

Non-Voting Government Observers on the IEEE-SA Standards Board (SASB)

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) for Governments

Why did IEEE-SA create the role of government observers?

With the increasing intersection of technology and policy, it is imperative for IEEE-SA, a global standards development organization, to strengthen its connections and understanding with governments. The key goals for the program are:

- 1) Increase understanding and support from governments for open and global standards, including IEEE standards;
- 2) Gain input from government experts in Standards Board discussions;
- 3) Engage with countries from around the world to receive global perspectives.

This FAQ document is intended to address questions that potential or new observers may have and will evolve as this program evolves, including questions received during the orientation sessions.

The Director, IEEE-SA Governance will serve as primary point of contact for government observers.

What will be the role of the observers?

We expect them to participate in the following manner:

- Learn about IEEE's standardization activities, including about its WTO-adhering process and the technical areas of standards work, through receiving and reviewing relevant email communications;
- Provide written information reports on national standardization initiatives to the Standards Board when relevant;
- Optionally, and especially encouraged when the Standards Board meets in the observer's country, participate in meetings as observers to see first-hand how IEEE standards are developed and to share their views during Standards Board meetings;
- Provide verbal reports upon their request and upon approval from the Standards Board Chair.

Additionally, when in attendance, we will hold an orientation meeting for observers to familiarize them with the IEEE-SA, the Standards Board, standardization activities, and answer questions.

What are the anticipated benefits for the observers?

Government observers help shape the activities of the IEEE-SA, leading to mutual benefits for the observers and the IEEE-SA. Other benefits include:

- An opportunity to obtain first hand, timely information from the IEEE-SA about its activities and plans, including through email notifications;
- An opportunity to influence the direction and priorities of the IEEE-SA;
- The ability to interact and share views with technology thought leaders;
- An opportunity for direct interaction with IEEE-SA volunteer leadership and staff, both locally and globally.

What level should the observers be in their ministry (or agency)?

As the Standards Board focuses on the standardization process and ongoing standardization work, an observer at the Director or Head of Unit level is expected to benefit the most from participation in the program. For this program, we aim to invite one regular observer who will participate in the program and build knowledge of IEEE's standardization and technical activities.

The program aims for one observer per country. What happens if there is interest from multiple persons or ministries?

Generally speaking, the ministry nominating the observer should be responsible for standardization or for a range of technologies that is relevant to IEEE-SA. Should more than one ministry from a country be interested, we can accommodate that to ensure relevant participation.

Are the observers able to attend Standards Board meetings?

We encourage observers to attend all Standards Board meetings, especially when in their country, to build knowledge of the process, share information, and engage with the standardization community.

Does IEEE-SA provide funding support to government observers?

No, IEEE-SA does not provide funding support for Standards Board members or other liaisons/ observers to attend Standards Board meetings.

What are the responsibilities of the Standards Board and its committees?

The **IEEE-SA Standards Board (SASB)** is responsible for the following:

- encourage and coordinate the development and revision of IEEE standards
- approve the initiation of IEEE standards projects
- review them for consensus, due process, openness, and balance
- give final approval to IEEE standards prior to publication and
- process all necessary appeals.

It has established committees to do some of this work:

- **Audit Committee (AudCom):** This committee reviews policies and procedures of the technical standards working groups with the goal that all IEEE standards committees have fair and open processes and procedures, and that they comply with them.
- **New Standards Committee (NesCom):** This committee reviews requests Project Authorization Requests (PARs) before a new standards activity can start to ensure they are within the scope and purpose of IEEE.
- **Standards Review Committee (RevCom):** This committee reviews the process documentation (votes on a standard, comment resolution, etc) for the development of a proposed standard to recommend approval or disapproval of a standard. These recommendations are based on an assessment that all procedural requirements have been satisfied.
- **Procedures Committee (ProCom):** This committee drafts new procedures or refinements to existing procedures of the IEEE-SA as necessary.

- **Patent Committee (PatCom):** This committee addresses patent issues of standards working groups and provides oversight of use of patents in IEEE standards.
- **Industry Connections Committee (ICCom):** This committee reviews activities under the Industry Connections Program, which helps incubate new standards and related products and services by facilitating collaboration among organizations and individuals as they hone and refine their thinking on rapidly changing technologies. Deliverables of this program include:
 - o Proposals for standards
 - o White papers
 - o Peer-reviewed guides and position papers
 - o Conferences, workshops and other events
 - o Databases and registration services
 - o Software, tools and web services
 - o Other jointly developed results

We encourage government observers to monitor all of the meetings that are of interest to them.