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# High level structure and identical text for management system standards and common core management system terms and definitions

*Structure à niveau élevé et texte identique pour les normes de système de management et termes et définitions principaux communs de système de management*

ICS 01.120; 03.100.01

**Please see the administrative notes on page iii**

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## Final draft High Level Structure and identical text for MSS and common MS terms and core definitions

This document contains the consolidated outcomes of JTCG Task groups 1 and 3 as reviewed and approved during the 8<sup>th</sup> meeting of JTCG, 15 October 2010 in Vienna.

It combines documents JTCG TF 1 N 36 and JTCG TF 3 N 127.

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**1. High Level Structure, with draft “Identical text”**

Note : In the Identical text proposals, **XXX** = an MSS discipline specific qualifier (e.g. energy, road traffic safety, IT security, food safety, societal security, environment, quality) needs to be inserted. Blue italicized text is given as advisory notes to standards’ drafters.

<p><b>Introduction</b></p> <p><i>Note: Unique to the discipline</i></p>
<p><b>1. Scope</b></p> <p><i>Note: Specific to the discipline; possibly some identical text</i></p>
<p><b>2. Normative references</b></p> <p><i>Note: Clause Title shall be used. Unique to the discipline</i></p>
<p><b>3. Terms and definitions</b></p> <p><i>Note: Clause Title shall be used. Terms and definitions may either be within the standard or in a separate document. To reference Aligned definitions + discipline specific ones</i></p>
<p><b>4. Context of the organization</b></p>
<p>4.1 Understanding the organization and its context</p> <p>The organization shall determine external and internal issues that are relevant to its purpose and that affect its ability to achieve the intended outcomes of its <b>XXX</b> management system.</p> <p>These issues shall be taken into account when establishing, implementing, maintaining and improving the organization’s <b>XXX</b> management system.</p>
<p>4.2 Understanding the needs and expectations of interested parties</p> <p>When establishing its <b>XXX</b> management system, the organization shall determine</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– its relevant interested parties and</li> <li>– their requirements (i.e. their needs and expectations whether stated, implied or obligatory)</li> </ul>
<p>4.3 Determining the scope of the management system</p> <p>The organization shall determine the scope of the <b>XXX</b> management system, such that the boundaries and applicability of the <b>XXX</b> management system can be clearly communicated to relevant internal and external parties.</p> <p>When determining the scope of the management system the organization shall consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the external and internal issues referred to in 4.1</li> <li>- the requirements referred to in 4.2,</li> </ul> <p>The organization shall retain documented information on the scope of the <b>XXX</b> management system</p>
<p>4.4 <b>XXX</b> management system</p> <p>The organization shall, establish, implement, maintain and improve an <b>XXX</b> management system in accordance with the requirements of this International Standard including the processes needed and their interactions.</p>



<p><b>5. Leadership</b></p>
<p>5.1 General</p> <p>Persons in top management and other relevant management roles throughout the organization shall demonstrate leadership with respect to the <b>XXX</b> management system.</p> <p>NOTE This can be shown, for example, by motivating and empowering persons to contribute to the effectiveness of the <b>XXX</b> management system</p>
<p>5.2 Management commitment</p> <p>Top management shall demonstrate its commitment by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ensuring the <b>XXX</b> management system is compatible with the strategic direction of the organization</li> <li>- integrating the <b>XXX</b> management system requirements into the organization's business processes;</li> <li>- providing the resources to establish, implement, maintain and continually improve the <b>XXX</b> management system</li> <li>- communicating the importance of effective <b>XXX</b> management and conforming to the <b>XXX</b> management system requirements;</li> <li>- ensuring that the <b>XXX</b> management system achieves its intended outcomes</li> <li>- directing and supporting continual improvement</li> </ul> <p>NOTE Reference to "business" in this International Standard should be interpreted broadly to mean those activities that are core to the purposes of the organization's existence.</p>
<p>5.3 Policy</p> <p>Top management shall establish a <b>XXX</b> policy. The policy shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- be appropriate to the purpose of the organization,</li> <li>- provide the framework for setting <b>XXX</b> objectives;</li> <li>- include a commitment to satisfy applicable requirements,</li> <li>- include a commitment to continual improvement of the <b>XXX</b> management system</li> <li>- be communicated within the organization</li> <li>- be available to interested parties, as appropriate.</li> </ul> <p>The organization shall retain documented information on the <b>XXX</b> policy.</p>
<p>5.4 Organizational roles, responsibilities and authorities</p> <p>Top management shall ensure that the responsibilities and authorities for relevant roles are assigned and communicated within the organization.</p> <p>Top management shall assign the responsibility and authority for</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) ensuring that the <b>XXX</b> management system conforms to the requirements of this International Standard</li> <li>b) reporting on the performance of the <b>XXX</b> management system to top management</li> </ol>



## 6 Planning

### 6.1 Actions to address risks and opportunities

The organization shall consider the issues referred to in 4.1 and the requirements referred to in 4.2 and determine the risks and opportunities that need to be addressed to

- assure the management system can achieve its intended outcome(s)
- prevent undesired effects
- realize opportunities for improvement.

The organization shall:

- a) evaluate the need to plan actions to address these risks and opportunities, and
- b) where applicable
  - integrate and implement these actions into its **XXX** management system processes (see 8.1)
  - ensure information will be available to evaluate if the actions have been effective (see 9.1)

### 6.2 **XXX** objectives and plans to achieve them

Top management shall ensure that **XXX** objectives are established and communicated for relevant functions and levels within the organization.

The **XXX** objectives shall:

- be consistent with the **XXX** policy
- be measurable (if practicable)
- take into account applicable requirements
- be monitored and updated as appropriate

The organization shall retain documented information on the **XXX** objectives.

To achieve its **XXX** objectives, the organization shall determine:

- who will be responsible
- what will be done
- what resources will be required
- when it will be completed
- how the results will be evaluated

## 7. Support

### 7.1 Resources

The organization shall determine and provide the resources needed for the **XXX** management system





<p>7.2 Competence</p> <p>The organization shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- determine the necessary competence of person(s) doing work under its control that affects its <b>XXX</b> performance</li> <li>- ensure these persons are competent on the basis of appropriate education, training, or experience,</li> <li>- where applicable, take actions to acquire the necessary competence, and evaluate the effectiveness of the actions taken</li> <li>- retain appropriate documented information as evidence of competence.</li> </ul> <p>NOTE Applicable actions may include, for example: the provision of training to, the mentoring of, or the re-assignment of current employees; or the hiring or contracting of competent persons.</p>
<p>7.3 Awareness</p> <p>Persons doing work under the organization's control shall be aware of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the <b>XXX</b> policy</li> <li>- their contribution to the effectiveness of the <b>XXX</b> management system, including the benefits of improved <b>XXX</b> performance</li> <li>- the implications of not conforming with the <b>XXX</b> management system requirements</li> </ul>
<p>7.4 Communication</p> <p>The organization shall determine the need for internal and external communications relevant to the <b>XXX</b> management system including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- what to communicate</li> <li>- when to communicate</li> <li>- to whom it will communicate</li> </ul>
<p>7.5 Documented information</p>
<p>7.5.1 General</p> <p>The organization's <b>XXX</b> management system shall include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- documented information required by this International Standard</li> <li>- documented information determined by the organization as being required for the effectiveness of the <b>XXX</b> management system</li> </ul>
<p>7.5.2 Create and update</p> <p>The process for creating and updating documented information shall ensure appropriate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- identification and description (e.g. a title, date, author, number )</li> <li>- format (e.g. language, software version, graphics) and media (e.g. paper, electronic)</li> </ul>



- review and approval for adequacy

NOTE The extent of documented information for a **XXX** management system can differ from one organization to another due to:

- the size of organization and its type of activities, processes, products and services,
- the complexity of processes and their interactions, and
- the competence of persons

### 7.5.3 Control of documented Information

Documented information required by the **XXX** management system and by this International Standard shall be controlled.

Control of documented information shall include the following, as applicable:

- Distribution
- Access
- Storage and preservation
- Retrieval and use
- Control of changes (e.g. version control)
- Preservation of legibility (i.e. clear enough to read)
- Prevention of the unintended use of obsolete information
- Retention and disposition

Documented information of external origin determined by the organization to be necessary for the planning and operation of the **XXX** management system shall be identified as appropriate, and controlled.

When establishing control of documented information, the organization shall ensure that there is adequate protection for the documented information (e.g. protection against compromise, unauthorized modification or deletion).

NOTE Access implies a decision regarding the permission to view the documented information only, or the permission and authority to view and change the documented information, etc.

## 8. Operation

### 8.1 Operational planning and control

The organization shall determine, plan, implement and control those processes needed to address the risks and opportunities determined in 6.1 and to meet requirements, by:

- establishing criteria for those processes
- implementing the control of these processes in accordance with the criteria
- keeping documented information to demonstrate that the processes have been carried out as planned.



The organization shall control planned changes and review the consequences of unintended changes, taking action to mitigate any adverse effects, as necessary

The organization shall control processes that are contracted-out or outsourced.

## 9. Performance Evaluation

### 9.1 Monitoring, measurement, analysis and evaluation

The organization shall determine:

- what needs to be measured and monitored;
- the methods for monitoring, measurement, analysis and evaluation, as applicable, to ensure valid results.
- when the monitoring and measuring shall be performed;
- when the analysis and evaluation of monitoring and measurement results shall be performed.

The organization shall evaluate the **XXX** performance and the effectiveness of the **XXX** management system.

Additionally, the organization shall:

- take action when necessary to address adverse trends or results before a nonconformity occurs.
- retain relevant documented information as evidence of the results.

### 9.2 Internal Audit

The organization shall conduct internal audits at planned intervals to provide information to assist in the determination of whether the **XXX** management system

- a) conforms to
  - the organization's own requirements for its **XXX** management system
  - the requirements of this International Standard.
- b) is effectively implemented and maintained.

The organization shall

- plan, establish, implement and maintain an audit programme(s), including the frequency, methods, responsibilities, planning requirements and reporting, while taking into consideration the importance of the processes concerned and the results of previous audits.
- define the audit criteria and scope for each audit
- select auditors and conduct audits to ensure objectivity and the impartiality of the audit process.
- ensure that the results of the audits are reported to relevant management
- retain documented information as evidence of the results.

### 9.3 Management review

Top management shall review the organization's **XXX** management system, at planned intervals, to ensure its continuing suitability, adequacy and effectiveness.

The management review shall include consideration of:

- the status of actions from previous management reviews;
- changes in external and internal issues that are relevant to the **XXX** management system,
- information on the **XXX** performance, including trends in:



- nonconformities and corrective actions
- monitoring and measurement evaluation results and
- audit results,

- opportunities for continual improvement.

The outputs of the management review shall include decisions related to continual improvement opportunities and the possible need for changes to the **XXX** management system

The organization shall retain documented information as evidence of the results of management reviews.

**10. Improvement**

10.1 Nonconformity and corrective action

The organization shall:

- identify nonconformities,
- react to the nonconformities, and as applicable
  - take action to control, contain and correct them,
  - deal with the consequences

The organization shall also evaluate the need for action to eliminate the causes of nonconformities, including:

- reviewing nonconformities
- determining the causes of nonconformities,
- identifying if potential similar nonconformities exist elsewhere in the **XXX** management system
- Evaluating the need for action to ensure that nonconformities do not recur or occur elsewhere
- determining and implementing action needed, and
- reviewing the effectiveness of any corrective action taken.
- making changes to the **XXX** management system, if necessary

Corrective actions shall be appropriate to the effects of the nonconformities encountered.

The organization shall retain documented information as evidence of

- the nature of the nonconformities and any subsequent actions taken, and
- the results of any corrective action

10.2 Continual improvement

The organization shall continually improve the suitability, adequacy or effectiveness of the **XXX** management system.

NOTE The organization can use the processes of the **XXX** management system such as leadership, planning and performance evaluation, to achieve improvement



## 2 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.

NOTE 1 The following terms and definitions constitute an integral part of the “common text” for management systems standards. Additional terms and definitions may be added as needed. Notes may be added or modified to serve the purpose of each standard.

NOTE 2 Bold type in a definition indicates a cross-reference to another term defined in this clause, and the number reference for the term is given in parentheses.

NOTE 3 Where the text “XXX” appears throughout this clause, the appropriate reference should be inserted depending on the context in which these terms and definitions are being applied. For example: “an XXX objective” could be substituted as “an information security objective”.

### T.1 Terms related to “plan”

#### T.1.1

##### **organization**

person or group of people that has its own functions with responsibilities, authorities and relationships to achieve its **objectives** (T.1.4)

NOTE The concept of organization includes, but is not limited to sole-trader, company, corporation, firm, enterprise, authority, partnership, charity or institution, or part or combination thereof, whether incorporated or not, public or private.

#### T.1.2

##### **risk**

effect of uncertainty on **objectives** (T.1.4)

NOTE 1 An effect is a deviation from the expected — positive and/or negative.

NOTE 2 Objectives can relate to different disciplines (such as financial, health and safety, and environmental goals) and can apply at different levels (such as strategic, organization-wide, project, product and **process** (T.2.2)). An objective can be expressed in other ways, e.g. as an intended outcome, a purpose, an operational criterion, as an XXX objective or by the use of other words with similar meaning (e.g. aim, goal, or target).

NOTE 3 Risk is often characterized by reference to potential **events** (Guide 73, 3.5.1.3) and **consequences** (Guide 73, 3.6.1.3), or a combination of these.

NOTE 4 Risk is often expressed in terms of a combination of the consequences of an event (including changes in circumstances) and the associated **likelihood** (Guide 73, 3.6.1.1) of occurrence.

NOTE 5 Uncertainty is the state, even partial, of efficiency of information related to, understanding or knowledge of, an event, its consequence, or likelihood.

NOTE 6 In the context of XXX management system standards XXX objectives are set by the organization, consistent with the XXX policy, to achieve specific results. When applying the term risk and components of risk management, this should be related to the objectives of the organization that include, but are not limited to the XXX objectives as specified in 6.2 of the common MSS text.

#### T.1.3

##### **policy**

intentions and direction of an **organization** (T.1.1) as formally expressed by its **top management** (T.1.5)

#### T.1.4

##### **objective**

result to be achieved

NOTE 1 An objective can be strategic, tactical, or operational.



NOTE 2 An objective can be expressed in other ways, e.g. as an intended outcome, a purpose, an operational criterion, as an XXX objective or by the use of other words with similar meaning (e.g. aim, goal, or target).

### T.1.5 top management

person or group of people who directs and controls an **organization** (T.1.1) at the highest level

NOTE 1 Top management has the power to delegate authority and provide resources within the organization.

NOTE 2 An organization can for this purpose be identified by reference to the scope of the implementation of a **management system** (T.2.1).

### T.1.6 interested party (preferred term) stakeholder (admitted term)

person or group of people that holds a view that can affect the **organization** (T.1.1)

### T.1.7 requirement

obligatory need or expectation that is stated or implied

## T.2 Terms related to “do”

### T.2.1 management system

set of interrelated or interacting elements of an **organization** (T.1.1) to establish **policies** (T.1.3) and **objectives** (T.1.4), and **processes** (T.2.2) to achieve those objectives

NOTE 1 A management system can address a single discipline or several disciplines.

NOTE 2 The system elements include the organization's structure, roles and responsibilities, planning, operation, etc.

NOTE 3 The scope of a management system may include the whole of the organization, specific and identified functions of the organization, specific and identified sections of the organization, or one or more functions across a group of organizations.

### T.2.2 process

set of interrelated or interacting activities which transforms inputs into outputs

### T.2.3 competence

ability to apply knowledge and skills to achieve intended results

### T.2.4 documented information

information required to be controlled and maintained by an **organization** (T.1.1)

NOTE 1 Documented information can be in any format and media and from any source.

NOTE 2 Documented information can, e.g., refer to  
– the **management system** (T.2.1), including related **processes** (T.2.2);  
– information created in order for the organization to operate;  
– evidence of results achieved.

### T.2.5 performance

measurable result

NOTE 1 Performance can relate either to quantitative or qualitative findings.



NOTE 2 Performance can relate to the management of activities, **processes** (T.2.2), products (including services), systems or **organizations** (T.1.1).

### T.2.6

#### **outsource** (verb)

make an arrangement where an external **organization** (T.1.1) performs part of an organization's function or **process** (T.2.2)

NOTE An external organization is outside the scope of the **management system** (T.2.1), although the outsourced function or process is within the scope.

## T.3 Terms related to “check”

### T.3.1

#### **monitoring**

determining the status of a system, a **process** (T.2.2) or an activity

NOTE To determine the status there may be a need to check, supervise or critically observe.

### T.3.2

#### **measurement**

**process** (T.2.2) to determine a value

### T.3.3

#### **audit**

systematic, independent and documented **process** (T.2.2) for obtaining audit evidence and evaluating it objectively to determine the extent to which the audit criteria are fulfilled

NOTE 1 An audit can be an internal audit (first party) or an external audit (second party or third party), and it can be a combined audit (combining two or more disciplines).

NOTE 2 “Audit evidence” and “audit criteria” are defined in ISO 19011.

### T.3.4

#### **effectiveness**

extent to which planned activities are realized and planned results achieved

### T.3.5

#### **conformity**

fulfilment of a **requirement** (T.1.7)

### T.3.6

#### **nonconformity**

non-fulfilment of a **requirement** (T.1.7)

## T.4 Terms related to “act”

### T.4.1

#### **correction**

action to eliminate a detected **nonconformity** (T.3.6)

### T.4.2

#### **corrective action**

action to eliminate the cause of a **nonconformity** (T.3.6) and to prevent recurrence

NOTE In the case of other undesirable outcomes, action is necessary to minimise or eliminate the causes and to reduce the impact or prevent recurrence. Such actions fall outside the concept of “corrective action” in the sense of this definition.



**T.4.3**

**continual improvement**

recurring activity to enhance **performance** (T.2.5)

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## Annex A – Application guidance notes on HLS and identical text

<p>General comment</p> <p><i>Clarifications or descriptions should be given for phrases such as “as applicable” or “as appropriate”, perhaps in the Introduction</i></p>
<p>General comment</p> <p><i>When referring to objectives, always use a “qualifier” (e.g. <b>XXX</b> objectives; <b>XXX management system</b> objectives; <b>process</b> objectives etc)</i></p>
<p>General comment</p> <p><i>For those standards that address risk, there should be agreement on the positioning of risk assessment and risk treatment text (i.e. should it go in clause 6 or clause 8)</i></p>
<p><b>Introduction</b></p> <p><i>This content of this clause will be unique to the discipline</i></p>
<p><b>1. Scope</b></p> <p><i>a) This will be specific to the discipline with possibly some identical text</i></p> <p><i>b) The Scope should define the “intended outcomes” of the relevant MSS</i>  <i>Use “intended outcome” and not “expected outcome”</i>  <i>- Expected outcome is that “expected” by interested parties</i>  <i>- “Intended Outcome” is that which is “intended” as a result of the application of the standard, or process etc.</i></p>
<p><b>2. Normative references</b></p> <p><i>The Normative clause title shall be used, even when no references are given, for clause alignment purposes; however the content will be unique to the discipline</i></p>
<p><b>3. Terms and definitions</b></p> <p><i>The “Terms and definitions” clause title shall be used.</i></p> <p><i>Terms and definitions may either be within the standard or in a separate standard/document.</i></p> <p><i>The clause should reference the Aligned definitions + discipline specific ones</i></p>
<p>5.4 Organizational roles, responsibilities and authorities</p> <p><i>Some MSS disciplines may wish to add a note that: &lt;&lt;Note the role of reporting on the performance of the <b>XXX</b> management system is often assigned to a “Management Representative”&gt;&gt;</i></p>
<p>6.1 Actions to address risks and opportunities</p> <p><i>Discipline specific standards can define “risk” in terms that are specific to their discipline. ISO 31000 provides a definition of “risk” that some discipline specific standards can use (see also definition T.1.2). Additionally, each discipline should clarify its need for a formal “risk management “ approach.</i></p>
<p>7.1 Resources</p>



*Each discipline may need to add a specific Note giving examples of resources*

**8. Operation**

*The concept behind this clause is that it applies to an organization's general operations, as well as to the operation of its management system*

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## Annex B - Application guidance notes on common terms and definitions

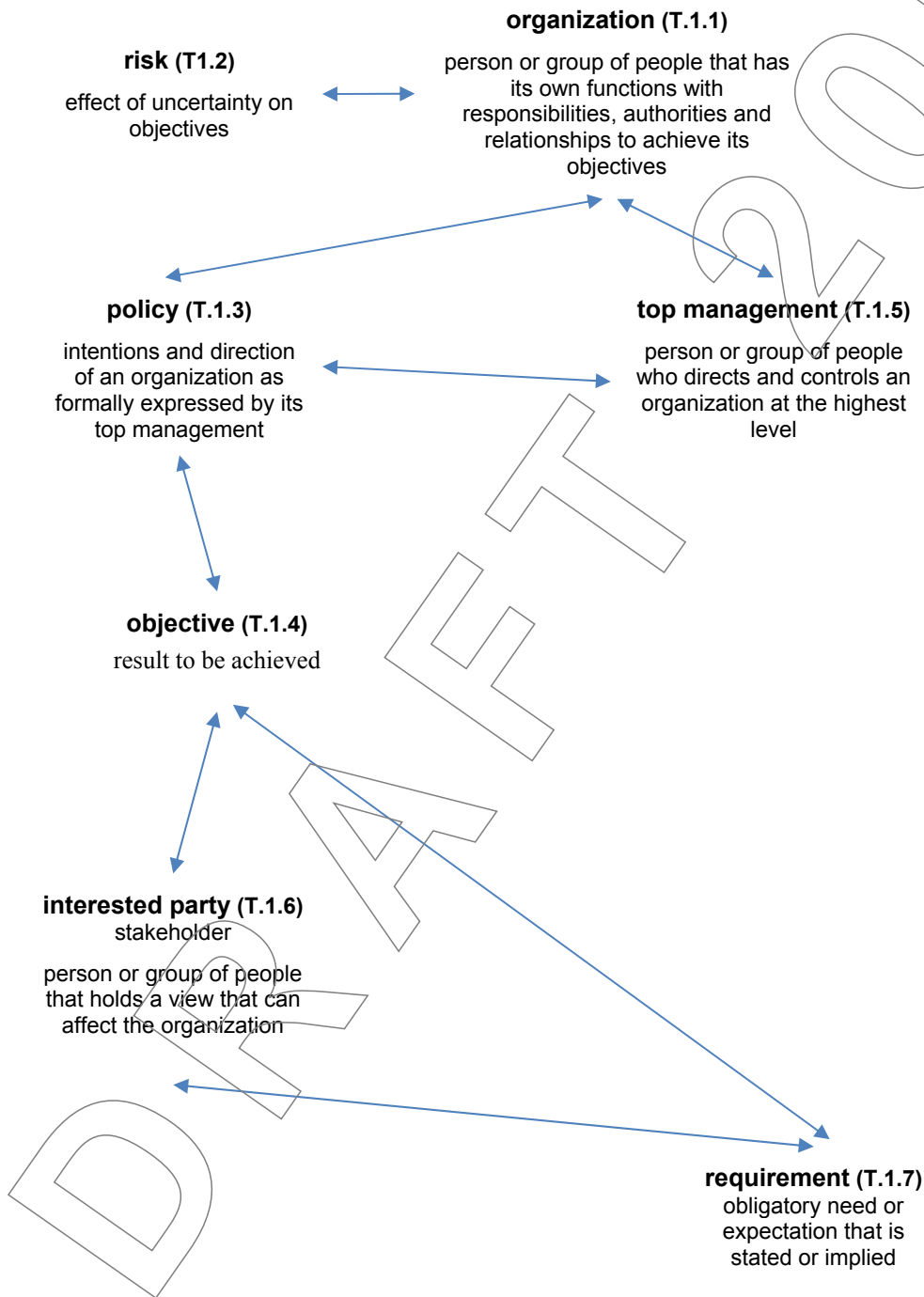
1. Whenever **management systems common terms** are included in the text of a management systems standard they shall be included in the terms and definitions clause of the standard or in a separate, normatively referenced document.
2. **Management systems core definitions** shall be stated without any deviation. However, the understanding of the concept of “risk” may (due to legal reasons and other constraints) deviate from that which is expressed in the definition under T.1.2, in which case an alternative definition may be needed (see also the application guidance in Annex A on clause 6.1 of the High Level Structure).”
3. Additional information to clarify the concept in question, for regulatory or other reasons shall be added in notes and examples.
4. Terms and definitions shall be arranged in conceptual order according to their position in the appropriate concept system of the subject field.
5. **Management systems common terms** shall be located in the appropriate concept system together with all other terms included in the terms and definitions clause. Consequently, the location of **management systems common terms and core definitions** in the clause may be different in each MS standard depending on their position in the concept system of that standard.

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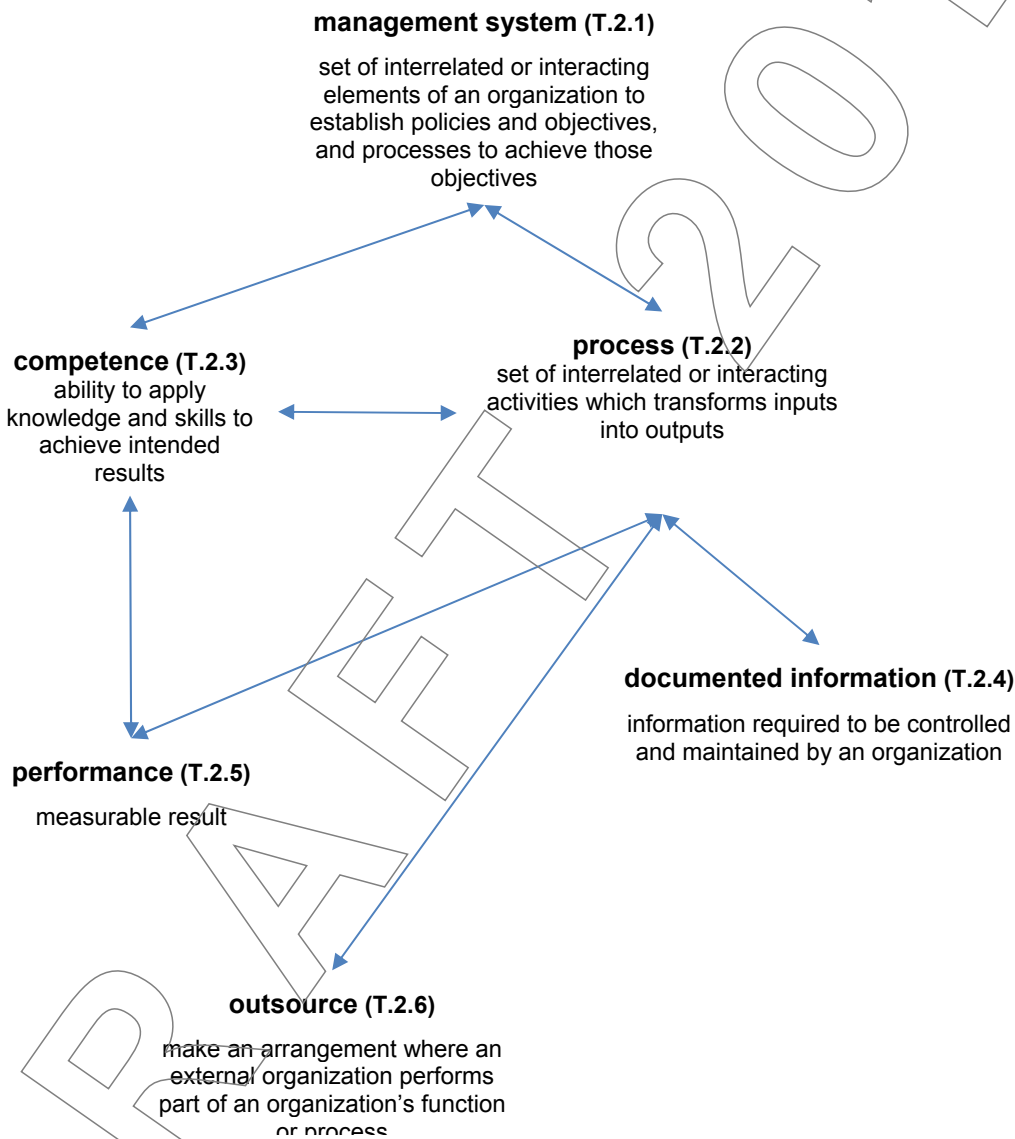
## Annex C - Concept diagrams of common terms and core definitions related to management systems

### T.1 Terms related to “plan”

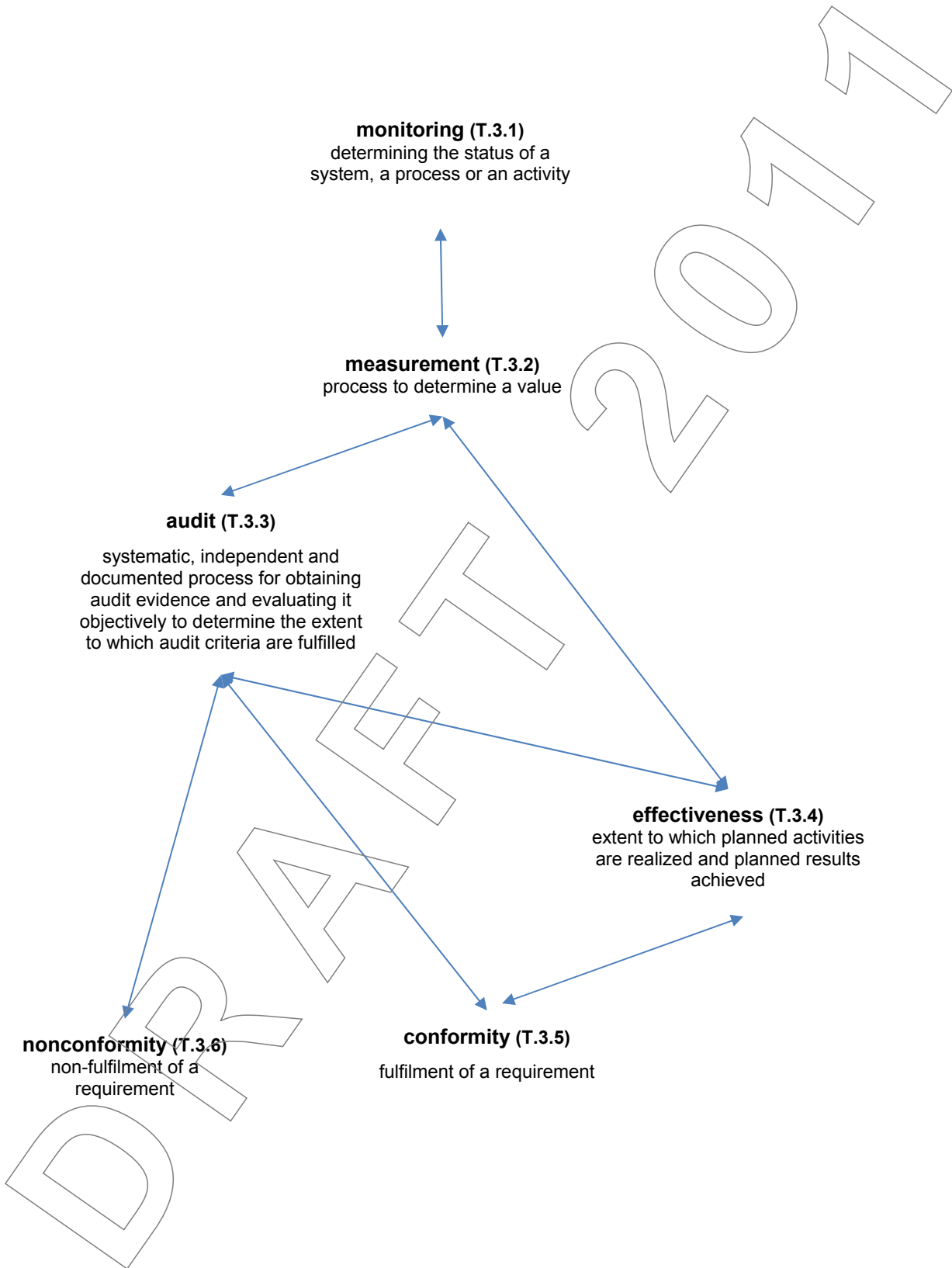




## T.2 Terms related to “do”



### T.3 Terms related to “check”



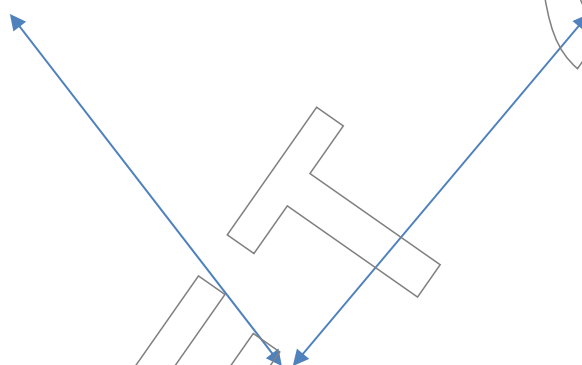


## T.4 Terms related to “act”

**correction (T.4.1)**  
action to eliminate a detected  
nonconformity

**corrective action (T.4.2)**  
action to eliminate the cause of a  
nonconformity and to prevent  
recurrence

**continual improvement (T.4.3)**  
recurring activity to enhance  
performance





## Annex D - Practical recommendations for drafting and representing terms and definitions

### D.1 Introduction

Following recommendations are based on *ISO/IEC Directives - Part 2 - Annex D* (normative)

“Drafting and representation of terms and definitions”

“... The principles and methods for terminology work are specified in ISO 704:2009. Rules for the preparation and layout of standardized terminology in particular subject fields are given in ISO 10241:1992, from which all examples in this annex are reproduced or adapted ...”

Specialists and standard writers are always dealing with objects, either material, immaterial or imaginary, that for the sake of communication they transform, by a mental process of abstraction, into **concepts** from which the subject fields are made.

But they also need to designate these **concepts** by means of transparently accurate, consistent and appropriate **terms** in order to transfer knowledge through comprehensible and unambiguous texts.

It is necessary to make a clear distinction between a “word” and a “term”. The former belongs to general language and the latter to special language (i.e. those words used by a subject field having a subject field specific concept definition that is special to the subject field and is not to be found in general language dictionaries). Standard writers have to use both special and general language and they have to be very careful when using one or the other.

Standardized management systems terminology should represent the specific management system concept system. Harmonization is the result of standardized work in the specific field of language or across specific fields of language.

### D.2 Concepts

#### D.2.1 Selection of concepts

In order to select an adequate list of concepts, it is necessary to analyze the properties of corresponding objects, so as to be able to find the suitable concepts' characteristics. Not all the characteristics have the same importance and only the essential ones shall be included, leaving aside the non-essential ones. Strictly speaking, only delimiting characteristics shall be taken into consideration.

Nevertheless, perhaps the best way to select concepts is to carefully analyze texts of the subject field in question in order to find this unique set of characteristics that constitute concepts within a network of related concepts with similar and different characteristics.

Selection of concepts requiring specialized treatment as terms and definitions for use in a standard or series of standards should be the result of liaison between the people using these rules for their terminology work and the group or groups formulating the text of the normative provisions of the standard. It is an iterative process whereby the concepts needing subject specific definition are either requested by the text writers to be considered for entry into the vocabulary for the standard or it is noticed by the terminology group that the text is using a term in a subject specific rather than general language manner.

It is then preferable for the text writers to supply the terminologists with a set of properties that characterize the concept as used by them.

The terminologists apply the following methods to obtain the appropriate designation, definition and any examples or notes for the text writers to consider. It is then a matter of iteratively refining or improving the term entry until it is approved as satisfactory for both parties.





## D.3 Concept systems

### D.3.1 Purpose of a concept system

A concept system is a graphical representation of the position of the concepts corresponding to a subject field. It makes clear the relationships among concepts and it forms the basis for a uniform and standardized terminology. A concept system provides a cohesive terminology structure that facilitates the drafting of intelligible and transparent definitions with linguistic brevity.

An analysis of the relations among concepts, and an arrangement of them into concept systems, is a prerequisite to the successful development of definitions.

### D.3.2 Types of concept systems

There are four primary types of concept systems:

- generic,
- partitive,
- associative,
- mixed.

## D.4 Definition

representation of a concept by a descriptive statement which serves to differentiate it from related concepts

[ISO 1087:2000, 3.3.1]

A good definition should be:

- clear,
- concise,
- relevant and applicable to the standard in question.

Additional information should be added in notes.

### D.4.1 Formulating definitions

The following basic principles shall apply to the drafting of definitions:

- a) The definitions shall have the same grammatical form as the term. Thus, to define a verb, a verbal phrase shall be used; to define a singular noun, the singular shall be used.
- b) The preferred structure of a definition is: a basic part stating the class to which the concept belongs, and another part enumerating the characteristics that distinguish the concept from other members of the class.
- c) The definition shall not begin with an expression such as “term used to describe” or “term denoting”; neither shall it take the form “[term] is ...” or “[term] means ...”.
- d) Unless there is a specific reason, the definition shall not begin with an article.

[Source: ISO 10241:1992, 5.2.5]



## D.4.2 Process for definition development

### D.4.2.1 Questions before drafting a definition:

#### D.4.2.2 Is it already defined in an International Standard?

If so, and if the definition is acceptable, quote that definition and give the source in square brackets one line after the direct quote.

#### D.4.2.3 If the “term” is

- self-explanatory or has a commonly known and understood dictionary meaning, and
- cannot be interpreted differently in different contexts?

it is not a term requiring definition and should not be included in the vocabulary.

Common dictionary words should only be entered as terms if there is a danger that a meaning other than the specific meaning for application to that standard may be used.

## D.4.3 Good practice for writing definitions

- Only include main characteristics (i.e. focus on aspects that differentiate the concept from other concepts).
- Define the concept as it exists in the world though having a special application in the subject field (i.e. do not add the characteristics that standard may be concerned with as part of the concept definition, leave that to the text writers e.g. defining what is “good quality” for the term “quality” in a standard related to quality).
- Use short phrases and consider only one issue in each phrase.
- Avoid introductory words such as “it means”, “is” or “the term is used for”.
- Avoid using the term itself in the definition.
- Whenever possible use the singular form for the definition.
- Always use:
  - a lower case starting letter,
  - no initial article, and
  - no full stop.

[Adapted from ISO 10241:1992, 6.2]

NOTE: Following these basic rules will allow the principle of substitution of the term by the definition to be respected.

The substitution principle shall be used to test the validity of a *definition*. In the case of an *intensional definition*, it is valid if it can replace a *designation* in discourse without loss of or change in meaning. [ISO 704:2009, 6.3.4]

### Examples illustrating the principle of substitution:

#### Definition:

#### 2.3

#### asset

anything that has value to the organization

#### Original text:

recognise that information, and related processes, systems, networks and people are important **assets** for achieving organization objectives;

#### Term substituted by definition:



recognise that information, and related processes, systems, networks and people are important **things that have value to the organization** for achieving organization objectives;

## 2.25

### **integrity**

property of protecting the accuracy and completeness of **assets** (2.3)

#### **Original text:**

The term information security is generally based on information being considered as an asset which has a value requiring appropriate protection, for example, against the loss of availability, confidentiality, and **integrity**.

#### **Term substituted by definition:**

The term information security is generally based on information being considered as an asset which has a value requiring appropriate protection, for example, against the loss of availability, confidentiality and the **property of protecting the accuracy and completeness of assets**.

[Source: ISO/IEC 27000:2009 “Information technology – Security techniques – Information security management systems – Overview and vocabulary”]

**Applying the substitution rule is useful to check within a vocabulary whether circularity has occurred and anywhere in the standard that the term is properly referenced within a sentence.**

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## Annex E - The use of common terms and words in management systems standard

This annex discusses the harmonization of words and terms that are commonly or frequently used in management systems standards.

Words commonly used in management systems and having an acceptable choice of meaning found in general language dictionaries are listed below to assist text writers to achieve consistency and accuracy of concept reference throughout their documents.

Some observations on basic methods of assuring consistent and accurate concept reference in standards provisions are also provided for newcomers to standards writing.

### E.1 Elements intended to assist consistent and accurate referencing of concepts in the text of management system standards

1. Dictionary words and the meaning generally applicable in management systems standards. Some of these have been requested for clarification while others are known to be problematic for one reason or another e.g. why does one provision require the implementer to “determine” and another to “define”.

Terms relating to the management of an organization:

- a. **leadership**  
ability to be ahead of others in assuming responsibility and authority
- b. **plan**  
detailed formulation of a programme to achieve an objective
- c. **programme**  
planned series of steps, projects or activities to be carried out
- d. **framework**  
underlying structure
- e. **design**  
working out the form of something
- f. **purpose**  
anticipated outcome that guides planned actions
- g. **determine**  
establish or find out with certainty by research, examination or calculation
- h. **define**  
state or describe exactly the nature, scope or meaning of that which is under consideration
- i. **identify**  
establish the identity of something
- j. **verification**  
confirmation, through provision of evidence, that specified requirements have been fulfilled

2. Some basic suggestions for assuring consistent and accurate referencing of concepts for newcomers to management systems standards writing:

- a. As far as possible:
  - i. only one term shall be used to refer to one concept (i.e. do not use any synonyms), and
  - ii. only one concept shall be referred to by one term (i.e. do not use homonyms, e.g. “management” used to refer to both the “activity of management” as well as the “people who manage” in the same document or “document” to refer to the noun “information and its supporting medium” as well as “document” meaning “to reduce information to documentary form” in the same document.



- b. Terms in standards vocabularies or vocabulary clauses are normative for use in the document or documents concerned, and consequently:
- i. a word or words forming a term and having a specialized technical definition shall not also be used with any of its often differing general language meanings;
  - ii. the substitution rule should be applied as part of the text writing process and for assurance as a text revision process
    1. when writing a word that is known to be a term into the text of a provision, reference should be made to that technical definition with a view to ensuring that the term can be replaced in the text by the full definition of the concept without any change to the meaning or understanding of the sentence (subject to minor adjustments for grammatical flow);
    2. upon completion of the text a systematic word search can be done on each term to check that each instance of its use in the text satisfies the substitution rule.
3. The following brief discussions of some words/terms or concepts are offered to help in understanding and to some extent translation issues. It needs to be remembered that different languages have different “problems” (and solutions), e.g. by having a different number of words to choose from under any heading. In a multilingual context this needs to be given particular attention.

## E.2 Discussion of some individual words/terms

### E.2.1 interested party – stakeholder

It is proposed to define interested party and stakeholder as synonyms, specifying “interested party” as the preferred term. Either term can, however, be used, but only one term should be used in the text in any one standard. However, in the terms and definitions clause, both terms should be mentioned as synonyms to avoid creation of a new definition of the other term.

In many standards there may be a need to address a specific subgroup of interested parties/stakeholders (generally those interested in the success of an organization or an activity and occasionally those that have an interest attacking the organization e.g. on the basis of some of its environmental practices). This can be addressed in different ways:

- explicitly describe in the text which subgroups are concerned,
- add a note to the definition of interested party/stakeholder, with guidance on how and/or when the standard refers to the specific subgroup(s), or
- develop a subordinate definition for the specific subgroup

If the last option is chosen, one possibility could be (as an example):

#### **affected party**

**interested party** (T.1.6) *with an interest in the success of an organization or an activity*

### E.2.2 objective – goal – aim – target

In general language these words are very often interchangeable. As terms, however, it is possible to restrict the meaning through a definition. It is, then, extremely important to be very clear and explicit about which words/terms shall be used in given contexts and with given intentions.

There is nothing “inherent” in the words that make any specific hierarchy more “natural” or “correct” than any other hierarchy.

It is normally not good practice to use these words without specifying what is intended and in many cases just one of the words is needed; varying usage may be confusing, unless it is clearly defined how the words shall be used.

### E.2.3 assessment – evaluation

In most contexts the meanings of “assessment” and “evaluation” coincide, and many languages have only one word to capture this.

If it is intended to use the word “evaluation” as well as “assessment” to differentiate similar but different concepts, term entries defining the difference should be included in the English text and languages that only have one word in this context may have to create a new term for one of the defined concepts.

In specific cases there may be a need to specify two different types (or levels) of assessment/evaluation, and it is in such a case “allowed” to define the two more specifically. It must be emphasized that such usage will be restricted to the document(s) in question.

### E.2.4 risk – risk assessment

The term “risk” has sometimes been used in a sense that is more or less a synonym to “risk assessment”, or to the result of “risk assessment”. This is also the case in the definitions of “risk” in some standards. This creates confusion when using “risk” compared to using “risk assessment”. In the 2009 version of ISO Guide 73 the definition of “risk” therefore (for this reason and others) was changed to a pure and generic definition “effect of uncertainty on objectives”. This definition would be applicable in most contexts. (It should be noted however that ISO Guide 51:1999 Safety aspects – Guidelines for their inclusions in standards, includes a different definition of “risk”.)

### E.2.5 plan – programme

There is often some inconsistency in the use of the words “plan” (and “planning”) vs. “program(me)”. Consistency is the main point; standard writers should make the intended use clear.

### E.2.6 ability – capability – competence (competences) – competency (competencies)

There is considerable overlap between the usages of these words.

The word “competency” (and in particular in its plural form) is frequently used, without clear difference from “competence”. It is recommended only to use “competence”.

There are elements of “formal” (legal) competence, while the abilities are more often “physical”.

You can be “able” to do something, and you can be “capable” to do it, but not having the “competence”; and also vice versa.

### E.2.7 continual – continuous

There is a frequent misuse of the word “continuous” as if it is synonymous with “continual” which is not correct.

**Continuous** indicates duration without interruption.

**Continual** indicates duration that continues over a long period of time, but with intervals of interruption. Continual is therefore the appropriate word to use in the context of improvement.

### E.2.8 The word “document” as verb and noun. The word “record” as verb and noun

It is bad practice and confusing to use these words both as a noun and as a verb.

common text uses the term “documented information” as the preferred noun. To be consistent, it is recommended using “document” only as a verb.

It should be noted that there is nothing inherent in the meanings of “document” and “record” to prevent one document to contain several records, nor to prevent one record to contain several documents.



### **E.2.9 The relation of “preventive action” to control of nonconformities vs. risk management**

When some management standards deal with “preventive action” in clauses dealing with control of nonconformities, other management standards deal with the concept in clauses dealing with risk management.

The list of common terms for management system standards does therefore not include a definition of “preventive action”. If the concept is used in a standard, it should be clearly explained in what context it is used.

### **E.2.10 Traceability – sector specific usages**

In, for example, Food Safety and Medical Devices, standards have to take into account legal requirements on traceability. Therefore the concept of traceability is slightly different in these contexts than e.g. in Quality management standards, in the sense that organizational ability is implied in the concept of traceability in Food Safety and Medical Device standards but not in e.g. in Quality management standards. There can be different usages in other fields as well. Instead of a generic definition, it is recommended to develop definitions of traceability in the context of specific management systems standards.

### **E.2.11 Terms specific to management systems standards vs. generic terms frequently used in management systems standards**

While some of the terms used in management systems standards are more or less specific to management systems standards, others are generic and frequently used in other standards as well. Regarding those being more or less specific to management systems standards, JTCG can be seen as the “owner” of the definitions, and JTCG has not considered usage in other categories of standards. For those terms that are frequently used in other categories of standards, where the definition may be crucial, JTCG has proposed pure and generic definitions that could be adapted to other standards as well. For these terms JTCG has for some terms added notes relating to the application in management systems standards.

JTCG has tried to avoid a situation where solving one problem in management systems standards creates problems to writers of other standards. Standard writers should be aware that ISO directives require that a series of standards shall develop only one definition for a specific term to be used consistently for all standards in the series.

### **E.2.12 activity vs. action**

The words activity and action are often used in the same standard, without a clear understanding whether they are intended to be synonymous or have a different meaning. If the intention is synonymous only one of the words should be used. If the intention is they have a different meaning the meanings should be clarified and the usage consistent.

### **E.2.13 needs and requirements**

Wherever the expression “needs and requirements” is used in management systems standards it is likely that it can cause confusion owing to the relationship of “need” within the concept of “requirement”.

### **E.2.14 control**

The word “control” has many different meanings. It can also be used both as a noun and as a verb. Standard writers should be aware of the problems that can be caused by using “control” with different meanings in the same standard. This is particularly important with respect to translation.

### **E.2.15 efficiency vs. effectiveness**

The difference between “efficiency” and “effectiveness” is often not understood, particularly when translating standards. It is especially important when used in the context of continual improvement.



Examples:

Efficiency – process which results in saving resources, e.g. money, time, etc.

Effectiveness – producing the intended or expected result

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