



CENELEC GUIDE 33

**Guide to the CENELEC
Permanent Delegate**

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1. Introduction

At its 138th meeting (held in Delft on 12-13 April 2011), the CENELEC Technical Board (BT) took the following decisions:

D138/075 BT, in view of the implementation of the CENELEC strategy 2010-2013, agreed to establish a CENELEC/BT Action Plan and invited CCMC, together with the Vice-President Technical, to develop a proposal, with allocation of responsibilities, to be discussed in a BTWG 138-1 "CENELEC/BT Action Plan" under convenorship of the BT Chairman (Vice-President Technical).

D138/076 BT invited BTWG 138-1 to submit their final proposal for consideration at 139 BT meeting, taking due account of the elements of the CEN/BT Action Plan and the possible common actions.

Successively, at its 140th meeting (held in Brussels on 31 January /1 February 2012), the BT took the following decisions:

D140/006 BT welcomed the final draft of the CENELEC/BT Action Plan prepared by CLC/BTWG 138-1 further to their meeting of 2011-12-02.

D140/007 BT approved Document BT140/DG8610/DC and invited the Champions and the involved Permanent Delegates to proceed with the implementation of the relevant actions.

Goal 3 of the approved document referred to: "Enhancing commitment of all CENELEC Members in technical work" (Champion: René Nielsen – DK).

During the work on this goal, sub-activity 'Encouragement of the active participation of Permanent Delegates (PD's) in the BT processes' became the most important issue for further elaboration.

In connection with BT meetings 141, 142 and 143, workshops on this issue were arranged. At these workshops several permanent delegates presented to the participating colleagues the working methods in their respective national standardisation organisations.

One of the conclusions from the workshop held at the 142th BT meeting was the preparation of a reference paper which is a guide, which describes the role of the permanent delegates, both as participants in the work of the CENELEC Technical Board and at home in their national committee.

Thus this paper summarizes the results of the workshops (presentations + following discussions) and represents a guiding document for whoever is (or will be) called upon holding the position of CENELEC BT Permanent Delegate. Describing the task and responsibilities of a PD the document is useful for NC's to identify which adequate resources, which has to be allocated to a Permanent Delegate in the organisation.

2. The CENELEC Technical Board in the reference material

The CENELEC Technical Board is described in the CENELEC Articles of Associations (2009) and in the CEN-CENELEC Internal Regulation Part 1 (2011) and Part 2 (2013).

In the CENELEC Articles of Associations, chapter III, General Assembly, article 12 – Powers, it is stated:

“The powers of the General Assembly are notably ¹:

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- Management of the technical standardisation work, by delegation to the Technical Board”

In the CEN-CENELEC Internal Regulations Part 1, the Technical Board is mentioned in paragraph 2 – CENELEC Organisation:

CENELEC consists of

- ***Its Members***
- ***Its Officers, i.e.***
 - o *The President*
 - o *Three Vice Presidents*
 - o *The President Elect*
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- ***The Technical Board (BT), which is mandated by the CENELEC General Assembly to manage the technical standardisation (see Internal Regulations Part 2)***

In the CEN-CENELEC Internal Regulation Part 2, the Technical Board is described in a more detailed way in paragraph 3.1:

3.1 Technical Board

3.1.1

Function

The Technical Board (BT) is responsible for controlling the standards programme and promoting its speedy execution by the CEN-CENELEC Management Centre, Technical Committees and other bodies. The functions of the Technical Board, which may be executed either at a meeting or by correspondence, include inter- alia:

- a) *to decide on all matters concerning the organization, working procedures, coordination and planning of standards work;*
- b) *to monitor and control the progress of standards work in close cooperation with the CEN-CENELEC Management Centre and, in particular, in consultation with the Technical Committee chairman and secretary, to keep under review the title, scope and programme of work of each Technical Committee, in order to ensure the greatest possible coordination and avoidance of overlaps and to see that each Technical Committee is engaged in a limited number of practicable projects;*
- c) *to examine proposals for new projects;*

¹ The mentioning of BT is one out of several items.

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- d) *to decide which questionnaires should be issued and to evaluate their results;*
- e) *to set up and disband Technical Committees, to allocate their secretariats and to appoint their chairmen;*
- f) *to impose or to release standstill obligations and to deal with members' requests to publish related national standards in the meantime;*
- g) *to organize technical liaison with intergovernmental organizations, international organizations and European trade, professional, technical and scientific organizations;*
- h) *to consider and rule upon appeals in accordance with clause 7;*
- i) *to undertake such other tasks with regard to standards work as may be specifically requested by the General Assembly or by the Administrative Board on its behalf.*

The Technical Board may delegate some of its functions to appropriate subgroups or technical bodies, under its full authority and supervision.

3.1.2

Membership

The Technical Board consists of the President and/or the Vice President(s) and one permanent delegate from each member, who shall establish the necessary contacts at national level so as to be able to represent the member effectively.

Technical Board meetings shall be chaired by the President or a Vice President. The secretariat of the Technical Board is held by the CEN-CENELEC Management Centre.

3.1.3

Meetings

Technical Board meetings are convened by the CEN-CENELEC Management Centre on the instructions of the chairman or at the request of at least two members.

Representatives of the European Commission and the EFTA Secretariat and, subject to contractual agreements, other organizations are invited to attend Technical Board meetings as observers. In special cases the chairman may also invite experts to take part in Technical Board discussions.

For deadlines related to the circulation of documents, see 12.4.2 and 12.4.3.

3.1.4

Reporting

The Technical Board shall report on its activities to each meeting of the General Assembly or Administrative Board, as appropriate. The chairman of the Technical Board shall ensure that matters of particular importance are brought to the attention of the General Assembly or Administrative Board, as appropriate.

This means that the Permanent Delegate has to be impartial and apply the concept of neutrality as a member of the Technical Board, when decisions are taken in the interest of CENELEC and its members.

3. The Role of the Permanent Delegate

As seen above, the CEN-CENELEC Internal Regulations Part 2 state specifically that BT consists of a group of permanent delegates, one from each CENELEC member, "who shall establish the necessary contacts at national level so as to be able to represent the member effectively". This assertion implies

that the PD plays a vital role in that he/she represents the focal point for all the instances of that particular member towards the central governance (AG, CA, CCMC) and towards the representatives of the other members.

Thus, the main role of a PD is to assure the linkage between the technical governance of the standardisation activity at European level and its management at the national level. In this respect, each PD stands for the National Committee that nominated and mandated him/her to represent such member organisation in the CENELEC technical activities and in particular in the BT.

Acting as an information relay, a PD should have a pro-active role at both national and European levels. On one side he/she is expected to share within his/her organisation all the information gained in the BT activities related to the processes and relevant procedures of standards development. He/she should also forward information and translate into national needs any European activities or situations in order to make them understood by the national stakeholders highlighting the implications if these issues are not adequately followed.

On the other side, a PD should identify interest and encourage involvement of national stakeholders in order to collect and establish national positions to be presented at European level thus being propulsive towards the European standardisation community by informing on the national experiences.

As national consultations can have various results (a relevant number of responses received, contradictory responses received or sometimes no reply received at all) a PD should be capable of identifying the feedback needed and in the conditions of elaborating the national position, having in regard national policy directions, previous views on related (or similar) items, and personal knowledge and experience.

In order to assure the linkage, a PD can often be seen (and consequently act) as the reference national post box where all the relevant BT information is sent. Handling all the received documents in a responsible manner requires developing and maintaining a network of relationships of potential national stakeholders. A PD is expected to identify and contact all the relevant stakeholders at national level in order to collect views and directions on the items that are on the BT table. Setting a clear national position on BT matters implies primarily close collaboration and continuous communication with the national mirror Technical Committees (where the stakeholders are usually present) and with the various departments in which the National Committee is organized.

For the sake of coherence and harmonization, contact and dialogue should be established with the CEN/BT member at the national level. In several countries, the tasks of the CENELEC/BT PD and those of the CEN/BT member are entrusted to the same person, but in others it is not so. It is important that sufficient time be allocated in order to cover the tasks for both BTs. For this reason, the PD role should be clearly understood at national level by all the participants to the standardisation activities.

At BT level, each PD, together with his/her colleagues, also has the task of ensuring that issues are consistently and professionally handled, which will assure continuity and a high level of performance of the Technical Board. It implies a thorough national consultation on the items of the agenda and an active involvement in BT debates.

In order to maximize the quality of the BT activity it is understood that a PD should attend the meetings of the BT and of the established BTWGs, (at least those having a horizontal nature), participate actively to the debate and express his/her position upon items raised in different situations. He/she will support the chairman's efforts toward consensus building among the CENELEC/BT PD's and will make contributions to the decision-making process in a constructive way.

This also implies that the interaction among the PD's before, during and after the BT meetings is an essential part in order to have an effective coordination of the standardisation activities (main task of the technical board) for the benefit of the CENELEC community.

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All these tasks added together constitute a rather complex job description for a PD. On top of this, qualifications and personal qualities with respect to social and cross cultural aspects certainly play an important role.

Needless to say a high priority issue is constituted by the working environment provided by CCMC. It is essential that tools such as FTP-server, Collaboration Tool, the homepage of CENELEC (and CEN-CLC) website and the cover page of all BT documents are easy to handle in the daily working situation. Streamlining these aspects would certainly save time for the PD's. These requests go hand-in-hand with an easy and non-bureaucratic document flow. In this respect, the PD can be seen as the "translator/mediator" between the instances of CCMC and the needs of the national stakeholders.

4. Some details on the role of the Permanent Delegate

In the following some of the already mentioned aspects of the PD role are considered in some more operative details.

Participation in BT meetings and reporting

- The BT meeting agenda should be made available by the PD to interested national experts.
- As the PD represents its NC he/she should consider carefully that he/she is the voice of all the national stakeholders.
- The PD should be ready to present clearly the prepared written comments.
- The cooperation, dialogue and exchanges of views with other PD's are fundamental and often allow to solve with success delicate problems or possible conflicting situations.
- The close cooperation with the CEN/BT member is also very important so as to present a unique national position on issues that are of common interest to CENELEC and CEN.
- The BT decision list shall be made available to interested national experts.
This may also include a personal report of the BT meeting or additional notes highlighting issues of particular interest for the NC. Specific information to the technical experts about BT decisions after the meeting is also a very important step that allows the PD to maintain contacts with the involved persons and remain updated on the follow-up.

Defining the national position

- Consultation of the mirror national technical bodies.
- Consultation of the mirror national governance bodies.
- Collection of the feedback received from technical experts or governance representatives.
- Eventually a mediation is necessary if disagreements between national Mirror Committees arise.
- Usually the PD takes the final decision on proposals made by the NC and is in charge of carrying out the final quality assessment of the national comments/positions before they are forwarded to the European organisations and their boards.
- He/she is mandated to present the national position with all the relevant explanations/comments to the BT meeting.

Presenting the national position

- The PD is held responsible for the commenting of the BT documents.
- Usually a reaction to the BT document (e.g. written national documents) should be put forward only if the NC position is not in line, or there is disagreement, with the proposed decisions/recommendations on the cover sheet. Therefore, the management by exceptions approach should be closely considered and possibly used.

- The presentation of the comments should be carefully prepared taking into account a possible compromise at the upcoming discussions in the BT meeting.

Handling of BT documents

- Information arrives from CCMC (by e-mail, dispatches, lists, etc.).
- Usually a download of documents from the CLC servers to PD working area according to the national procedures. Generally the PD goes through the content of all BT documents before processing them within his/her national organisation.
- Thus, the PD examines all the received documents noting deadlines, DOWs, questions of principle requiring BT decisions, deviations and snCs, new TCs or BTTFs (in general new work starting), required actions, similarities to previous decisions, other curious aspects, etc.
- Follows the distribution of the documents to the interested stakeholders with the PD notes on possible proposed decisions and request for feedback in due time.
- Attention should be paid to TC-related issues (requiring consultation with national mirror TCs) vs. non TC-related issues (requiring consultation with other national technical or governance bodies).

Tools for the handling of BT documents

Directly available to PD's:

- Documents contained in FTP server
- List of documents currently under BT consultation and excel document listing the deadlines.
- List of standards ready for ratification and for which an appeal can be lodged, and, presently excel document listing the deadlines.
- Collaboration Tool Newsletter and direct access to documents through a personal password including Notifications.
- In particular cases (e.g. information from the European Commission, management of mandates, etc.) documents made available with specific e-mails from CCMC.

5. Difficulties that a PD could experience

Sometimes difficulties arise for the PD in performing his/her crucial role. In the following a non-exhaustive list is presented:

- Difficulty in obtaining feedback to the BT documents from the national experts in due time. Need to send reminders and to have to constantly monitor the situation.
- Lack of national position, due to the lack of interest of national technical experts on the specific issue or not full comprehension of the latter.
- Difficulty in finding technical experts on new areas of standardisation (finding new stakeholders requires time: therefore, reluctance of the board to take positions).
- Insufficient knowledge of the technical experts on BT procedures.
- Insufficient awareness among the technical experts of the fundamental role of the national BT Permanent Delegate.

6. Additional tasks of the Permanent Delegate

At the workshops, the permanent delegates mentioned additional work; this is a logical consequence when considering that the PD is the central coordinating link between the European administrative and technical work and the activities in the National Committees.

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Thus the work usually involves also the handling of:

- CA documents.
- AG documents.
- Ratifications and National implementation.
- Notifications and Vilamoura procedures.
- Notifications of A-deviations or special national conditions.
- Management of CLC technical bodies Secretariats, reporting secretariats and monitoring/support in their work of the relevant national officers holding the position of Chairmen, Secretaries, Convenors, etc., including informing them about procedures and relevant updating.
- Maintaining close contacts with NC officers, mirror TC/SC/WG Chairmen, Secretaries, Convenors, supporting them with the relevant mentorship attitude.
- Identification of possible vacancies of Officers (Chairman, Secretary, Convenor) in already established technical bodies and due interaction with national mirror committees on the interest of taking over these technical positions (this activity may include coordination with other PD's).
- Identification of the position of the national industry and other stakeholders to the creation of new technical bodies and the possible national commitment on duty of secretariat or suitable Chairman to be proposed for this activity (this activity may include coordination with other PD's).
- Participation in BT working groups.
- Management and follow-up of EC Mandates.
- Training of staff and national stakeholders on the process of national, European and International standardisation including rules and procedures.
- Organization of national Workshops when necessary.

In several cases (especially in smaller national organisations), the PD is also responsible for the equivalent work in IEC as the National Secretary and for undertaking the role of technical officer of mirror committees.

Taking into account the very comprehensive list of tasks and responsibilities, it is crucial in a broad sense that adequate support is available at national level (and relevant resources at NC level) in order to successfully handle the position of being such a fundamental focal point.