shall be available before the standard is referenced in the EHDP due to the fact that all the standards listed in the EHDP, must be available in the English language and must be readily accessible;
  
  - Wherever possible, civil or dual-use standards (standards that can be quoted or applied in both civil and military contexts) should be recommended;
  
  - Some standards on a given topic may be very similar because they are derivations or variants of an original standard that has been adapted for local use. The original standard should be recommended unless there is a strong reason to prefer one of the variants in which case, the justified reason should be included in the recommendation;
  
  - Priority should be given to standards that refer to system level aspects, performance requirements to be met, interfaces to be defined or standards which
address interoperability needs. Performance (what to get ?) standards written in
terms of required results will be especially considered rather than prescriptive
standards (how to do it ?);

- Final drafts of relevant standards may be selected for integration in the EHDP
  where they reflect the “state of the art” for future applications. Consolidation will
  have to be ensured through the EHDP maintenance process.

➢ Recommendations content and format

One aim of the EHDP is to provide the users with a clear understanding of how to apply
the identified “best practice” standards but this may differ from one key area to the next.
Therefore, it is left to Expert Groups to determine whether the recommendations are
presented per individual standard or set of standards depending on their envisaged
application.

The recommendations associated with the standards shall necessarily include different
types of information in order to make it easier to understand their applicability and use.
The recommendation shall include the main considerations, explanations and findings that
were identified and discussed during the selection process and considered as useful for the
EHDP intended users, i.e.

- the reasons for selecting standards as “best practice” ones should be explained and
  embodied in the related recommendation;
- each recommendation shall include guidance on how related standards should be
  applied or tailored according to their intended use;
- recommendations may include some proposals with regard to the need for further
  standardization activity in the related key area due to evidence of standardization
gaps and the identification of requirements for coherence, harmonization,
  promoting a national standard to a higher level of recognition, etc.

For pedagogical reasons and to meet the end users expectations for a meaningful, helpful and
user-friendly approach, one of the WS10 goals is to provide a set of concise recommendations
appertaining to the aforementioned key issues which will enable Project Managers to utilise
the standards with the minimum amount of further investigative action.