



**ANSWERS TO**  
**Frequently Asked Questions**  
**About**  
**IAPMO's Consensus Code Process**

## INTRODUCTION

In September, 2000 the IAPMO Board of Directors made the landmark decision to revise the IAPMO Bylaws by providing for the development of the *Uniform Plumbing Code* and *Uniform Mechanical Code* under the ANSI Voluntary Consensus Process. Development of the UPC and UMC in this manner enabled IAPMO to be the first organization to develop plumbing and mechanical codes as American National Standards.

In order to assist all those who may be interested in IAPMO's consensus code development process, we offer to you answers to the following commonly asked questions.

## GENERAL QUESTIONS

Q. What is an American National Standard?

A. In order to be designated as an American National Standard, such standard must be developed using procedures approved by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI). This institute serves as the central body responsible for the identification of a single, consistent set of voluntary standards called American National Standards.

Q. What is the American National Standards Institute (ANSI)?

A. The ANSI is a non-profit membership organization which for more than 75 years has administered and coordinated the voluntary standardization system in the United States. The members of the ANSI federation develop standards and otherwise participate in their development. ANSI facilitates this system by accrediting over 200 standards developers and accrediting groups to participate in the development of international standards.

Q. What kind of procedures are approved by ANSI?

A. In order for a standard to be designated as an American National Standard (ANS), ANSI requires that the development procedures provide for due process, openness and balance. Procedures which contain these qualities result in standards that are developed through consensus.

Q. What is consensus?

A. Consensus involves the participation of industry, government and consumers in the development process. "Consensus means substantial agreement has been reached by directly and materially affected interests. Consensus requires that all views and objections be considered, and that an effort be made toward their resolution."<sup>1</sup> Consensus does not require that everyone be in agreement but does reflect that substantial agreement has been reached by materially affected interest categories.

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<sup>1</sup> ANSI Essential Requirements, Issued January 31, 2007 (Copyright New York) page 23.

Q. What do due process, openness, balance mean?

A. Due process – “Due process means that any person (organization, company, government agency, individual, etc.) with a direct and material interest has a right to participate by: (a) expressing a position and its basis; (b) having that position considered; and (c) having the right to appeal.”<sup>2</sup>

Openness – Openness requires that “all persons who are directly and materially affected by the activity in question”<sup>3</sup> be permitted to participate in the process.

Balance – Balance means that the standards development process should have a balance of interests and shall not be dominated by any single interest category.<sup>4</sup>

Q. What are the significant steps in the consensus code development process and how long is each development cycle?

A. Each development cycle lasts for three years. A simplified flow chart of the codes and standards making system is on the following page. This chart provides a chronological order of the events in the process from start to finish.

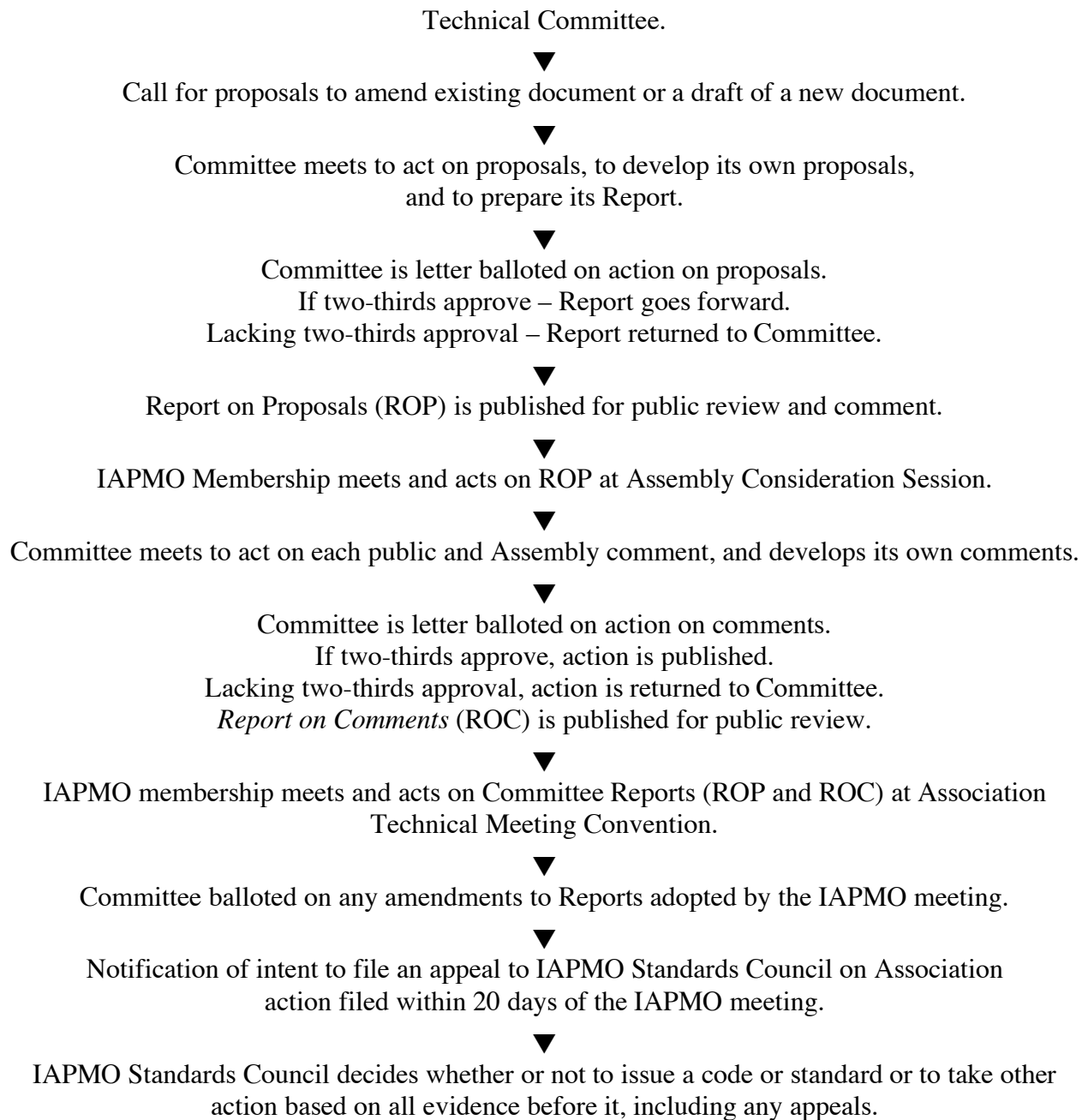
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<sup>2</sup> ANSI Essential Requirements, Issued January 31, 2007 (Copyright New York) Section 1.0, page 4.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

SIMPLIFIED FLOW CHART OF THE  
CODES AND STANDARDS MAKING SYSTEM



## **IAPMO STANDARDS COUNCIL**

- Q. What is the IAPMO Standards Council?
- A. The IAPMO Standards Council consists of nine people selected by the IAPMO Board of Directors from a broad range of appropriate interests familiar with the technical and standards development functions of IAPMO. This Council has the responsibility for the administration of the development of the UPC and UMC; issuance of these codes; and selection of members on the IAPMO Technical Committees.
- Q. How does the IAPMO Standards Council decide whether to issue a proposed new or revised code?
- A. The Council considers the entire record of the development and processing of the code proposal, including the Report on Proposals and Report on Comments, the recommendation of the IAPMO membership, and all appeals.
- Q. How can one appeal to the IAPMO Standards Council?
- A. Anyone can appeal to the Council concerning a procedural or substantive matter. The appeal should be filed in accordance with the Regulations Governing Committee Projects at Section 1-6 and should be timely filed.

## TECHNICAL COMMITTEES

Q. What interest categories are recognized in the IAPMO development process?

A. The following are the interest categories applicable to IAPMO's development of the UPC and UMC:

- ◆ Manufacturer
- ◆ User
- ◆ Installer/Maintainer
- ◆ Labor
- ◆ Research/Standards/Testing Laboratory
- ◆ Enforcing Authority
- ◆ Consumer
- ◆ Special Expert

Q. What are the IAPMO Technical Committees (TCs)?

A. Currently, there are two IAPMO Technical Committees – the Plumbing Technical Committee and the Mechanical Technical Committee. These committees consist of one Chairman, a secretary appointed by the Chairman of the TC and members that represent the eight interest categories listed above. Each TC is constituted so as to contain a balance of affected interests, with no more than one-third of the committee from the same interest group. The committee must reach a consensus by at least a two-thirds vote of the voting members in order to take action on code change proposals and comments.

Q. What role does the Technical Committee (TC) play in the development process?

A. IAPMO TCs are the principle consensus developing body within the IAPMO code development process. They are responsible for reviewing proposed amendments to the Codes and recommending to the IAPMO Standards Council the final draft of the Codes to be published. Each code change cycle is begun with a notice inviting the public to submit Proposals on what should be contained in the UPC or UMC, respectively. The TC then meets to review a monograph which contains a compilation of the code change proposals; to act on such proposals (as well as committee-generated proposals) and to prepare a Report on Proposals (ROP). The ROP is then made available to the public for further review and comment. At the third and final TC meeting in the cycle, the TC reviews all the comments submitted by the public, including the Assembly Comment, and acts on all such comments.

Q. Are the TC meetings open to the public?

A. Yes, anyone can attend the TC meetings. However, guests wishing to participate by addressing the TC on a subject relevant to a specific item under consideration are required to notify the TC Chairman or Staff Liaison in writing at least 7 days before the meeting.

Q. How do I know what the TC will be discussing at their annual meeting?

A. Prior to the meeting a monograph containing all of the proposed code changes is sent to all TC members as well as to all parties who submitted a code change proposal. Anyone may obtain a copy of the monograph by contacting IAPMO World Headquarters.

Q. What is the Report on Comments (ROC)?

A. The Report on Comments (ROC) provides the actions taken by the TCs on all comments received by the public, including the Assembly Comment developed from the Assembly Consideration Session. The reasons for all negative votes are contained in the ROC as well. Prior to the Association Technical Meeting Convention, an ROC is provided to all IAPMO members as well as to all parties who submitted a comment. Anyone may obtain a copy of the ROC by downloading it from IAPMO's website or contacting IAPMO World Headquarters.

Q. How do I submit a comment to the TC?

A. Anyone wishing to submit a comment to the TC must do so by completing the Comment Form which is included in the ROP and which is also available on IAPMO's website at [www.iapmo.org](http://www.iapmo.org), or by requesting a copy from IAPMO World Headquarters. ALL COMMENTS MUST BE SUBMITTED BY THE COMMENT CLOSING DATE (FEBRUARY 1). ONLY THOSE PERSONS WHO PREVIOUSLY SUBMITTED PROPOSALS AND/OR COMMENTS BY THE REQUIRED DEADLINE ARE PERMITTED TO PROPOSE AMENDMENTS AT THE ASSOCIATION TECHNICAL MEETING CONVENTION (One exception to this rule is that anyone may present as an amendment the original proposal as worded in the ROP in the event the ROC contains an action taken by the TC which is different from the action taken in the ROP).

Q. Does the vote taken at the TC meeting represent the final action of the TC?

A. No. The vote taken at the TC meeting does not represent the final action of the TC. It merely represents the sentiment of the committee members at the time of the meeting. The final action of the TC is secured by letter ballot within thirty days after the meeting and the Regulations require a two-thirds majority for any affirmative action.

Q. Who can be a member of the TCs?

A. Anyone who maintains a high level of knowledge and competency in the subject matter of the UPC and/or UMC is qualified to be a member of the TC. Members may be appointed to act as representatives of an organization or as an individual. However, no interest category can make up more than one-third of the TC at any given time so as to ensure balance.

Q. How do I apply to become a member of the TC?

A. Applications for membership on the TC can be found on IAPMO's website at [www.iapmo.org](http://www.iapmo.org), or can be obtained by contacting the IAPMO Standards Council Secretary. Applicants are encouraged to apply at any time.

Q. I am an IAPMO member and do not serve on the TC. How can I participate in the consensus code development process?

A. Under the consensus process, the ability of the individual member to directly participate in the code development is of paramount importance. For example, members are able to propose amendments to the code (proposals). Also, members are able to appear at the annual TC meeting to present their views on code change proposals as well as on any other code change proposals being considered (the spring TC meeting). Further, members are able to submit written comments to the action taken by the TC on each specific proposal wherein the member provides the technical basis in support of his or her comment. Under the consensus process, this individual comment must be considered and acted upon by the TC and the TC must provide a specific response to every comment.

Members are able to participate in the Assembly Consideration Session held in year two of the code development cycle. At this session, a member can discuss with the Assembly their opinion related to an action taken by the TC on a code change proposal. Members of the Assembly are able to make motions with regard to a particular action taken by the TCs. A successful motion is submitted

to the TC as an Assembly Comment and will be acted upon by the TC at their final meeting in the code development process.

Lastly, members are able to appear at the Association Technical Meeting Convention where they are able to voice their opinion on any item as well as to vote on every item on the agenda.

### **ASSOCIATION TECHNICAL MEETING CONVENTION**

Q. What is the Association Technical Meeting Convention?

A. This is held in the final year of the code development cycle and provides every IAPMO member attending the meeting (not proxies) with the opportunity to vote on every action that has been taken by the Technical Committee. Further information about the meeting and the IAPMO Technical Meeting Convention Rules can be found at the IAPMO website at [www.iapmo.org](http://www.iapmo.org) or by contacting a member of the Code Department at IAPMO World Headquarters.

Q. If I did not submit a proposal or a comment, how can I participate at the Association Technical Meeting Convention?

A. All IAPMO members attending the meeting who are qualified to vote under the Bylaws will be given the opportunity to vote on each code change proposal. Anyone may speak at the Association Technical Meeting Convention but only those who previously submitted proposals and/or comments by the required deadline may propose an amendment. There is one exception to that rule. In the event the ROC contains an action taken by the TC which is different from the action taken in the ROP, then anyone may present as an amendment the proposal as worded in the ROP. Also, anyone may propose a motion to return the entire report to the TC for further consideration.

## CONCLUSION

This set of FAQ's is intended to assist in understanding the IAPMO consensus code development process. If your specific question has not been answered, please contact IAPMO's Code Department.

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