

CEN-CENELEC GUIDE 2

Consumer interests and the preparation of European Standards

Edition 1, December 2001

The CEN Administrative Board decided to replace CEN/CENELEC Memoranda by CEN/CENELEC Guides with the corresponding document number (resolution CEN/CA 18/2001). As a result, CEN/CENELEC Memorandum 2 was converted into CEN/CENELEC Guide 2. No change was made to the text of the original document (1977). The CENELEC General Assembly agreed by correspondence to convert the CEN/CENELEC Memoranda listed in the CENELEC Catalogue into CEN/CENELEC Guides with the corresponding document number. As a result, CEN/CENELEC Memorandum 2 was converted into CEN/CENELEC Guide 2. No change was made to the text of the original document (1977).



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Consumer interests and the preparation of standards

Member bodies of CEN and CENELEC recognize and support the objectives of the EEC preliminary programme for a consumer protection and information policy, in particular that there should be "consultation with and representation of consumers in the framing of decisions affecting their interests".

It is a principle of standards activity that all interests affected by the work are taken into account. This principle is applied by the Member bodies of CEN and CENELEC in forming their national opinion and representing it through their national delegations at the European level. Moreover, the services of the Commission of the European Communities and the EFTA Secretariat may take part in the activities of the CEN/CENELEC technical committees to the extent considered appropriate having regard to the legitimate interests represented.

In pursuit of these principles the General Assemblies on CEN and CENELEC make the following recommendations:

1. At national level there should be provision for consumer participation in the initiation and planning of the programmes of standards work as well as in policy matters relevant to the consumer interest.
2. At national level consumer interests should be invited to participate in all technical committees handling standard projects affecting the interests of the general public.
3. Where a CEN or CENELEC committee is developing a European Standard of interest to consumers, Member bodies should seek means to encourage the active participation of consumers in national delegations.
4. Standards work is by nature technical and complex. Where possible and necessary, Member body staff should provide consumer representatives with briefing on technical issues and guidance on standards procedures.
5. Member bodies should ensure effective communication of the results of their standards work to general public.
6. Where the representation of consumers is hampered through the lack of finance, Member bodies should use their best efforts in finding solutions to overcome these difficulties.
7. Member bodies should be encouraged to examine measures to "sound" consumer opinion, either on their own initiative or through other organizations.

8. Member bodies are invited to study the composition and terms of reference of the various consumer committees or other Member bodies and to consider whether any changes in their own national structures would be appropriate in order to comply with the above recommendations.
9. Particular attention should be paid to a close co-ordination of all activities arising from these recommendations within the same country. This would also facilitate a common approach to matters of consumer interest in CEN and CENELEC.