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 71stINTOSAI 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-streamon the adherence to the QA level, the Goal Chairs would issue a certificate to be affixed in the document.

Detailed Procedure

4. To put in practice the above principles, the following procedure is prescribed. The procedure detailed is 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 for whatsoever reason could not be determined at the time of preparation of Work Plan, the decision may be taken 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 at 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 also to keep track of the progress of the project.
9. The progress of the project shall be briefed 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.

11. The procedure to be adopted in case the output of the project is kept at level 1:

1. The project team has to follow the entire procedure equivalent to the Due Process of IFPP as detailed in the paragraphs below.
2. 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.
3. The document at all the three stages should 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.
4. The Project team may go to the next stage only after the approval of the Approving Body.
5. 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.
6. The Project team should analyse the comments on exposure drafts and address them appropriately while finalizing the document.
7. The Chair of the Working Group/Subcommittee/Work-stream shall oversee the entire process, the exposure of the documents and consideration of the comments in the final documents.
8. The Project team shall forward the disposition table on the comments received to Goal Committee Secretariat in excel file for display on INTOSAI Community Portal. The file will be posted in the INTOSAI Community Portal till the document is finalized.
9. 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.
10. 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 in case of any clarification/query on the matter.

11. Based on his independent assurance and also on 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.

12. In case the document is kept at level 2:

1. All the above procedure indicated under QA level 1 from sl. No. 7(5) has to be followed, but instead of exposing the document for a period of 90 days, it is recommended that the project group expose the document for atleast a period of 45 days.
2. In these case the approval authority for the project proposal, exposure draft and endorsement version shall be the Steering Committee of the Working Group/Subcommittee/Work-stream or any Body authorized by it.
3. 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 relationship with the subject matter.
4. The Working Group/Subcommittee/Work-stream may forward the list of external sources identified to the Goal Committee Secretariat.
5. Other process from sl.no. 11(6) to 11(14) remain the same.

13. In case the document is placed at level 3:

1. The Working Group/Subcommittee/Work-stream decide to place the document at level 3, the reasons for the same may be explicitly brought out and forwarded to Goal Committee Secretariat.
2. The project team shall seek the comments of all the members of the Working Group/Subcommittee/Work-stream by giving them sufficient time within which to respond and finalize the document after duly addressing their comment.
3. 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.

14. Once the document is finalized in accordance with para 11, 12 and 13, the Goal Chair shall include the document in the Goal committee's motion to the INTOSAI GB.

15. The finalized document will then be published in 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.

QA Process

Process	QA Level 1	QA Level 2	QA Level 3
Quality assurance processes	Equivalent to INTOSAI due process	Limited quality assurance processes involving stakeholders from outside the body or working group responsible for the products' initial development. To include piloting, testing and inviting comments from key stakeholders, public exposure period not go as far as full 90-day.	Rigorous quality control measures within the body or working group responsible for their development
Approval of Project Proposal	Goal Committee Secretariat or any body designated for this purpose by committee	Steering Committee of the Working Group/Subcommittee/Work-stream	Steering Committee of the Working Group/Subcommittee/Work-stream
Approval of Exposure draft approval	Goal Committee Secretariat or any body designated for this purpose by the committee	Steering Committee of the Working Group/Subcommittee/Work-stream	Steering Committee of the Working Group/Subcommittee/Work-stream
Exposure Period in INTOSAI Community Portal	Minimum 90 days	Recommended minimum 45 days	Not mandatory. Document to be circulated among the members and observers of the Working Group
Disposition table on the comments received on exposure draft.	Prepared and displayed in the INTOSAI Community Portal	Prepared and displayed in the INTOSAI Community Portal	Not applicable.
Approval of Endorsement Version	Goal Committee Secretariat or any body designated for this purpose by the committee	Steering Committee of the Working Group/Subcommittee/Work-stream	Steering Committee of the Working Group/Subcommittee/Work-stream
Assurance Certificate issued by	Chair of the Working Group/Subcommittee/ Work-stream	Chair of the Working Group/Subcommittee/Work-stream	Chair of the Working Group/Subcommittee/Work-stream
Referral of document to Goal chair	Chair of the Working Group/Subcommittee/ Work-stream	Chair of the Working Group/Subcommittee/Work-stream	Chair of the Working Group/Subcommittee/Work-stream
Affixing of quality assurance statement	Goal Chair	Goal Chair	Goal Chair
Publishing of the finalised document	INTOSAI Community Portal	INTOSAI Community Portal	INTOSAI Community Portal