

# Newsletter

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## Experts meet to debate common challenges

SBS' first Experts Meeting of 2016 was an opportunity for both new and re-appointed experts to meet and discuss common challenges they encounter in their daily work. The meeting focused on the experts' deliverables for 2016, including their quarterly reports.



Additionally, CEN-CENELEC reminded re-appointed SBS experts and informed the new ones about their rights in Technical Committees and Working Groups within CEN and CENELEC. Finally, the European Commission stressed the importance for experts to inform the SBS Secretariat and hence the EC about the difficulties they encounter in the standards development process.

## Final version of the Joint Initiative approved

At the last meeting of the Editorial Committee on Standardisation, participants agreed on a final version of the Joint Initiative. This initiative stems from the communication on the Single Market Strategy (Autumn 2015) calling for a modernisation of the European Standardisation System. Those involved include the Commission, EU and EFTA member states, European and national standardisation organisations, and societal stakeholders.

The first part of the initiative sets out a vision to better prioritise standards-setting across the board. The annex identifies actions to be undertaken by participants, e.g. Action 15 (specifically designed for SMEs) calls for the improvement of SME representation in international standardisation processes.

Alongside this joint initiative, the European Commission will be publishing various documents relating to standardisation – a chapeau communication on standards, including a specific communication on services standards and the Annual Union Work Programme.



## Concerns raised regarding the Guide on Lifts Directive

SBS sent a letter to two European Commission Units, the one for Standards for Growth, and the one for Advanced Engineering and Manufacturing Systems. In the letter, SBS raises its concerns about the upcoming publication of the Guide to the application of the Lifts Directive 2014/33/EU.

The Lifts Working Group, chaired by the European Commission's Unit for Advanced Engineering and Manufacturing Systems, is in charge of drafting the Guide. The SBS experts participating in the WG have extensively contributed to the process, provided comments and proposed modifications to the Guide. However, to ensure its comments will be duly taken into consideration and included in the final version of the Guide, SBS requested a meeting with both units. Indeed, SBS fears the text does not sufficiently highlight the importance of harmonised standards for compliance with the essential requirements of the Lifts Directive.

In fact, the Lifts Directive enables installers and manufactures to comply with its requirements by designing and manufacturing their products in line with the harmonised standards, which are specifically developed to allow a presumption of conformity with those requirements. While standards are voluntary, harmonised standards for lifts are specifically designed to fulfil the Essential Safety Requirements. A reference to harmonised standards therefore needs to be included in the Guide.

## CONSTRUCTION

# Quality Initiative discussed at the Construction Forum

The second [SBS Construction Forum](#), organised by EBC (leader of SBS' construction sector activities), gathered SME experts in the sector, stakeholders involved in the standardisation of construction products and EC representatives from DG GROW's Construction Unit. During the meeting, the Commission reaffirmed its commitment to supporting SMEs and made reference to the Construction Products Regulation as the main piece of legislation for CE Marking construction products.

SBS also presented its [Quality Initiative on construction standardisation](#) under the Joint Initiative on European Standardisation and discussed, with the external contribution of non-member associations [CPE](#) (manufacturers) and [FIEC](#) (contractors), the possible actions to undertake in the framework of this initiative. Finally, the Construction Forum focused on the supporting activities that SBS provides to its experts in the field.



## Commission asks CEN to reconsider the standard on gully tops

The European Commission organised an ad-hoc meeting regarding EN 124 to explore some of the issues raised by SBS to support the non-member association Composites UK. The issues in question led to the non-citation of EN 124 (gully tops and manhole covers) in the Official Journal of the European Union. Based on SBS' remarks, the EC stressed that the new EN 124 fulfils neither the mandate nor the fundamental expectations for a harmonised standard under the Construction Product Regulation. Furthermore, the issues brought up by the EC went beyond the UK's formal objection and beyond those raised by the British industry. The EC therefore asked CEN to reconsider the standard within the related Technical Committee.

## Proposal to modify ETSI Rules of Procedure would be detrimental to SMEs

At ETSI's last General Assembly meeting, a proposal was put forward to delete an article of the ETSI Rules of Procedure on dispute resolution between its members. The current rules request ETSI members to revert to internal conciliation to solve disputes. In case of non-resolution, the legal dispute should be dealt with under French law.

This article is vital for all ETSI members, but especially for smaller companies. Internal dispute resolution is a faster means of solving disputes, as well as a less costly one. It puts all members on an equal footing and therefore protects smaller members from financially stronger ones. Furthermore, it is a safeguard against unnecessary or premature court cases. SBS hence called on the members of the General Assembly to oppose the deletion of article 18.1. As a result, the members decided to propose a conciliatory solution instead of a vote and agreed on the creation of a Working Group to redraft the article.

### What are the Commission's priorities for ICT standardisation?

The recently published [EC communication on ICT standardisation](#) aims to make better use of resources and set priorities for the development of ICT standards to serve the Digital Single Market (DSM). The priority plan for Europe's global leadership in digital economy has two pillars: (i) a list of priority building blocks for the DSM, (ii) and a high-level political process to validate and deliver the priorities and to monitor progress thereon.

Indeed, the first pillar identifies the key building blocks for the DSM: 5G, cloud computing, big data and cyber-security. Moreover, the communication also focuses on Standards Essential Patents (SEP) as the EC aims to improve access and transparency on SEP declarations, clarify licensing terms and facilitate dispute settlement.

## Technical News

- **RPD standards revised for more clarity**

The SBS expert in CEN TC 79 (Respiratory Protective Devices) sent comments regarding the revision of EN 12941 (Powered filtering devices incorporating a helmet or a hood) and of EN 12942 (Power assisted filtering devices incorporating full face masks, half masks or quarter masks). These comments were discussed in the last meetings of WG 4 of the TC and partially accepted. The expert has also been appointed to lead a Task Group within the TC to develop a proposal for the improvement of mechanical stress methods.

Moreover, the expert is contributing to the revision of EN 137 (Self-contained open-circuit compressed air breathing apparatus). Indeed, SBS comments concern the new flame engulfment test, specification on marking and the requirement of the revision date on the pressure reducer of the apparatus. This requirement was subsequently deleted from the standard.

Last but not least, SBS submitted comments on EN 13794 (Self-contained closed-circuit breathing apparatus for escape). This resulted in the withdrawal of the standard and led to the decision to develop a completely new and more suited standard.

- **The other side of SBS' Mirror Committees: a first live meeting on timber construction**

SBS Mirror Committees are set up so experts can discuss and form positions on the issues debated in the corresponding Technical Committees. The experts in the field of timber (products and/or design of structures) pushed the process a step further by organising a live meeting in Brussels. Indeed, 10 experts in the field met after the SBS Experts Meeting (see above) to discuss challenges they face when representing SMEs in their respective TCs. This meeting enabled the experts to agree on creating a mailing list, on reinforcing the continuous exchange with the SBS coordinator, and on the efficient methods to share documents through the extranet.

- **Second enquiry for standard on steel and aluminium structures**

At the last two CEN TC 135 WG 2 meetings, the convenor explained that the negative votes received regarding the enquiry on draft standard EN 1090-2:2015 (Technical requirements for the execution of steel structures) imply a second enquiry. This would therefore then lead to a vote on whether or not to send the draft standard for formal voting procedure. The SBS expert has been monitoring the situation and simultaneously underlining that the activities of WG 2 should not only focus on bigger constructions works (such as bridges, offshore plants, halls etc.), but also on balustrades, balconies and roof constructions, as these issues are of major interest for SMEs.



Small Business Standards (SBS) is a European non-profit association established in 2013 with the support of the European Commission devoted to representing and defending Small and Medium-sized Enterprises' (SMEs) interests in the standardisation system at European and international levels. Its 22 members are national and European sectoral and inter-professional associations representing SMEs in 32 European countries.

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### Upcoming events

- **18 October: Experts' meeting (Brussels)**
- **19 October: Annual conference (Brussels)**