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## OASIS Best Current Practices Document

### The Document Life Cycle for TCs

**Version: 2023.11.27**

**Abstract:**

This document provides guidance on how work products in the OASIS [Technical Committee \(TC\)](#) program progress through the various development stages of a document's lifecycle. This document also defines three optional standing rules that a TC may enact. These standing rules simplify when ballots are needed, clarify when and how approvals are done, can reduce voting fatigue, and can reduce delays due to administrative process. These can be adopted on a document by document basis or be adopted globally by the TC for all documents. In the latter case, a TC may consider doing this during the formation of the TC.

**Scope:**

This document may be used by any OASIS or otherwise and applies to all Standards Track and Non-Standards Track work products from those Technical Committees.

**Notices:**

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# 1 Introduction

This document provides guidance on how work products in the OASIS [Technical Committee \(TC\)](#) program progress through the various development stages of a document's lifecycle. This document also defines three optional standing rules that a TC may enact. These standing rules simplify when ballots are needed, clarify when and how approvals are done, can reduce voting fatigue, and can reduce delays due to administrative process. These can be adopted on a document by document basis or be adopted globally by the TC for all documents. In the latter case, a TC may consider doing this during the formation of the TC.

## 1.1 Contributions

A contribution to a TC either contains a proposed new work item (NWI) or contains proposed edits, changes, additions, or suggestions to an existing work item (regardless of the existing work item's current stage). This OBCP document focuses on contributions that create new work items. TCs need to review and consider all contributions, but the contributions do not need to be accepted or adopted (in part or in full) by the TC.

## 1.2 Document Stages

All work items in OASIS programs start as a contribution to a TC and starter templates for these contributions can be requested from OASIS Admin [1]. Once a contribution is accepted and adopted it becomes an official work product (WP) of the TC and will then progress through the following stages of the document lifecycle. A contribution may go through several revisions before it is accepted and adopted as a WP.

1. Standards Track Work Product stages
  - a. Unofficial Working Draft
  - b. Committee Specification Draft
  - c. Committee Specification
  - d. OASIS Standard
2. Non-Standards Track Work Product stages
  - a. Unofficial Working Draft
  - b. Committee Note Draft
  - c. Committee Note

[1] -

<https://www.oasis-open.org/project-administration-support-requests/form-request-template-start-document/>

### 1.2.1 Documents Don't Revert to a Previous Stage

As a document advances to a new stage, new versions of that document do not start over at a previous stage. For example, when a document has been approved as a Committee Specification Draft (CSD), new versions of that document do not start over as Working Drafts

(WD). However, in rare cases when the TC needs to update a Committee Specification (CS) or a Committee Note (CN) a TC may decide that the proposed changes warrant going back to the Committee Specification Draft (CSD)/Committee Note Draft (CND) stage. This is especially true if the changes include significant breaking changes or the changes would represent a major or perhaps even a significant minor revision to the document according to semantic versioning.

### 1.3 Full Majority Votes

Approvals of a Committee Specification Draft require a Full Majority vote. As stated in Section “1.11 TC Voting” of the [TC Process](#):

TCs may conduct electronic ballots. An electronic ballot may be conducted during a meeting using any tool available to the TC, including email, and the results must be recorded in the minutes. Electronic ballots outside of a meeting shall be made either by using the TC’s general mail list or the publicly archived electronic voting functionality provided by OASIS and must remain open for a minimum of 7 days.

The TC may vote using the TC’s ballot tool or by issuing a call for objections to unanimous consent in a quorate meeting or via email so long as the motion, the second to the motion, and results are documented per TC Process. If the call for unanimous consent goes out over email, then the ballot for objections must remain open for a minimum of 7 days. If there is one or more objections to unanimous consent then a traditional ballot must be used.

### 1.4 Abbreviations and Acronyms

This document uses the following abbreviations and acronyms:

- **CN** - Committee Note
- **CND** - Committee Note Draft
- **CS** - Committee Specification
- **CSD** - Committee Specification Draft
- **NWI** - New Work Item
- **SMV** - Special Majority Vote
- **TC** - Technical Committee
- **WD** - Unofficial Working Draft / Working Draft
- **WP** - Work Product

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## 2 Document Stages

### 2.1 Unofficial Working Drafts

The OASIS TC Process does not talk about contributions or unofficial working drafts, as such, this section gives some guidance on what they are and how they should be understood.

For the scope of this document a contribution to a TC is a document that contains a proposed new work item (NWI). A TC needs to review and consider all contributions, but contributions do not need to be accepted or adopted (in part or in full) by the TC. A contribution may go through many revisions before it is discarded, accepted or adopted as a work product (WP). Each revision of a contribution, including the first submission is considered an Unofficial Working Draft.

Said another way, an Unofficial Working Draft (Working Draft or WD for short) is a contribution that has not yet been officially accepted or adopted as a WP or has not yet been approved by a TC as an official Standards Track or Non-Standards Track work product (it is not at the CSD or CND stage). This generally means that Working Drafts are either:

- A proposed new work item (NWI)
- A work item that does not yet have enough support from the TC (by a Simple Majority Vote) to be accepted and adopted as a WP.
- A WP that has not yet reached a sufficient level of maturity as determined by the TC to be considered for and approved as an official Standards Track or Non-Standards Track work product (i.e. a CSD or CND).

#### 2.1.1 New Versions

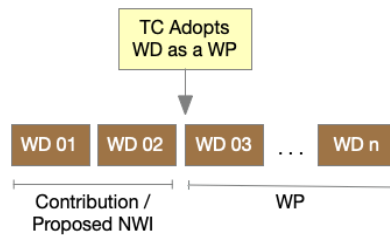
TCs do not approve new versions of a Working Draft. Working Draft documents are developed either by the original contributor or the editors of the document and can be revised, updated, and released as often as the original contributor or editors desire. Each version of these documents can and should be uploaded to the official TC document repository (Working Drafts directory in Kavi).

#### 2.1.2 Numbering

The first release and initial contribution to the TC should have a document version of “Working Draft 01”. For each additional version of the document, the version value should be incremented (e.g., 02, 03, 04 etc). Please see the OASIS Naming Directives document for more information.

#### 2.1.3 Accepting and Adopting

A TC can at any time accept and adopt a contribution as a WP by a Simple Majority Vote. This means the document goes from being a contribution (proposed new work item) to an official work product that will be developed by the TC. The figure below shows additional Working Draft versions after it has been adopted as a WP.



## 2.2 Specification / Note Draft Documents

For a TC, once a Working Draft has been accepted and adopted as a WP and has been deemed sufficiently mature by the TC, the TC can approve the current version of the Working Draft as a Standards Track or Non-Standards Track Work Product through a Full Majority Vote. Please see the TC process for more information on how to perform CSD, CND, and CN (it is possible for documents to go directly from a WD to a CN due to them not needing a public review) ballots.

### 2.2.1 Updates

CSD and CND documents are developed by the TC and updates and revisions are performed by the editors of the document. These documents can be revised, updated, and released as often as desired.

### 2.2.2 Numbering

The first version of a CSD and CND needs to have a document version of “Committee Specification Draft 01” or “Committee Note Draft 01”. For each additional version of the document, the version value should be incremented (e.g., 02, 03, 04, etc.). Please see the OASIS Naming Directives document for more information.

NOTE: the old Working Draft numbers are not retained once a document moves to the CSD or CND stage and new versions of a CSD and CND do not start as Working Drafts.

### 2.2.3 Approvals

The TC needs to approve each new version of a CSD and CND through a Full Majority Vote. Please see the TC Process for more information on how to perform CSD and CND ballots.

### 2.2.4 Standing Rule 1: Approving Draft Documents

As a standing rule, the TC may approve the editor(s) to release new versions of a CSD or CND either on a regular basis or at their discretion without additional motions, calls for consent, or ballots. A Full Majority Vote is required to enact this standing rule.

It is important to note that before a Working Draft can become a CSD or a CND it must have a Full Majority Vote. Thus if a TC is going to enact this standing rule, as a best practice the TC should do this as part of the first CSD or CND ballot to reduce voting fatigue, but this can be

done at any time. This standing rule can be revoked at any time by the TC through a Full Majority Vote.

With this standing rule in place, once a CSD or CND has been released, the TC Chair(s) can ask the OASIS Admin to publish and announce the publication of the CSD or CND without additional motions, ballots, or votes.

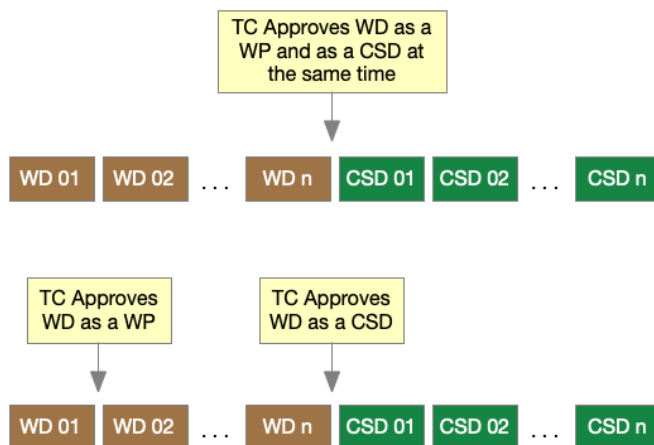
For example, if this standing rule is enacted in a TC then:

- New CSD and CND documents should be uploaded to the official TC document repository (Approved Work Products directory in Kavi) by the editors, as these documents are approved CSDs and CNDs.

If the standing rule is not enacted:

- New not yet approved CSD and CND documents should be uploaded to the official TC document repository (Working Drafts directory in Kavi) by the editor(s) or chair(s) and should have a suffix name of “pre-csd##-yyyy-mm-dd” or “pre-cnd##-yyyy-mm-dd”. The “##” in this case is what the CSD or CND number will be once approved. For example, if CSD01 has been approved and the TC is wanting to approve CSD02, the document would have a suffix of “pre-csd02-yyyy-mm-dd”.
- Once this CSD or CND is approved (by Full Majority Vote), it can be uploaded to the TC document repository (Approved Work Products directory in Kavi) with the normal “csd##” or “cnd##” suffix.

The Figure below shows an example of a Working Draft being approved as a WP and CSD at the same time and at different times.



## 2.3 Informal Document Feedback

TCs can receive feedback at any time about any work product they are working on. It is critical that all feedback from non TC members is submitted through the public comment methods defined in the TC Process.

## 2.4 Public Reviews

See section “2.6 Public Review of a Committee Specification Draft” for more information about public reviews.

In summary, before a committee specification draft can progress to a full committee specification, it needs to have at least one public review. The TC needs to approve each new public review via a Full Majority Vote. Please see the TC process for how to perform Public Review ballots. The TC at any time can request additional public reviews through a Full Majority Vote.

### 2.4.1 Standing Rule 2: Approving Public Reviews

As a standing rule, a TC may approve the chair(s) to open new public reviews with each CSD or CND release, on a regular basis, or at their discretion, without additional motions, calls for consent, or ballots. A Full Majority Vote is required to enact this standing rule.

It is important to note that the first public review must have a Full Majority Vote, thus if a TC is going to enact this standing rule, the TC should do this as part of the first public review to reduce voting fatigue, but it can be done at any time. This standing rule can be revoked at any time by the TC through a Full Majority Vote.

## 2.5 Specification / Note Documents

Approval of a Committee Specification requires a Special Majority Vote (SMV). The SMV is set up and run by TC Admin. See section “2.7 Approval of a Committee Specification” of the TC Process for more information about approving a CS.

In summary, in addition to the requirements around public reviews, once the TC has decided that the CSD is complete and the text is sufficiently stable, they can request the OASIS Admin to open the Special Majority Vote. Please see the TC Process for how to perform a CS ballot.

### 2.5.1 Numbering

The first version of a CS or CN needs to have a document version of “Committee Specification 01” or “Committee Note 01”. For each additional version of the document, the version value should be incremented (e.g., 02, 03, 04, etc.). Please see the OASIS Naming Directives document for more information.

### 2.5.2 Updates

TCs should avoid advancing a CSD or a CND to the next stage if immediate updates and/or changes are still needed and/or expected. Meaning, additional CS and CN versions should be rare as these documents are considered a final deliverable.

If a CS or a CN needs to be updated and revised, new versions of that document do not start over as Working Drafts (WD). However, a TC may decide that the proposed changes warrant

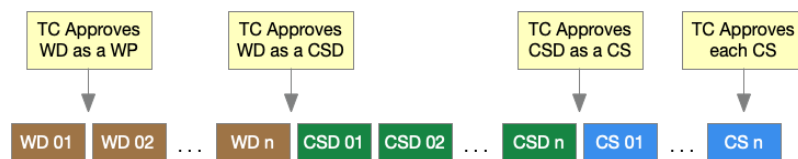


going back to the CSD or CND stage. This is especially true if the changes include material changes, significant breaking changes, or the changes would represent a major or perhaps even a significant minor revision to the document according to semantic versioning. Regardless, each new CS version requires a public review and the TC to perform a new CS ballot.

When updating a CS or CN:

- New not yet approved CS and CN documents should be uploaded to the official TC document repository (Working Drafts directory in Kavi) and should have a suffix name of “pre-cs##-yyyy-mm-dd” or “pre-cn##-yyyy-mm-dd”.
- Once this CS or CN is approved, it can be uploaded to the TC document repository (Approved Work Products directory in Kavi) with the normal “cs##” or “cn##” suffix and then published.

The Figure below shows an example of a Committee Specification Draft being approved as a CS (note: it does not show the approvals for public reviews).



## 2.6 Changes During Publication

Technical Committees at OASIS strive to produce and publish high quality documents and specifications. However, sometimes during the publication process, the time after a successful ballot and before the document is published, non-material, minor, and editorial issues may be found that the TC wants to fix. These issues and problems can be resolved by the TC without doing another version and possible public review as stated in Section “2.2.4 Allowed changes” of the [TC Process](#):

After a Work Product has been approved as a Standards Track or Non-Standards Track Work Product (for example, as a Committee Specification Draft), only non-material changes may be made during the publication process. These changes can only be made in coordination with the TC Admin and a summary of changes shall be sent to the TC mailing list. The TC may continue to make changes to the next Committee Specification Draft.

### 2.6.1 Standing Rule 3: Approving Editorial Changes

As a standing rule, a TC may approve the chair(s) and editor(s) in coordination with OASIS Admin to make editorial changes during the publication process without requiring approval from the TC. Editorial changes are things like formatting problems, updating the table of contents, spelling fixes, typo fixes, grammar problems, updating links and references, etc. This does not include minor text changes or larger non-material changes, only editorial changes. It is

important to note that the chair(s), the editor(s), and the OASIS Admin must all agree that these changes are purely editorial. A Full Majority Vote is required to enact this standing rule.

If a TC is going to enact this standing rule, the TC should do this as part of the first CSD or CS ballot for a given document, but it can be done at any time. This standing rule can be revoked at any time by the TC through a Full Majority Vote.

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## 3 Summary and Conclusions

This document outlines how TCs can advance a document through its entire lifecycle. It also clarifies that many of the ballots that are done today can be addressed through a call for unanimous consent or by enacting standing rules to pre-grant the chair(s) or editor(s) authority to release CSDs and CNDs and perform their public reviews either on a regular basis or at their discretion without additional motions, calls for consent, or ballots. It also clarifies how document versions are updated and shows how documents do not need to restart at a previous stage. Meaning, once a document has advanced to the next stage, it does not need to go backwards and start over at a previous stage.

In some TCs today a document may go through as many as 10 or more ballots before it is finally published as a final deliverable (e.g., CS 01). With these best practices and standing rules, documents could have as few as 2 ballots before they are published. For example:

- The first ballot could be used to:
  - accept a contribution (proposed NWI) as a WP,
  - approve it as CSD01,
  - approve the first public review, and
  - approve both standing rules that are covered in this document.
- The second ballot would then be used to:
  - approve the CS

This could greatly decrease voting fatigue and reduce the amount of time needed to support the balloting process and thus ultimately speed up the delivery of published documents.