Guidance on Quality Assurance (QA) levels and procedure for QA evaluation of non-IFPP products

Introduction

1. The paper on the "Quality Assurance of products developed outside the Due Process" developed jointly by the INTOSAI Goal Chairs and INTOSAI Development Initiative (IDI)and approved by INTOSAI GB envisages the following three Quality assurance levels:
    1. Products that have been subjected to quality assurance processes equivalent to INTOSAI due process, including an extended period of transparent public exposure;
    2. Products that have been subjected to more limited quality assurance processes involving stakeholders from outside the body or working group responsible for the products' initial development. Quality assurance processes might, for example, include piloting, testing and inviting comments from key stakeholders, although not go as far as full 90-day public exposure;
    3. Products that have been subjected to rigorous quality control measures within the body or working group responsible for their development;

2. The paper also envisions affixing of a quality assurance statement prominently on or immediately after the cover page of the document and an annex succinctly outlining the quality assurance measures that were taken and their outcome. The statement shall also include either a revision or expiry clause, stating clearly the latest date by which the product will be reviewed and updated or the date upon which the guidance in the product will cease to be valid.
3. The goal chairs have jointly developed the templates for the project proposals and the QA certificates for the non-IFPP products. These were also presented before 71st INTOSAI GB as one of the initiatives under Goal chairs collaboration. It was agreed in principle to follow a 2 tier certification process, wherein based on the assurance provided by the Chair of the Working Group/Subcommittee/Work-stream on the adherence to the QA level, the Goal Chairs would issue a certificate to be affixed in the document.

Detailed Procedure

4. The paper also required the Goal Chairs to develop the necessary procedures and templates. Accordingly, the following procedure is being prescribed. The procedure will be subject to review by the Goal Chairs every year.
5. The Chairs of the Working Group/Subcommittee/Work-stream in their Work Plan may also indicate the QA level of the new products. The information may be sent to the Goal Committee Secretariat to enable them to keep consolidated records and to keep track of the progress as per the set QA level.
6. In case the QA level could not be determined at the time of preparation of Work Plan, it may be determined at the soonest possible, preferably before the first Steering committee meeting of the Goal committee under the new Work Plan, to enable discussion on the matter in the meeting.

7. At the time of determining the QA level, it is also advisable to decide the expiry date and the date of the renewal of the proposed new documents.
8. Once the project team is constituted, the team may be advised to forward a detailed project proposal in the template prescribed at Annex -I. A copy of the project proposal may be forwarded to the Goal Committee Secretariat for record and for keeping track of the progress of the project.
9. The progress of the project shall be presented by the Chair of the Working Group/Subcommittee/Work-stream at the Steering Committee meeting of the Goal Committee so that any deviation from the procedure or special consideration and challenges can be discussed and resolved in a timely manner.
10. Once the exposure draft of the document is in place, the following procedure may be followed depending on the QA level at which the document is placed.

Procedure QA level 1:

11. The project team has to follow the entire procedure equivalent to the Due Process of IFPP as detailed in the paragraphs below.
12. Instead of FIPP which approves the document at all the three stages in the Due process of IFPP, namely, the project proposal, exposure draft and endorsement version, the Steering Committee of the Goal Committee or any body designated by it (henceforth called the Approving Body), will be the body which would approve the documents.
13. The document should at all the three stages be referred to by the Chair of the Working Group/Subcommittee/Work-stream to Approving Body by email at least a month in advance to allow the members to independently examine the documents.
14. The Project team may go to the next stage only after the approval of the Approving Body.
15. During the exposure period, the document has to be exposed for a mandatory period of 90 days for comments from the INTOSAI Community through the INTOSAI Community Portal.
16. The Project team should analyse the comments on exposure drafts and address them appropriately while finalizing the document.
17. The Chair of the Working Group/Subcommittee/Work-stream shall oversee the entire process including the exposure of the documents and consideration of the comments in finalizing the documents.
18. The Project team shall forward the disposition table containing the comments received and how they were addressed to the Goal Committee Secretariat for display on INTOSAI Community Portal. The file will be posted in the INTOSAI Community Portal till the document is finalized.
19. When the final document is approved by the Approving Body, the Chair of the Working Group/Subcommittee/Work-stream shall refer the document to the Goal Chair with the necessary assurance certificate (Annex II) that the due process has been followed in all aspects.
20. The Goal Chair may also in parallel conduct an independent assessment of the process. The Goal Chair may, if need arises, contact the Project team lead for any clarification/query on the matter.
21. Based on his own independent assurance and the assurance provided by the Chair of the Working Group/Subcommittee/Work-stream, the Goal chair shall issue a certificate (Annex-III) which will be affixed in the Document.

Procedure for QA level 2:

22. The procedure for QA level 1 will be followed, but instead of exposing the document for a period of 90 days, the project group may expose the document for atleast 45 days.
23. The Steering Committee of the Working Group/Subcommittee/Work-stream or any body authorized by it will be the approving authority for the project proposal, exposure draft and endorsement version.
24. In addition to exposing the document, the project team may also consider identifying other parties outside the Working Group/Subcommittee/Work-stream and seek their expert comments on the document, in consultation with the Chair of the Working Group/Subcommittee/Work-stream, giving reasons for selecting such parties and their connection with the subject matter.
25. The Working Group/Subcommittee/Work-stream may forward the list of external sources identified to the Goal Committee Secretariat.
26. Other process from sl.no. 16 to 21 remain the same.

Procedure for QA level 3:

27. The reasons for placing the document at QA level 3 may be explicitly brought out and forwarded to Goal Committee Secretariat.
28. The project team shall seek the comments of all members of the Working Group/Subcommittee/Work-stream by giving them sufficient time to respond and finalize the document after duly addressing their comments.
29. The Chair of the Working Group/Subcommittee/Work-stream while referring the document to the Goal Chair shall provide the assurance that the exposure draft was circulated to all the members of the Working Group/Subcommittee/Work-stream and their opinion was duly considered by the Project team while finalizing the document.
30. Once the document is finalized in accordance with above procedures, the Goal Chair shall include the document in the Goal committee's motion to the INTOSAI GB.
31. The finalized document will then be published on the INTOSAI Community Portal. The Chair of the Working Group/Subcommittee/Work-stream shall take measures to inform the INTOSAI Community about the availability of the new document.