

NECA STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT PROCEDURES



ANSI Approved 05/7/2010

Table of Contents

1.0	Scope of NECA Standards Activities	1
1.1	Definitions.....	1
2.0	Standards Development Process	3
2.1	ANSI Notification of a New Project.....	3
2.2	Industry Review	3
2.3	Canvass Request	3
2.4	Balance and Dominance	3
2.5	Openness	4
2.6	Ballots	4
2.7	ANSI BSR-8 Form.....	5
2.8	Ballot Responses.....	5
2.9	ANSI Request for Public Review (BSR-8).....	6
2.10	ANSI Request for Second Public Review (BSR-8).....	6
2.11	Evidence of Consensus and Consensus Body Vote.....	6
2.12	Comment Resolution	7
2.13	Recirculation of Ballots	8
2.14	Standards Approval.....	9
3.0	Maintenance of Standards.....	11
3.1	Procedures to Initiate Five Year Review	11
3.2	Procedures for Revising American National Standards.....	11
3.3	Procedures for Reaffirmation of American National Standards.....	12
3.4	Procedures for Withdrawal of ANS – ANS Ballot	12
3.5	Appeals	13
3.6	Copyrights and Submissions.....	13
4.0	Standards Technology and References	14
4.1	Mandatory Provisions	14
4.2	Optional Provisions.....	14
4.3	References.....	14
5.0	Interpretations of NECA Standards	15
5.1	Informal Interpretations	15
5.2	Formal Interpretations.....	15
6.0	NECA Policies	16
6.1	Evidence of Compliance	16
6.2	Metric Policy.....	17
6.3	Commercial Terms and Conditions	17
6.4	Patent Policy	17
7.0	Revision of Procedures	18

1.0 Scope of NECA Standards Activities

NECA develops voluntary standards covering recommended installation and maintenance practices for electrical products and systems. These practices supplement and illustrate the requirements contained in ANSI/NFPA 70, *National Electrical Code*, and ANSI/IEEE C2, *National Electrical Safety Code*, and shall not conflict with these requirements.

NECA does not develop safety requirements for electrical products and systems.

NECA standards are intended to establish a minimum level of electrical construction quality, and to define what is meant by a “neat and workmanlike” installation. NECA standards are written to provide advice and guidance only, and adherence to them is wholly voluntary.

1.1 Definitions

Association - National Electrical Contractors Association.

Balance – is defined as a development process that should have a balance of interests. Participants from diverse interest categories shall be sought with the objective of achieving balance. While balance is desired it is not required.

Consensus – is defined as substantial agreement has been reached by the directly and materially affected interests. This signifies the concurrence of more than a simple majority, but not necessarily unanimity. Consensus requires that all views and objections be considered, and that an effort be made toward their resolution.

Consensus Body – consists of persons or organizations responding to the Canvass Invitation call to participate in the approval process for a proposed American National Standard.

Codes and Standards Committee (CSC) - The Codes and Standards Committee is the supervising and appeal body for NECA standardization activities. CSC is appointed by the NECA President.

NECA Standard - A publication that covers some aspect of electrical construction and maintenance, and which has been developed in accordance with these procedures.

Openness – Participation in the standards development shall be open to all persons who are directly and materially affected by the proposed standard. There shall be no undue financial barriers to participation. Voting membership on the consensus body shall not be conditional upon membership in the Association.

Lack of dominance – The standards development process shall not be dominated by any single interest category, individual or organization. Unless claimed in writing (including electronic communications) by a directly and materially affected party that a single interest category, individual or organization

dominated the standards development process, no test for dominance is required.

Resolved – is defined as a negative vote cast by a member of the consensus body or a comment submitted as a result of public review where the negative voter agrees to change his/her vote or the negative commenter accepts the proposed resolution of his/her comment.

Subject Matter Expert (SME) – An individual responsible for development and revision of any NECA standard. SMEs are appointed by the Codes and Standards Committee and the Executive Director of Standards and Safety.

Substantive Change – is defined as a change that directly and materially affects the use of the publication. Examples of substantive changes are:

- “Shall” to “should” or “should” to “shall”;
- addition, deletion or revision of requirements, regardless of the number of changes;
- addition of mandatory compliance with referenced standards.

Technical Subcommittee (TSC) - A group responsible for development and revision of any NECA standard. TSCs are appointed by the Codes and Standards Committee and the Executive Director of Standards and Safety.

Unresolved – is defined as either a negative vote submitted by a consensus body member or written comments submitted by a person during the public review expressing disagreement with some or all of the proposed standard, that have not been satisfied and/or withdrawn after having been addressed according to NECA’s approved procedures.

2.0 Standards Development Process

NECA is accredited by ANSI to develop standards using a Canvass process. The Canvass process will be used for approving the creation, revision, reaffirmation or withdrawal of an American National Standard (ANS).

2.1 ANSI Notification of a New Project

All new projects for proposed ANSs must be initiated by submitting the *ANSI Project Initiation Notification System (PINS) Form*. ANSI will provide notice to the public via *ANSI Standards Action* when an ANS is contemplated. Comments resulting from the announcement of the PINS will be addressed in accordance with clause 2.4 of the current version of the *ANSI Essential Requirements*.

2.2 Industry Review

After completion of the first draft of a new standard by the author, the proposed ANS will be sent to industry representatives, as determined by the Association, for review and approval for ANS ballot. The Association reserves the right to initiate an industry review of any revised standard.

2.3 Canvass Request

A Canvass Invitation will be sent to those persons identified as having a potential interest in the subject matter of the ballot. A Canvass Invitation is sent for both ANSI and non-ANSI standards. The Canvass Invitation will be open for an ANS will be for no less than 30 days (until the ANSI Canvass Invitation closes). Participants shall declare their interest category at this time. At the same time that the internal ANSI Canvass Invitation (for proposed ANS) is sent out, ANSI is notified to publish a Canvass Invitation in the next available *Standards Action*. Once the ANSI 30-day invitation closes, the proposed standard is sent out to the Canvass List for review and comment. Non-ANSI Canvass Request close date is not dependant upon the close date for comment announced in *Standards Action*.

2.4 Balance and Dominance

All appropriate interests that may be directly and materially affected by the standards activity of NECA shall have the opportunity for fair and equitable participation without dominance by any single interest category, individual or organization. Each Canvass List participant shall designate its own interest category as appropriate and in accordance with NECA's established categories. Interest categories appropriate to the development of consensus in any given standards activity are functions of the nature of the standards being developed. In defining the interest categories appropriate to a standards activity, consideration shall be given to the following:

- Construction – Those who are predominantly involved with the construction of buildings and similar structures. This category

typically includes contractors, architects, engineers, electricians, inspectors, etc.

- Producer – Those who are predominantly involved with the manufacture of products and systems installed by electrical contractors. This category usually includes manufacturers and trade associations.
- Government – This category typically includes government agencies that contract for electrical construction work.
- General Interest – Those who are not associated with electrical construction. This category typically includes professional and lay people employed by academic and scientific institutions, experts, government agencies, insurance companies, etc.

The standards development process should have a balance of interests. Participants from diverse interest categories shall be sought with the objective of achieving balance. Dominance means a position or exercise of dominant authority, leadership, or influence by reason of superior leverage, strength, or representation to the exclusion of fair and equitable consideration of other viewpoints. The requirement implicit in the phrase “shall not be dominated by any single interest category, individual or organization” normally will be satisfied by the historical criteria for balance that no single interest category constitute more than half of the membership of a committee.

2.5 Openness

Participation in the NECA Canvass process is open to any person or company having a direct and material interest in the subject of that subcommittee. NECA Membership is not a prerequisite to participation.

2.6 Ballots

Standards shall be produced by consensus (see Definitions). Consensus is achieved through a balloting process.

2.6.1 First American National Standard (ANS) Ballots

ANS ballots for the creation of ANSs are sent to the responders of the canvass invitation. This ballot is open for no less than 45 days. If the closing date should fall on a weekend or holiday, the ballot close date will be the next business day.

2.6.1.1 Recirculation of ANS Ballots

Should the proposed ANS be revised as a result of substantive comments received, the revised document shall be sent to the established canvass list. The recirculation ballot shall be open for no less than 30 days. Should the ballot closing date fall on a weekend or holiday, the ballot close date will be the next business day.

2.6.1.2 Unresolved Objection Recirculation Report

If all reasonable attempts have failed to resolve a continuing technical objection, NECA will send an Unresolved Objection Recirculation Report out to the entire established canvass list. This report will include the continuing objection all correspondence regarding the attempts to resolve the objection, and the comment resolution report. The canvass participants will be asked to review the accompanying documentation and determine if they want to respond, reaffirm or change their vote.

The canvass participants will have 15 days to respond. Should the close date fall on a weekend or holiday, it will close the next business day.

2.6.2 First Non-ANS Ballots

Non-ANS ballots are for the creation of standards not being approved as ANSs. Non-ANS ballots are open for no less than 45 days. If the closing date should fall on a weekend or holiday, the ballot close date will be the next business day.

2.6.2.1 Re-circulation of Non-ANS Ballots

Should the proposed non-ANSI standard be revised as a result of substantive comments received, the revised document shall be sent to all the participants on the established canvass list, whether they returned the original ballot or not. The recirculation ballot shall be open for no less than 15 days. Should the ballot close date fall on a weekend or holiday, the ballot close date will be the next business day. Only those sections of the draft standard revised as a result of comments received will be open for consideration and approval. Any comments received outside the designated section(s) will be considered during comment resolution.

2.7 ANSI BSR-8 Form

Prior or simultaneous to the opening of the ANS ballot, a BSR-8 form must be completed and submitted to ANSI for announcement in the ANSI *Standards Action* (see *Completing BSR-8 Form Procedures*).

2.8 Ballot Responses

Parties responding to a ballot for approval of an ANS have the following ballot response options:

- **Approve without comment.** Indicates agreement with the proposed ANS.
- **Approve with comment.** Indicates general agreement, but suggests enhancements or changes to the proposed ANS text that, if not acted on, would not cause the party to change their vote. Comments shall be acknowledged by NECA, and shall be considered during the comment resolution process. Comments

not adopted may be deferred to the next revision of the Standard.

- **Negative (Comments mandatory).** Indicates disagreement with the proposed ANS text for the technical reasons stated. Comments shall be specific as to the points or omissions being objected to, and shall state what changes or actions would resolve the objection. Comments shall be acknowledged by NECA and shall be considered during the comment resolution process. Disapprove ballots received without comments shall be recorded, but no further action shall be taken by NECA.
- **Abstain (with or without stated reasons for the abstention).** A company may return a ballot indicating that it has chosen to abstain from voting.

2.9 ANSI Request for Public Review (BSR-8)

A 45-day, instead of the normal 60-day, Public Review may be requested if the proposed document meets the ANSI guidelines for 45-day Public Review. All proposed ANS ballots designated for 45-day Public Review must be available electronically to the requestor. The availability of the document must be announced in ANSI *Standards Action*.

2.10 ANSI Request for Second Public Review (BSR-8)

If the recirculation ballot is a result of substantive changes to the original ballot, and the changed sections are no more than two (2) pages in total, the second public review period shall be 30 days. NECA will request that ANSI publish the proposed two-pages of changes in *Standards Action*. Should the changes be more than two pages in length the second public review will be 45 days.

2.11 Evidence of Consensus and Consensus Body Vote

Consensus is demonstrated by a vote of the consensus body. Consensus is reached by the return of more than a simple majority (50% +2) and must have approval by two-thirds minus abstentions of those returning ballots. Such a vote shall be conducted and reported in accordance with the rules set forth herein. Votes for the approval of proposed standards or portions thereof may be obtained by letter or fax.

NECA will not change a vote unless instructed to do so by the voter. This change will only be made via the *Vote Change Form* completed by the voter and returned to NECA by mail (snail or electronic). An email stating that all objections have been addressed to the satisfaction of the voter will also be accepted. All outstanding negative votes will be recorded on the BSR-9 form. NECA will consider all relative comments received as a result of the ANS ballot votes and public review comments. The vote change form or the email will be filed with the original ballot.

NECA will not consider negative votes accompanied by comments that are outside the scope of the proposed Standard, or negative votes without comments. The ANS ballot states that comments are mandatory for negative votes related to the proposal. Votes unaccompanied by such comments will be recorded as “negative without comments” without further notice to the voter.

2.12 Comment Resolution

2.12.1 Types of Ballot Comments

2.12.1.1 Substantive Changes/Technical Changes

A substantive change in a proposed Standard is one that directly and materially affects the use of the Standard. Examples of substantive changes:

- (1) “shall” to “should”; “should” to “shall”;
- (2) addition, deletion or revision of requirements, regardless of the number of changes; or
- (3) addition of mandatory compliance with referenced Standards.

2.12.1.2 Editorial Changes

An editorial change in a proposed Standard is one that corrects typographical errors, grammatical errors, or clarifies a concept without making a substantive change. Any other changes to an ANS Standard may only be made by a revision to the proposed Standard.

2.12.2 Resolution of Comments

Purely editorial comments, once acknowledged, do not require further coordination with the originator. Technical comments received during balloting and public review shall be acknowledged when received, and the originator shall be advised, in writing, of the disposition of the comments. If NECA incorporates the comments, the proposed Standard shall be re-circulated and sent to ANSI to be listed in *Standards Action* for a second public review. All reasonable attempts shall be made to resolve the negative ballot or comment in one of the following ways:

- (1) by explaining to the originator the rationale followed in arriving at the proposed Standard. NECA shall maintain a detailed written record of all correspondence and contacts on this matter,
- (2) by proposing changes to the proposed Standard which are editorial only and which do not result in changes in the technical requirements of the proposed Standard,

Note: If negative voters or public review commenter's agree to withdraw their objections without technical changes in the proposed Standard, they will be asked to do so in writing (vote change form or email or fax for consensus body members and a form of written communication from a public review commenter), and sent to NECA as proof that the negative vote or comment has been withdrawn. When all objections have been resolved, or all attempts to resolve continuing objection have been exhausted, processing will continue,

- (3) by proposing revisions to the technical requirements of the proposed Standard which would remove the objections of the originator. Such revisions shall be supported by a consensus of canvass participants. If the revisions result in changes in the technical requirements, the proposed Standard shall be re-circulated and sent to ANSI for a second public review to be listed in *Standards Action*.

If the negative voter or public review commenter does not return the vote change form or inform NECA in writing, within fifteen (15) business days, to indicate agreement or disagreement with the rationale followed by NECA in arriving at the proposed Standard, then publication processing will continue. The negative vote or comment will be recorded as such on the BSR 9 form. If one or more unresolved "Negative" ballots or public review comments remain in spite of reasonable efforts to resolve them, and if a consensus is believed to exist among the canvass participants (see Section 2.6.1.2), the proposed Standard will be processed for publication.

2.13 Recirculation of Ballots

Text for a ballot shall be recirculated and have a public review period of not less than 30 days. If revisions have been made which change the technical requirements or increase the range of products to which the Standard applies. A recirculation ballot is prepared and issued. If the recirculation is the result of a continuing objection vote the canvass participants will have 15 days to respond, reaffirm or change their vote.

2.13.1 Consideration of Continuing Views and Objections

Prompt consideration shall be given to the written views and objections of all participants.

In connection with an objection articulated during a public review comment period, or submitted with a ballot, an effort to resolve all expressed objections accompanied by comments related to the proposal under consideration shall be made, and each such objector shall be advised in writing (including electronic communications) of the disposition of the objection and the reasons therefore. If

resolution is not achieved, the objector shall be informed in writing that an appeal process exists (see 2.13.2).

Each unresolved objection and attempt at resolution, and any substantive change made in a proposed American National Standard shall be reported to the consensus body in order to afford all members of the consensus body an opportunity to respond, reaffirm, or change their vote. If the consensus is reviewing a single unresolved objection, they will have 15 days to respond, reaffirm, or change their vote (multiple unresolved objections will have a 30 day response time). If no response is received from the consensus participants their vote will stand as originally cast on the previous ballot.

When the results of the reported continuing view and objections show a consensus in favor of approval of the proposed Standard, NECA will proceed toward approval of the Standard. If after all reasonable attempts to resolve negative ballots have been exhausted, and there is consensus to go forward with the publication, the proposed Standard will be prepared for publication.

2.13.2 Right to Appeal Notification

If after re-circulation balloting, any negative ballots or public review comments remain unresolved, then all parties with unresolved objections, shall be advised in writing, including electronic means, of the efforts of NECA to resolve them and those parties shall be advised in writing, including electronic means, of their right to file an Appeal (see Section 3.5).

2.14 Standards Approval

2.14.1 ANSI BSR Approval (BSR-9)

When the proposed ANS has completed balloting, public review, and comment resolution, the proposed ANS will be sent to ANSI for Board of Standards Review (BSR) approval. The BSR-9 form will be completed (see *Completing BSR-9 Form Procedures*) and sent along with the appropriate ANS ballot summary sheet. Should the proposed ANS have continuing objections, all correspondence detailing the resolution process must also be sent to ANSI for BSR review. When the BSR has determined procedures have been followed, the proposed ANS will be declared an ANS and a BSR Notification of Approval will be sent to NECA. The approved standard will be announced in the next ANSI *Standards Action*.

2.14.2 Declaration as an American National Standard

After receipt of the ANSI BSR Notification of Approval, the proposed Standard is declared to be an ANS. Notification is issued to the industry by NECA through the NECA Public Relations Department and other media means. The Notification of Approval will be attached and filed with the original BSR-9 form.

2.14.3 Publication of American National Standards

A new ANS, revision or reaffirmation of an ANS to be approved by the BSR shall be submitted to ANSI by NECA within six months from the close of the comment period listed in *Standards Action* using the appropriate form provided by ANSI, unless the standards developer notifies the Secretary of the BSR in writing of good cause for a different schedule for submittal. If a document cannot be published within one year from the close of the comment period listed in *Standards Action*, NECA may petition the BSR for up to an additional year to publish. Failure to make the submittal within two years from the close of the comment period listed in *Standards Action* shall require consideration by the BSR, i.e., withdrawn, extension for cause, or another listing in *Standards Action* (See ANSI *Essential Requirements*, Section 1.2.12, Consideration of Standards Proposal).

3.0 Maintenance of Standards

3.1 Procedures to Initiate Five Year Review

If the review process (reaffirmation, revision, or withdrawal) cannot be completed within the five-year period, NECA will request an extension of time by completing the ANSI BSR-11 (Request for Extension of Time) form, and submitted to ANSI for approval. If a PINS or BSR-8 for the ANS has been submitted to ANSI by the fifth year then a BSR-11 is not required. The request shall include a specific date by which the review will be completed and submitted to ANSI for approval. NECA can request an extension for up to five years (for a total of 10 years review). If the document has not completed the ANSI BSR Review by the end of the 10th year, the standard is withdrawn. The ANSI approval process will have to be completed as if the standard was a new project from the beginning. The BSR-11 must be completed in order to extend the review period. If the BSR-11 is not requested by the end of the five-year review period, ANSI will withdraw the standard.

3.2 Procedures for Revising American National Standards

The process of revising a Standard is similar to the development of a new Standard in that consensus shall be reached by industry ballot on changes to the technical content or meaning of the Standard. Usually the revision takes the form of a complete revision and re-issuance of the Standard. Revision of or addition to the technical content of an existing ANS requires that the procedures for the development of a new Standard be followed. Revision, Reaffirmation or Withdrawal takes the form of a periodic review wherein NECA shall determine whether the document in question should be reaffirmed, revised, or withdrawn. Unless otherwise noted, all American National Standards shall be reviewed every five years. NECA shall initiate action to:

- (1) **revise** the Standard to incorporate additional language or delete language that will change its technical content or meaning;
- (2) **reaffirm** that a review of the Standard resulted in a decision that the technical content is valid and does not need change; or
- (3) **withdraw** the Standard following determination that the technical content is no longer of value.

Note: Revisions require a proposed standard be developed and processed in the same manner as that of a new proposed ANS. Reaffirmation and withdrawal of an ANS does not require a PINS form to be completed and sent to ANSI.

3.2.1 Substantive Change

A substantive change in a Standard is one that directly and materially affects the use of the Standard. Examples of substantive changes:

- (1) “shall” to “should”; “should” to “shall”;
- (2) addition, deletion or revision of requirements, regardless of the number of changes;
- (3) addition of mandatory compliance with referenced Standards.

3.2.2 Editorial Change

Once approved as an American National Standard, no changes shall be made in a Standard document without going through the full consensus, comment and balloting process prescribed for a proposed Standard. A NECA Standard shall also go through the consensus process for changes, but it need not be submitted for a public review process at ANSI. The only exception to this rule allowed by ANSI is the issuance of an erratum to correct a manifest mistake or omission in the original text or an error subsequently discovered, and that only where the error should have been obvious to the user of the Standard. Any other changes to a NECA Standard shall be made only by following the procedures for a revision.

3.3 *Procedures for Reaffirmation of American National Standards*

NECA shall recommend reaffirmation of a Standard if it finds the technical content valid and does not require change. Reaffirmation shall be accomplished without any substantive change to the main text of the Standard. Reaffirmation requires a formal industry balloting process. The procedures for the development of a new ANS shall be followed. Copies of the Standard will not be distributed with the industry ballots. A copy of the Standard may be requested by contacting NECA. As required by section 4.2.1.2 of the ANSI *Essential Requirements* any reaffirmed standard shall clearly indicate on its cover or title page that it is a reaffirmation.

3.4 *Procedures for Withdrawal of ANS – ANS Ballot*

NECA shall recommend withdrawal of an ANS if it determines that the ANS is no longer required to meet the purpose for which it was written. Withdrawals do not require a formal industry balloting process. Should the withdrawal be done by formal ballot, procedures for the development of a new ANS shall be followed. Copies of the Standard will not be distributed with the ballots. A copy may be requested by contacting NECA.

3.4.1 Procedures for Withdrawal of ANS – Without Balloting

At the discretion of the NECA Executive Director of Standards and Safety, an ANS can be withdrawn without balloting by making a formal request in accordance with 4.2.1.3.4 of ANSI *Essential Requirements* to withdraw ANSI approval. A request is sent to the PSA Department requesting ANSI approval be withdrawn. The request will be announced in the next ANSI *Standards Action*. At the conclusion of the 30-day notice, ANSI will withdraw its approval.

3.5 Appeals

Any Association member may file a written appeal concerning procedural or substantive matters related to a NECA standard. In the case of NECA standards submitted for approval by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI), this right of appeal shall be extended to parties who are not members of the Association.

Appeals shall be filed in writing with the NECA Director of Standards within fifteen (15) days after the date of notification of action or at any time with respect to inaction. The appeal shall state the nature of the objection(s), the clause(s) of these procedures or the standard at issue, actions or inactions that are at issue, and the specific remedial actions(s) that would satisfy the appellant's concerns. Previous efforts to resolve the objection and the outcome of each shall be noted.

Appeals concerning NECA Standards shall be reviewed by the Standards Steering Committee, which shall act within 30 days. A simple majority (51%) of the Standards Steering Committee results in upholding or denying an appeal. Appellants shall be notified in writing of the Committee's decision.

3.6 Copyrights and Submissions

The finished document will be copyrighted and published by the NECA. Joint standards may be copyrighted by all pertinent Standards Development Organizations (SDOs) involved in development and as determined by the signed agreement. If Joint Standards Documents are being produced, the language may need slight modification to include all SDOs who will hold copyright. The applicable statements mentioned below grant NECA the right to copyright and sell NEIS, which contain the submission in whole or in part, and to allow publication of excerpts from the NEIS Publications. The statements also extend these rights to NECA's existing policy of allowing and encouraging other regional, national or international standards bodies to adopt NECA Publications as their own. (These statements make it clear that a license to use the NECA's copyrighted material contained in a NECA Publication granted to another region, nation, or SDO does not automatically convey rights to Essential Patents or copyrights required for conformance with the NECA Publication.)

4.0 Standards Technology and References

4.1 Mandatory Provisions

The words *shall*, *must*, *required*, shall be permitted (in lieu of may) and equivalent language indicate mandatory provisions of a NECA standard, in the sense that compliance with these provisions is necessary to achieve minimum acceptable quality for an electrical installation.

Note: This terminology does not indicate mandatory requirements in the sense of being suitable for adoption into law. NECA Standards are intended to provide advice and guidance only, and adherence to them is wholly voluntary.

4.2 Optional Provisions

May, *should*, *recommended*, and equivalent language indicates optional provisions of a NECA Standard.

4.3 References

NECA Standards shall reference the latest edition of standards or other publications in effect at the time the NECA Standard is published. Obsolete standards or publications shall not be referenced.

5.0 Interpretations of NECA Standards

5.1 *Informal Interpretations*

Association staff and members may provide explanations and opinions about the intent or meaning of a NECA standard, based on best technical judgment. Such explanations and opinions shall clearly state that these informal interpretations are not to be construed as expressing an official position of the Association.

5.2 *Formal Interpretations*

A request for formal interpretation shall be filed in writing with the NECA Executive Director of Codes and Standards. The request shall be reviewed by the TSC responsible for the standard, which shall formulate a response supported by explicit technical reasoning. Alternatively the TSC may conclude that the request is outside the scope of the standard or concerns a subject that the standard was not intended to address. The response shall be approved and provided to the requestor in writing.

6.0 NECA Policies

6.1 Evidence of Compliance

6.1.1 Record Retention

NECA has developed a document retention policy to maintain and control important NECA records, eliminate unnecessary or duplicative documents, and save space.

The determinative factors in deciding whether to discard documents should be the practical value of the document and any legal reason for keeping it. For each document, the following criteria are used:

- (1) There is some practical reason for keeping it.
 - (a) Will it be referred to as it is part of an on-going project, or
 - (b) Does it have historical value and will someone know how to access it?
- (2) There is a valid legal reason for keeping it.
 - (a) It affects the obligations of NECA
 - (b) It may be discoverable in pending litigation.
- (3) The document falls within a category for which NECA has set retention periods:
 - (a) Correspondence, agreements – At signing of agreement, all correspondence will be discarded except that having special significance regarding interpretation of agreement. All correspondence associated with American National Standards shall be retained for at least one complete standards cycle or until it is revised or reaffirmed, whichever is longer. Records of withdrawn standards shall be kept for five (5) years from the date of withdrawal.
 - (b) Standards Setting Documents – all ANSI required documentation for the issuance of a standard shall be retained for one complete standards cycle, or until the standard is revised, whichever is longer. Records of withdrawn standards shall be kept for five (5) years from the date of withdrawal.
 - (c) NECA Printed Publications – maintain at least one copy (hard and soft) of NECA publications. All required documents (ballots, ballot summaries,

response letters, and vote change forms) are retained for at least one complete standards cycle. Records of withdrawn standards shall be kept for five (5) years from date of withdrawal.

- (d) Mailing Lists – as a rule, mailing lists should be destroyed when modified. However, when mailing lists are part of standards development balloting process, refer to standards-setting documents.
- (e) Correspondence, general – Maintain correspondence relevant to the development of a standard in the same manner as correspondence associated with the standards-setting documents detailed above.

6.2 Metric Policy

NECA's metric policy is in compliance with the *ANSI Essential Requirements*. All proposed standards shall use the International System of Units (SI) for measurements referred to in ANSs. When NECA Standards use inches in the text it will be followed with the equivalent metric measurement in parenthesis.

6.3 Commercial Terms and Conditions

Should any time in the future, commercial terms and conditions be addressed, NECA will adhere to the requirements set forth in Section 3.2 of the *ANSI Essential Requirements*.

6.4 Patent Policy

At the time of the writing of these procedures, NECA does not have standards in which patents have been declared. Should any time in the future, patents be declared, NECA will adhere to the requirements set forth in Section 3.1 of the *ANSI Essential Requirements*.

7.0 Revision of Procedures

From time to time the NECA *Standards Development Procedures Manual* will require modification as a result of changes made by ANSI in its procedures, or as a result of problems experienced by NECA with a particular Section of the Procedures. Some areas of change may also be highlighted as part of normal review of processes and procedures to make the standards process more efficient and effective, or as a result of issues discovered during a routine ANSI audit. Such proposed modifications should be brought to the attention of the Director of Standards. The updated Procedures shall be effective within NECA and sent to ANSI for its review. Depending on the nature of the change, ANSI may call for a public review period in its *Standards Action* on the revision or make such other requests, as it deems appropriate.