

GSSB Due Process Protocol

October 2015



The Global Sustainability Standards Board (GSSB) is authorized by its *Terms of Reference* to develop and issue authoritative pronouncements. The term ‘authoritative pronouncements’ includes GRI Standards and related Interpretations. Authoritative pronouncements are to be developed and issued in the public interest and according to due process as defined in this protocol.

All references to ‘due process’ in this document refer exclusively to the requirements defined by this protocol.

In developing its authoritative pronouncements, the GSSB follows the due process and working procedures described below.

The development process of GRI Standards is divided into the following steps:

- Project Identification and Prioritization
- Project Commencement
- Appointment of Project Working Groups, as appropriate
- Development of Proposed Standards
- Appointment of *ad hoc* Technical Committees, as necessary
- Interaction with the GRI Board and Stakeholder Council
- Public Exposure
- Consideration of Respondents’ Comments on an Exposure Draft
- Consideration of the Need for Re-Exposure
- Approval of a Standard
- Release of a Final Standard

The development process of Standard Interpretations is divided into the following steps:

- Project Identification and Prioritization
- Project Commencement
- Appointment of Project Working Group, as appropriate
- Development of Proposed Standard Interpretation
- Appointment of *ad hoc* Technical Committees, as necessary
- Interaction with the GRI Board and Stakeholder Council
- Approval of Final Interpretation
- Release of a Final Standard

The development of Guidance and FAQ’s are not subject to due process.

The steps outlined above are explained in more detail below. Furthermore, the Due Process Protocol includes clarifying remarks on:

- General Procedures of the Due Process
- Withdrawal of a Standard
- Matters of Due Process (Ref: Paras. 34-35)

Matters of due process are identified in Fundamental Principles I and II and in paragraphs 1–35 of this document. Final standards may be issued by the GSSB only after the Due Process Oversight Committee (DPOC) is satisfied that due process has been followed in their development in the public interest. In accordance with its *Terms of Reference*, the DPOC is bound to provide independent and timely advice.

Working procedures, shown in a separate section of this document, are steps applied by the GSSB to facilitate the operation of its due process but do not themselves form part of the due process. Working Procedures may be modified in practice to suit circumstances.

DUE PROCESS

Fundamental Principles

The work of the GSSB is to be undertaken solely for a purpose and in a manner that:

- I. Complements the GRI's Vision and Mission as approved by the Board of the GRI.
- II. Promotes the Public Interest, defined here:
In general, as:
 - those overarching interests of humanity, held in common, that include but exceed the partial interests of individuals or groups.

In the context of sustainability reporting, as:

- making well informed decisions – and therefore in having easy and timely access to relevant and reliable information on which such decisions might be based,
- promoting positive (and discouraging negative) impacts on social, ecological, environmental and economic systems,
- promoting transparency, fairness and integrity of processes that affect the public domain, and
- ensuring that no person or community is either overlooked or marginalized – especially if relatively weak in comparison to others.

In forming a view about specific GSSB authoritative pronouncements, the GSSB and DPOC shall have regard to:

- a. authoritative intergovernmental instruments and their authoritative interpretations, and/or
- b. documented, widely held expectations of behavior relating to social, ecological, environmental and economic responsibilities.

General

1. GSSB meetings are open to the public –via electronic means, as determined by the GSSB. Observers do not have a seat at the GSSB table and may not participate in the business of the GSSB. Matters of a general administrative nature or with privacy implications may be dealt with in closed sessions of the GSSB. (Ref: Para.A1)
2. Meeting agenda papers, including issues papers and draft standards prepared for the GSSB's review and debate and minutes of the immediately preceding meeting of the GSSB, are to be published in English on the GSSB website in advance of each GSSB meeting. (Ref: Para.A2-A5)
3. Meetings are to be conducted in English, which is the official working language of the GRI.

Project Identification and Prioritization

4. The GSSB identifies potential new projects based on:
 - a. a consideration of national and international developments;
 - b. comments and suggestions received from the GRI Board of Directors (as advised by the GRI SC), and
 - c. from those who have an interest in the development of standards issued by the GSSB.
5. To facilitate this process, the GSSB periodically develops and approves a strategy and work program. In developing its strategy and work program, the GSSB shall have regard to paragraph 14 of this protocol. (Ref: Para.A6-A7).

Project Commencement

6. A proposal to start a new project is to be prepared by the Standards Division based on research and on appropriate consultation within the GSSB– and then present its project proposal to the GSSB for approval, amendment or rejection. The draft project proposal is to be circulated to the GRI Board and SC to identify matters of possible relevance to the project. The GSSB shall receive and consider the comments of the GRI Board (as advised by the SC); however it is the sole responsibility of the GSSB to determine and prioritize the project proposal, having regard to the overriding importance of serving the public interest. The GSSB is to approve, amend or reject the Standards Division’s project proposal in a meeting open to the public. (Ref: Para.A8-A9)

Development of Proposed Standards and Formation of Project Working Groups

7. The GSSB may appoint a multi-stakeholder Project Working Group (PWG) to develop a project. Members of a PWG are to be instructed by the GSSB that they shall act in an individual capacity, exclusively in the public interest and according to due process as defined in this protocol. (Ref: Para.A10-A17)
8. Where a PWG is established, its membership should reflect a balance of multi-stakeholder constituencies. As a minimum, each PWG shall have at least one person drawn from each of the constituencies on which the membership of the GSSB is based – as defined in the GSSB *Terms of Reference*. The work of a PWG will not be invalidated if, for some appropriate reason, the GSSB is unable to achieve the desired multi-stakeholder composition.
9. The GSSB shall determine whether to hold a public forum or roundtable, or issue a consultation paper, in order to solicit views on a project under consideration. The GSSB shall also consider the appropriateness of conducting a field test of the application of its proposals for a new or revised standard, either prior to or after a draft standard being issued for public exposure. The rationale for the GSSB’s decision in relation to these steps shall be discussed at a GSSB meeting and the decision shall be minuted and published. Comments received through a public forum or roundtable, or in response to the issuance of a consultation paper, are to be considered in the same manner as comments received on an exposure draft. (Ref: Para.A18-A19)
10. A PWG should report to the GSSB and seek guidance whenever it requires further advice in order to advance the project or where its members cannot reach consensus. When a PWG is satisfied that it has a proposed draft standard that is ready for exposure, it presents the draft to the GSSB. The GSSB shall review the draft and, if considered necessary, may ask the PWG to conduct further research and/or further develop the draft prior to it being voted on, by the GSSB, for exposure. (Ref: Para.A20)
11. The GSSB shall vote on the approval of an exposure draft of the proposed standard in accordance with the GSSB’s *Terms of Reference*. When a member of the GSSB votes in favor of the release of an exposure draft, the member is confirming that he or she is satisfied that the draft would form an acceptable standard in the event that no comments on the exposure draft were to be received a nature that would

require the GSSB to amend the proposals. (Ref: Para.A21)

Appointment of *ad hoc* Technical Committees

12. The GSSB may appoint, at its convenience, one or more Technical Committees – to be established on a temporary basis in order to provide technical advice, of relevance to the task of standard-setting, including but not limited to the development a standard. (Ref: Para.A22-A27)
13. An *ad hoc* Technical Committee may provide technical advice on any matter referred to it by the GSSB, including but not limited to:
 - significant issues relating to the development of a standard, and
 - significant issues raised in comment letters on exposure drafts and the GSSB's related activities.

Interaction with the GRI Board and Stakeholder Council

14. The GSSB shall seek the views of the GRI Board (as advised by the SC) on the identification and prioritization of projects to be undertaken by the GSSB. Thereby, the GRI Board is required to include in its advice to the GSSB any dissenting opinion of the SC. The process for seeking these views shall be as agreed by the GSSB and GRI Board. In particular, the GRI Board (as advised by the SC) is invited to comment on the GSSB's strategy and work program, including project priorities and any changes therein, to help establish their appropriateness. Where the GRI Board (as advised by the SC) has recommended a project for consideration by the GSSB, the Chair of the GSSB informs the DPOC and the Chairman of the GRI Board of the decisions of the GSSB concerning the GRI Board's recommendation.
15. The GSSB may engage with the SC and ask for direct advice from the SC on an 'as needed' basis.
16. The GSSB shall seek comment from the GRI Board (as advised by the SC) during the development and finalization of a standard in relation to:
 - proposals to start new projects;
 - significant issues relating to the development of a standard; and
 - significant issues raised in comment letters on exposure drafts and the GSSB's related response.

The views of the GRI Board (as advised by the SC) are to be sought and considered, but are not binding on the GSSB.

17. The Chair of the GSSB is responsible for bringing to the GSSB's attention significant comments received from the GRI Board (as advised by the SC). The GSSB shall consider (but is not bound by) comments received from the GRI Board. As in all other matters, the GSSB shall decide each matter independently, in the public interest, according to due process.

Public Exposure

18. Approved draft standards are to be exposed for public comment. Exposure drafts are to be placed on the GSSB website where they can be accessed free of charge by the general public. Each exposure draft is to be accompanied by an explanatory memorandum that highlights the objective(s) of and the significant proposals contained within the draft standard, as well as the GSSB's view on the main issues addressed in the development thereof. (Ref: Para.A28-A29)
19. The exposure period will ordinarily be no shorter than 90 days – and for as long as deemed appropriate by the GSSB. (Ref: Para.A30-A31)
20. Comments made by respondents to an exposure draft are a matter of public record and are posted

on the GSSB website after the end of the exposure period. (Ref: Para.A32-A34)

Consideration of Respondents' Comments on an Exposure Draft

21. As part of the GSSB's public agenda papers, an analysis of comments received on an exposure draft that summarizes the significant issues raised by respondents, outlines their proposed disposition and, as appropriate, explains the reason(s) why significant changes recommended by a respondent(s) are, or are not, to be accepted.. (Ref: Para.A35-A36)
22. Members of the GSSB are to familiarize themselves with the issues raised in comment letters on exposure drafts such that they are able to make well-informed decisions as they finalize a standard. The GSSB is to deliberate on significant matters raised in the comment letters received, with significant decisions recorded in the minutes of the meeting of the GSSB. (Ref: Para.A37-A38)
23. At the meeting in which the GSSB deliberates on significant matters raised in the comment letters received, members of the GSSB are to address issues raised by respondents, in addition to those issues summarized by the PWG, that they consider should be discussed by the GSSB. This does not preclude a member of the GSSB from raising a matter for discussion at a later time.

Approval of a Standard and Consideration of the Need for Re-Exposure

25. Where a PWG exists, the PWG, it is to present the revised content of the exposed standard to the GSSB for approval. The GSSB shall review the draft and, if considered necessary, may amend it, or may ask the PWG further to develop the draft prior to it being approved by the GSSB.
25. The work of the GSSB will be undertaken principally with the support of the Standards Division. The Standards Division will report to and work under the direction of the GSSB and in accordance with the due process. The Head of the Standards Division shall attend the meetings of, but is not be a member of, the GSSB. The Head of the Standards Division is responsible for advising the GSSB on whether due process has been followed and with proper regard for the public interest, before a final standard may be approved for issue. (Ref: Para.A39-A40)
26. The GSSB is to vote on the approval of the final revised content of an exposed standard in accordance with its *Terms of Reference*. The votes of individual members is to be recorded in the minutes of the GSSB meeting. Approval of the final revised content of an exposed standard is an approval for its issue as a final standard, unless the GSSB subsequently votes in favor of re-exposure as described below. (Ref: Para.A41-A42)
27. After approving the final revised content of an exposed standard, the GSSB shall vote on whether there has been substantial change to the exposed document that was not anticipated in the explanatory memorandum such that a re-exposure is necessary. An affirmative vote in accordance with the GSSB's *Terms of Reference* for re-exposure is necessary if an exposed document is to be re-exposed. The basis of the GSSB's decision with respect to re-exposure, including the votes of individual members, is to be recorded in the minutes of the GSSB meeting at which the related project is discussed. (Ref: Para.A43-A45)
28. When an exposed document is re-exposed, the explanatory memorandum accompanying the re-exposure draft shall include the reasoning for re-exposure and sufficient information to allow an understanding of the changes made as a result of the earlier exposure.
29. Where applicable, the GSSB shall set an effective date for the application of the final standard. (Ref: Para.A46)

30. For each final standard, the Standards Division shall issue a separate document explaining the GSSB's basis for conclusions, including its consideration of and response to significant issues raised on an exposure draft. (Ref: Para.A47)

Withdrawal of a Standard

31. The GSSB shall vote on the withdrawal of a standard, whether that withdrawal is due to the issue of a new or a revised standard that incorporates or replaces the subject matter of an existing standard or for any other reason, in accordance with the GSSB's *Terms of Reference*.

Release of a Final Standard

32. The Chair of the GSSB shall be responsible to the DPOC for reporting that due process has been followed in the development of the final standard. (Ref: Para.A48)
33. Before release of a final standard, the Chair of the GSSB shall obtain the conclusion of the DPOC as to whether due process as defined herein has been followed. This process may involve the GSSB taking further appropriate steps should the DPOC express a concern or a negative conclusion about whether due process has been followed. (Ref: Para.A49)

Matters of Due Process

34. If a concern over adherence to due process is raised formally with the GSSB, the GSSB shall assess the concern and seek an appropriate resolution. The GSSB's decision on the matter is to be communicated to the party raising the concern. If the GSSB is unable to achieve a mutually satisfactory resolution of the concern, then the complainant may request that the concern be assessed by the DPOC directly. In any case, alleged breaches of due process and the resolution thereof are to be communicated by the GSSB to the DPOC. The results of investigations of alleged breaches of due process are to be reported by the Chair at a meeting of the GSSB that is open to the public. (Ref: Para.A50-A52)
35. The steps relating to contact between the GSSB and DPOC as specified in this Protocol are the minimum required in order to ensure adherence to due process. The GSSB and DPOC may agree additional steps, allowing for more regular reviews of due process in the development of any standard or more generally to improve communication and coordination during the process. The details of any additional steps agreed by the GSSB and DPOC shall be published on the GSSB website prior to their being instituted.

WORKING PROCEDURES

General

GSSB Meetings (Ref: Para.1)

A1. The GSSB meetings are to be minuted, recorded and archived on the GSSB website.

Meeting Agenda Papers (Ref: Para.2)

A2. Meeting agenda papers are to be published on the GSSB website ordinarily no later than two weeks in advance of each GSSB meeting. Draft meeting minutes, as reviewed by the Chair of the GSSB, are to be published on the GSSB website ordinarily within three weeks after each GSSB meeting.

A3. The Appendix of this document lists the unique titles for common GSSB documents at various stages of due process.

A4. Agenda papers are to be retained on the GSSB website for at least three years from the date of the meeting. Final minutes are to be retained on the GSSB website indefinitely.

A5. Updated project summaries and meeting highlights are to be posted to the GSSB website after each meeting.

Project Identification and Prioritization (Ref: Para.4)

A6. The GSSB's strategy review shall involve a formal survey of those whom it deems to be key stakeholders in order to obtain views about issues that they believe should be addressed by the GSSB in the immediate future.

A7. The development of the GSSB's strategy and work program shall include the issue of a consultation paper for public comment, placed on the GSSB website where it can be accessed free of charge by the general public, for ordinarily no less than 90 days. The GSSB shall consider the results of the public consultation in formulating, as necessary, a revised strategy and work program.

Project Commencement

Project Proposals (Ref: Para.6)

A8. The GSSB may, for its convenience, appoint a Sub-committee from among its number to make an initial assessment of project proposals. Where the GSSB has a Sub-committee (or equivalent), a proposal to start a new project is to be first considered by the Sub-committee (or equivalent). As appropriate, the Sub-committee (or equivalent) is to recommend to the GSSB either that a project proposal be approved or that no new project be initiated at that time. A project proposal shall identify, where applicable, who has first proposed a project for development by the Standards Division and submission to the GSSB for its consideration.

A9. Project proposals shall identify the objectives of the proposed project and explain how achievement of those objectives would serve the public interest. GSSB members, the GRI Board and SC and others interested in the development of the proposed pronouncement are thereby provided with a benchmark against which the project can be measured.

Development of Proposed Standards and Formation of Project Working Groups

Multi-stakeholder Project Working Group (Ref: Para.7)

- A10. A project proposal shall include details of any proposed assignment of responsibility for the project to a PWG. The proposal shall identify, where appropriate, specific areas of expertise or geographical representation that may be needed on the PWG. A PWG can only be established with the approval of the GSSB.
- A11. The principal criterion for selecting PWG members shall be identification of the best persons for the job. In making a selection of participants, criteria will include: relevant knowledge, relevant experience and availability to perform the role.
- A12. A PWG is usually to be chaired by a member of the GSSB and may include other members of the GSSB. The Head of the Standards Division shall make recommendations about the composition of the PWG to the GSSB. The GSSB may make initial recommendations regarding the composition of the PWG to the Head of the Standards Division. The GSSB shall determine the final composition of the PWG.
- PWGs may contain participants, such as external experts, who are not members of the GSSB but who have experience relevant to the subject matter. Subject to the availability of competent individuals, a PWG shall contain at least one representative from each of the GRI constituencies and may include members of the SC. An SC member may only serve on a PWG in their individual capacity and not as a representative of the SC. The GSSB shall be the sole judge of what constitutes 'competence' for appointment to a PWG.
- A13. Members of a PWG are to be identified in the project summaries contained on the GSSB website and in the relevant project agenda papers for a GSSB meeting.
- A14. PWG meetings are not open to the public.
- A15. A PWG is to identify issues, and propose recommendations, relevant to the development of the proposed standard on which GSSB input is appropriate. These papers, which are ordinarily accompanied by a draft version of the proposed pronouncement, are to be developed based on research and consultation, which may include: conducting research; consulting with the GSSB or the GRI Board (as advised by the SC), practitioners, regulators, national standard setters and other interested parties.
- A16. The papers submitted by the PWG to the GSSB shall include confirmation that no other significant matters were discussed and agreed by the PWG, in particular in regard to a decision to exclude a significant matter from the proposed draft pronouncement.
- A17. The GSSB may carry out projects in cooperation, or conduct projects jointly, with a national standard setter(s) or other organizations with relevant expertise. In the case where a project

is to be conducted jointly¹, a member of the GSSB is to chair, or co-chair, any joint PWG that might be established. Where practicable, joint projects are to be conducted on a multi-national basis whereby two or more national standard-setters or national organizations are involved in the joint project.

Public Forum or Roundtable, or Consultation Paper (Ref: Para.9)

A18. In deciding upon the need to hold a public forum or roundtable or to issue a consultation paper, the GSSB shall consider whether the subject of the standard, the level of interest among stakeholders, the likely or actual existence of a significant and controversial divergence of views, the need for additional information in order to further the GSSB's deliberative process, or some other reason indicates that wider or further consultation would be appropriate.

A19. The outcome(s) of a public forum or roundtable, or the issue of a consultation paper, is to be summarized and reported to the GSSB, as part of the GSSB's public agenda papers, for purposes of the GSSB's deliberation on the subject under consideration.

Proposed Draft Standard (Ref: Para.10)

A20. The GSSB has a responsibility to be sensitive to any issues that might have an adverse impact on the GRI as a whole. In order to assist the GSSB to discharge this responsibility, a PWG is to raise proactively with the GSSB any issue that may have implications for the GRI as a whole. The GSSB shall seek comment on such matters from the GRI Board (as advised by the SC).

Approval of Draft Standard (Ref: Para.11)

A21. Where applicable, the GSSB is to set a proposed effective date for the application of the pronouncement as part of the exposure draft.

Ad hoc Technical Committees (Ref: Para.12)

A22. The GSSB may refer a matter of interest to a specially established *ad hoc* Technical Committee.

A23. The principal criterion for selecting Technical Committee members shall be identification of the best persons for the job. In making a selection of participants, relevant criteria will include: relevant knowledge, relevant experience and availability to perform the role.

A24. A Technical Committee is usually to be chaired by a member of the GSSB. The Head of the Standards Division, in consultation with the Chair of the GSSB, is to determine the composition of an *ad hoc* Technical Committee a manner that brings the right balance of technical expertise to the topic discussion. *Ad hoc* Technical Committees may contain participants, such as external experts, who are not members of the GSSB but who shall have experience relevant to the subject matter. Membership may include representatives of organizations whose standards are referenced in GRI Standards and guidance.

A25. Members of a Technical Committee are to be identified in the project summaries contained

¹ Joint projects are subject to the due process of the GSSB. If exposed separately both globally and by the national standard-setter(s) with whom the project is being jointly developed, and where applicable, GSSB may additionally have regard to comments received by the national standard-setter(s), where they may be relevant globally, and to the extent the process does not result in unnecessary delay in the finalization of the pronouncement. The final pronouncement approved by GSSB becomes a final standard in the normal way. It may differ from the corresponding document(s), if any, approved by the collaborating national standard-setter(s).

on the GRI website and in the relevant project agenda papers for a GSSB meeting.

- A26. *Ad hoc* Technical Committee meetings are not open to the public.
- A27. The papers submitted by an *ad hoc* Technical Committee to the GSSB shall include confirmation that no other significant matters were discussed and agreed by the *ad hoc* Technical Committee, in particular in regard to a decision to exclude a significant matter from a proposed draft pronouncement.

Public Exposure

Exposure Drafts (Ref: Para.18)

- A28. Notice of the issuance of exposure drafts will be posted on the GSSB website and additionally distributed to: regulatory bodies deemed by the GSSB to have a relevant interest; organizations that have registered or are likely to have an interest in the pronouncements issued by the GSSB; GRI Organizational Stakeholders; and relevant sections of the media. The GSSB is to consider and decide whether there are any additional broad stakeholder groups to whose attention a proposed pronouncement should be drawn.
- A29. An explanatory memorandum may also direct respondents, including those representing specific constituencies such as developing nations, small and medium-sized reporters or the public sector, to aspects of the draft standard on which specific comments are sought.

Exposure Period (Ref: Para.20)

- A30. Although the exposure period for a draft standard will ordinarily be no shorter than 90 days, a shorter or longer exposure period may be set when considered appropriate. A longer exposure period may be set, for example, where complex or pervasive changes might affect translation or in order to make wider consultation possible. A shorter exposure period may be set, for example, where in the public interest there is a need to conclude deliberation on a matter more quickly, the exposure draft is relatively simple or short, or where the GSSB decides to re-expose all or only part of a draft standard.
- A31. Exposure drafts are to indicate that the GSSB cannot undertake to consider comments and suggestions received after the close of the exposure period.

Comments Received (Ref: Para.21)

- A32. An acknowledgement of receipt is to be sent to every respondent to an exposure draft.
- A33. GSSB members, and PWG members, who are not members of the GSSB, are to be notified when comment letters have been made available on the GSSB website.
- A34. The exposure draft and comment letters are to be made available for the reference purpose of GSSB members at the GSSB meeting in which the project is scheduled for discussion.

Consideration of Respondents' Comments on an Exposure Draft

Comments Received on Exposure (Ref: Para.22)

- A35. The comments and suggestions received within the exposure period are to be read and considered by a PWG – if established by the GSSB and by the GSSB.
- A36. Project agenda papers are to contain a cumulative summary of the significant decisions made

by the GSSB on matters relating to the project, including its position on the significant issues raised in comment letters.

Deliberation of Significant Matters (Ref: Para.23)

- A37. Neither the GSSB nor a PWG is to enter into debate with respondents on individual comment letters. The GSSB or a PWG may decide, however, to discuss a letter of comment with the respondent to seek clarification on a matter.
- A38. If requested, the GSSB will explain to the GRI Board (as advised by the SC) its reason(s) for not having accepted their comments or proposals. The nature and outcome of such discussions are to be reported and recorded in the minutes of the GSSB meeting at which the related project is discussed.

Approval of a Pronouncement and Consideration of the Need for Re-Exposure

Adherence to Due Process (Ref: Para.25)

- A39. The Head of the Standards Division is to provide a written report in the agenda papers of the meeting outlining the basis for concluding whether due process has been followed with respect to actions up to the date of the meeting.
- A40. The Chair of the GSSB is also to report to the GSSB on whether or not due process has been followed at the meeting at which a final standard is approved for issuance. The substance of this report is to be recorded in the minutes.

Approval (Ref: Para.26)

- A41. The results of GSSB voting, including dissenting votes and abstentions – and the reason(s) therefore, on the approval of the revised content of an exposure draft are to be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.
- A42. The agenda paper containing the draft proposed revised content of exposed standard is to be updated for changes agreed by the GSSB during the course of the meeting and is to be posted to the GSSB website after the meeting at which the GSSB is to approve the final standard. The updated agenda paper posted to the GSSB website is for information purposes only and is not the final pronouncement. The final pronouncement is that approved by the GSSB after the DPOC has confirmed that due process was followed in its development.

Re-Exposure (Ref: Para.27)

- A43. When an exposure draft has been subject to many changes, a summary comparative analysis is to be presented to the GSSB. This analysis is to show, to the extent practicable, the differences between the exposure draft and the proposed final standard.
- A44. The Head of the Standards Division, in consultation with the Chair of the GSSB and chair of any PWG, are to advise the GSSB on whether a draft standard, or part thereof, needs to be re-exposed.
- A45. Situations that constitute potential grounds for a decision to re-expose may include, for example: substantial change to a proposal arising from matters not identified in the exposure draft such that commentators have not had an opportunity to make their views known to the GSSB before it reaches a final conclusion; substantial change arising from matters not previously deliberated by the GSSB; or substantial change to the substance of a proposed standard.

Effective Date (Ref: Para.29)

A46. In setting the date for the application of a standard, the GSSB shall consider the reasonable expected minimum period for effective implementation.

Basis for Conclusions (Ref: Para.30)

A47. The document explaining the GSSB's basis for conclusions with respect to comments received on an exposure draft is to be circulated to the GSSB for comment and is to be issued after clearance by the Chair and Head of the Standards Division. The issue of the document is i) not to be subject to voting approval by the GSSB and therefore ii) does not constitute part of the final standard and iii) is non-authoritative. It is to be retained for an indefinite period on the GSSB website.

Release of a Final Pronouncement

Adherence to Due Process (Ref: Para.32)

A48. The Chair of the GSSB is to provide the DPOC with a written report outlining the basis for the conclusion on whether due process has been followed.

Final Pronouncement (Ref: Para.33)

A49. Subject to having received confirmation from the DPOC that in its opinion due process has been followed, the GSSB is to issue its standard together with a separate document explaining its basis for conclusions, including its consideration of and response to comments received on an exposure draft, is to be posted to the GSSB website.

Matters of Due Process

Responding to a concern (Ref: Para.34)

A50. Where the GSSB has a Sub-committee (or equivalent), the Sub-committee (or equivalent) is to assess issues raised over due process and obtain relevant information from all parties involved. The Sub-committee (or equivalent) is to bring the issue to the attention of the GSSB with a recommendation on whether the alleged breach has merit and, if so, an appropriate resolution.

A51. The GSSB is to publicly report annually on the progress of its defined technical work program and its compliance with Due Process. Ultimately, the DPOC will judge whether the development of standards complied to GSSB Due Process and therefore the DPOC shall approve the GSSB's annual report.

A52. The DPOC shall develop and publish a process by which it will receive and evaluate grievances concerning the application of due process, under this protocol, in the development of standards.

ANNEX - List of unique titles for common GSSB documents at various stages of Due Process

Project Commencement

Proposal to start a new project:

- “[Title of Project]—[GSSB] Project Proposal”

Development of Proposed Standards

Agenda papers prepared for the GSSB's review and debate addressing issues in the course of the development of a proposed standard:

- “[Title of Project]—Issues and [GSSB] Working Group Proposals dated [MM/YY]”

Draft versions of a proposed pronouncement accompanying such agenda papers:

- “[Title of Project]—Draft Pronouncement dated [MM/YY]”
- “[Title of Project]—Draft Pronouncement dated [MM/YY] Showing Changes from Draft dated [MM/YY]”

Consultation papers issued to solicit views on a matter under consideration:

- “[Title of Project]—[GSSB] Consultation Paper dated [MM/YY]”

Consideration of Respondents' Comments on an Exposure Draft

Agenda papers addressing the significant issues by respondents on an exposure draft:

- “[Title of Project]—Summary of Significant Comments on Exposure and [GSSB] Working Group Recommendations dated [MM/YY]”

Agenda papers prepared for subsequent GSSB meetings that outline the PWG's response to the GSSB's consideration of significant comments on exposure:

- “[Title of Project]—[GSSB] Working Group Recommendations dated [MM/YY] in Response to [GSSB's] Consideration of Significant Comments on Exposure”

Draft versions of a proposed pronouncement accompanying such agenda papers follow the format described above.

Agenda papers setting out the main differences between an exposure draft and the proposed final standard, when the exposure draft has been subject to many changes:

- “[Title of Project]—Comparison of Exposure Draft and Draft Pronouncement dated [MM/YY]”

Approval of a Final Pronouncement

Document posted to the GSSB website after the meeting at which the GSSB approves the final standard showing final changes agreed by the GSSB:

- “[Title of Project]—Final Draft Pronouncement dated [MM/DD/YY] Showing Changes from Draft dated [MM/DD/YY]: As Approved by [GSSB] for Submission to DPOC”

Release of a Final Pronouncement

Final pronouncement:

- “[Title of Pronouncement]”

Document explaining the GSSB's basis for conclusions with respect to comments received on an exposure draft:

- “[Title of Pronouncement]—Significant Comments on [GSSB] Proposals and Basis for Conclusions Thereon