Secretariat of ISO/TC 176/SC 2  
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To the Members of  
ISO/TC 176/SC 2 -  
Quality Management and  
Quality Assurance/  
Quality Systems

Communique on the 44th meeting of ISO/TC 176/SC2  
Bridgetown, Barbados, November 2019

The 44th meeting of ISO/TC 176/SC2 was held in Bridgetown, Barbados, hosted by the Barbados National Standards Institution, at the Hilton Barbados Resort hotel.

Since its last meeting, the membership of the SC has remained static overall, but with movement of members between P and O-membership. It now stands at 81 P-members, 18 O-members and 44 Liaison members.

The SC’s Strategic Planning and Operations Task Group (SPOTG) held a short meeting in Barbados to take an overview of the work of the SC. In the recent past, its role has mainly been to coordinate the activities of different Working Groups and their projects. Now, the SPOTG is moving more towards a strategic review of what will need to be done in the future.

Noting the ongoing revision of the Annex L "High Level Structure" (which seeks to improve alignment between management system standards, so that they can be more easily integrated into an organization's management system) the SPOTG agreed that SC2’s Task Group (TG) 01 would meet in conjunction with ISO/TC 76/SC1 in order to provide a coordinated
response to the current draft of the “High Level Structure” from ISO’s Joint Technical Coordination Group for Management System Standards (the “JTCG”).

The SPOTG also examined the other factors that could affect a future revision of ISO 9001, including the ISO/TC 176/TG04 work on “Future Concepts” for quality, or the work of SC2/TG04 on Interpretations (see below). The SPOTG decided to recommend the establishment of a new TG 05 to prepare for a potential revision of the standard (which could commence in 2021 following the completion of a systematic review of ISO 9001). A key challenge for this new TG will be to conduct a survey of users of ISO 9001 to be completed in line with the systematic review of ISO 9001.

The SPOTG noted that ISO/TS 9002:2016 Guidelines for the application of ISO 9001:2015 had started a “systematic review” in October. Such a review is conducted to ensure that ISO standards and other deliverables, such as Technical Specification (TS), remain adequate. A systematic review is conducted via a ballot of ISO’s member national standards bodies, to determine their opinions on what should happen to a standard in the future. The result of a systematic review can be a decision to either revise (or amend) a document, to confirm it (unchanged), or to withdraw it. The SPOTG agreed that it would be strange to have to start a revision of the TS when the document it is based on (ISO 9001:2015) has not changed. It decided to make a recommendation to the SC2 members bodies to confirm the TS, until a revision of ISO 9001 has been started.

The joint SC2/TG01 meeting with ISO/TC 176/SC 1, that was held in Barbados, successfully completed a review of submitted comments in order to develop its coordinated response. It also provided a briefing to the SC2 and TC 176/SC1 representatives to the JTCG’s TF14, which will meet in January. In addition, it planned a series of webinars and meetings for the future, depending on whether the JTCG will issue future drafts in the near future (e.g. following the January JTCG TF 14 meeting).

SC2 offers an interpretations service to its member bodies, to clarify any potential ambiguities in ISO 9001. This is managed through its Task Group (TG) 04, which met in Barbados to review the comments received from member bodies on an interpretation request for ISO 9001:2015 (the 4th one received since the publication of the standard). This work was completed and the interpretation will now be posted on the SC’s web site at https://committee.iso.org/tc176sc2. In addition, the TG made some slight amendments to the guidance on interpretations for member bodies. The TG also proposed a resolution to the SC’s plenary to encourage members to submit any interpretations they have issued for review by the TG.

The work that was accomplished during the week could not have been achieved without the superb support that it received from our hosts, Barbados National Standards Institution, BNSI. In addition, the excellent facilities and wonderful hospitality that they, and their sponsors, provided made the tasks much easier.

The next meeting of ISO/TC 176 will be held during 18 to 23 October 2020 in Rwanda; SC2 and its subordinate groups will need to meet with the TC at that time.

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For the BSI Secretariat of
ISO/TC 176/SC2