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To   :   Permanent Representatives (Council)

From   :   Secretary General

REVISED NATO POLICY FOR STANDARDIZATION

1.   Attached please find the proposal for a revised NATO Policy for Standardization, prepared by the Committee for Standardization and endorsed by the Military Committee and all Senior Policy Committees directing Alliance standardization activities.

2.   The revised policy aims to make standards more current and focused on delivering and supporting interoperable capabilities to meet NATO priorities. It allows relevant committees to address their diverse tasks, while maintaining the coherence and quality of NATO standards.

3.   I do not believe this update requires Council discussion. Unless I hear to the contrary by **16:00 hours on Friday, 20 May 2016**, I shall assume that Council approved this revision of the NATO Policy for Standardization.

(Signed) Jens Stoltenberg

Annex: 1

Original: English

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NATO POLICY FOR STANDARDIZATION

Introduction

1.   The achievement of Alliance objectives increasingly depends on the smooth and close cooperation among national, multinational and NATO structures, forces and assets. NATO Allies must be interoperable with each other, and when required, with Partners, other Nations, non-governmental and international organizations and other (non-defence) government departments. This requirement has grown consistently, driven by an increased demand for multi-nationality at lower echelons, dynamism of technological advances, by the increased role of non-military actors during conflicts and by the changing security landscape in and around the Alliance.

2.   As set out in the Allies' Political Guidance, NATO must maximize the interoperability and capability of its forces, and further efforts are needed to enhance the interoperability of joint and multinational capabilities as a means of improving the safety of forces as well as their effectiveness and efficiency in support of the full range of Alliance missions. In this, standardization is critical to qualitative defence planning. Standardization should be timely and vigilant in defence planning.

3.   Standardization supports achieving, maintaining and enhancing interoperability[1] among Alliance forces and between NATO forces and forces of Partners, thus strengthening the Alliance defence capabilities and enhancing the Alliance's operational effectiveness and efficiency. Standardization in support of interoperability is not an end in itself but is a key enabler and an important capability multiplier. Allied Heads of State and Government have decided that all Allies will ensure that their armed forces can operate together effectively, including through the implementation of agreed NATO standards[2].

Aim

4.   This policy steers Alliance standardization activities to support developing, maintaining and enhancing interoperable capabilities for missions and operations in support of Alliance core tasks, through agreed NATO processes.

Scope

5.   This policy defines NATO standardization, outlines its guiding principles, and describes roles, responsibilities and coordination of the main stakeholders in the standardization community. The policy covers all NATO standardization activities and shall apply to all NATO Allies and NATO Bodies, including staffs. NATO Partners are strongly encouraged to apply this policy.

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[1] C-M(2009)0145 – NATO Interoperability Policy and Strategy
[2]   PR/CP(2014)0120, Wales Summit Declaration

Definition

6.   NATO standardization is the development and implementation of procedures, designs and terminology to the level necessary for the interoperability[3] required by Allies, or to recommend useful practices in multinational cooperation.

6.1   The three levels of standardization in NATO are compatibility, interchangeability and commonality as defined in NATOTerm.

Principles

7.   The following principles guide the application of the NATO Policy for Standardization.

7.1   <u>Overarching and Systemic Approach</u>

7.1.1   As a primary tool for achieving interoperability, standardization requires an overarching and systemic approach starting with the definition of requirements, followed by the development of solutions, their implementation and validation. In accordance with agreed NATO policies, this includes interoperability with non-NATO actors.

7.1.2 Standardization shall provide solutions to interoperability requirements. These requirements emanate either from the NATO Defence Planning Process (NDPP), agreed Alliance initiatives and NATO's operations planning (top-down), or from lessons learned, exercise and evaluations processes (bottom-up).

7.1.3   Traceability shall be established between interoperability requirements and standardization documents. The development of NATO standardization documents shall follow the steps described in Allied Administrative Publication-03. Feedback through established NATO processes, both on the implementation of standards covered by STANAGs[4], and on the contribution to fulfilling interoperability requirements, is an essential part of NATO standardization processes.

7.2   <u>Timeliness of Standardization</u>.   Standardization solutions to interoperability requirements shall be implemented at the earliest practicable time. Allies and NATO Bodies should direct efforts to speed the accomplishment of standardization objectives that directly enhance the interoperability of identified capabilities. Developing and implementing standards before crises emerge is essential to rapid response and reinforcement of Allies. To meet urgent requirements, standardization documents shall be developed and implemented using an accelerated procedure.

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[3] Interoperability is the ability to act together coherently, effectively and efficiently to achieve Allied tactical, operational and strategic objectives.
[4]   Throughout this document, "implementation of standards", refers to those standards covered by Standardization Agreements (STANAGs).

7.3   Commitment to Implementation

7.3.1   Implementation of standards is essential to adaptation and transformation of the Alliance. Therefore, a complete picture and periodic qualitative and quantitative assessments of implementation, including by Partners, are required.

7.3.2   Implementation of standards is the indispensable national contribution to NATO standardization. Implementation of standards by individual Allies is a relevant and useful output metric offering a qualitative indication of the development of the interoperable capabilities needed to bolster Alliance readiness and responsiveness. NATO shall promote transparent national implementation of standards with the understanding that standardization is, in principle, voluntary for Nations and that implementation is a national decision with importance for NATO's ability to fulfill its missions.

7.3.3   NATO Bodies shall implement standards applicable to them. Allies and NATO Bodies implementing a standard shall provide NATO with feedback on the implementation status and on the lessons learned which shall be taken into account in the review of the document.

7.4   Transparency

7.4.1   Standardization activity shall be transparent through reports and the widest participation of all stakeholders and subject matter experts both internal and external to NATO. NATO shall involve Partners and promote cooperation with civil standards developing organizations (SDO's) and other interested parties within the guidance provided by the Council, on a case-by-case basis and subject to the approval of the appropriate senior committee.

7.4.2   Interoperability with Partners must be supported to the maximum extent possible[5], including through the release of appropriate documents and NATO standards following agreed NATO policies for release.   The security classification of classified NATO standardization documents shall be kept at the lowest level possible in order to allow for distribution to the widest possible audience. This is facilitated by dedicated NATO standardization information technology tools[6].

7.5   Use of Civil Standards

7.5.1   NATO recognizes the concept of standardization as defined by ISO/IEC: "activity of establishing, with regard to actual or potential problems, provisions for common and repeated use, aimed at the achievement of the optimum degree of order in a given context. NOTE 1 In particular, the activity consists of the processes of formulating, issuing and implementing standards. NOTE 2 Important benefits of standardization are improvement of the suitability of products, processes and services for their intended purposes, prevention of barriers to trade and facilitation of technological cooperation".

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[5] PO(2014)0453, Partnership Interoperability Initiative
[6] NSO Websites, etc.

7.5.2   NATO shall adopt and refer to suitable non-NATO standards (civil standards and national defence standards) in lieu of developing NATO standardization documents to the maximum extent. NATO will fully exploit mature national defence standards. NATO shall only develop a standard where no suitable non-NATO standard exists.

7.5.3   Non-NATO standards shall be selected for NATO's use based on their utility for the NATO standardization requirement, broad acceptance, accessibility and technical excellence. In general, using civil standards is preferred to using national defence standards. Using civil standards leverages the broader expertise, technology, market and best practices of industry. Compared to developing purely NATO standards, this avoids duplication of effort, reduces NATO's workload, broadens interoperability and can reduce procurement costs.

7.5.4   NATO will cooperate with the most suitable SDOs on mutually beneficial standardization projects. When decided by the relevant Tasking Authorities, NATO shall adopt non-NATO standards, transfer NATO standards to civil SDOs or develop new dual-use and other standards in collaboration with civil SDOs.

7.6   Consistency and Coherence. Standardization is a shared responsibility among all stakeholders involved in NATO standardization processes. A consistent and coherent approach to standardization shall be applied between stakeholders using NATO processes and standardization management tools under the cognizance of NATO Standardization Office (NSO).

7.7   Terminology. The Alliance shall promote understanding through the selection or development and use of commonly-agreed, well-defined, clear, precise, consistent, gender-neutral and bilingual (English/French) terminology. NATO agreed terminology shall be used in NATO standardization documents.

Roles and Responsibilities

8.   The following stakeholders constitute the broad NATO standardization community. Such a broad community requires harmonization and coordination.

8.1 Allies (NATO Nations). Allies may make standardization proposals and shall provide subject matter experts (SMEs) to develop NATO standardization documents. Allies shall ratify STANAGs within the agreed timelines. They shall implement standards in accordance with their ratification responses and agreed capability targets, in the most expeditious manner in response to Alliance needs. The training of national forces to NATO standards to meet the full range of Alliance missions remains a priority for, and responsibility of, individual Allies.

8.2 NATO Partners. Many standardization activities are open for Partners. Partners are encouraged to send SMEs to those activities and may make standardization proposals. Partners are invited and encouraged to adopt and implement standards when appropriate. Fully transparent adoption of NATO standards, and training of national forces to those

standards, is of particular importance for capabilities to be integrated in NATO training and exercise events, NATO partnership programmes and NATO led-operations.

8.3 <u>NATO Standardization Tasking Authorities[7] (Senior Committees)</u>. A NATO senior committee which holds responsibility for any NATO standardization document is a Tasking Authority (TA) in its respective field. TAs share and validate standardization proposals, develop and approve tasks, and produce, agree, review and maintain NATO standardization documents. TAs contribute to the development of interoperability requirements and standardization solutions to those, through the NDPP. All decision making regarding the development, promulgation and review of NATO standardization documents will be made by consensus of Allies in the responsible TA[8]. A Tasking Authority may delegate these functions to another TA, or to a subordinate body called Delegated Tasking Authority (DTA). For purposes of transparency, coordination and efficiency any DTA shall report directly to its TA on standardization decisions.

8.4 <u>Committee for Standardization (CS)[9]</u>. The mission of the CS is to exert domain governance for standardization policy and management within the Alliance. The CS is the senior committee for the NDPP planning domain of standardization. Harmonization and coordination of the standardization community are roles of the CS, which is the senior policy committee responsible to the North Atlantic Council (NAC) for standardization policy and management and promoting standardization in the Alliance. The CS, with all stakeholders, should ensure that processes for standards development promote quality and timeliness.

8.5 <u>NATO Standardization Office (NSO)[10]</u>. The NSO initiates, coordinates, supports or administers all those NATO standardization activities that are conducted under the authority of the CS, provides standardization management support and standardization advice for the standardization community and supports the Military Committee Standardization Boards (MCSBs)[11]. The NSO facilitates staff coordination of standardization activities between Tasking Authorities, including through means such as the NATO Standardization Staff Group (NSSG). All NATO standardization documents are promulgated by the Director of the NATO Standardization Office.

8.6 <u>Other NATO Bodies</u> contribute to NATO standardization in accordance with their respective governing documents.

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[7] These currently include, but are not limited to: the Air and Missile Defence Committee (AMDC), Aviation Committee (AVC), the Civil Emergency Planning Committee (CEPC), the Committee for Standardization (CS), the Conference of National Armaments Directors (CNAD), the Consultation, Command and Control Board (C3B), the Logistics Committee (LC), and the Military Committee (MC).

[8] Close liaison and coordination between the TAs during the standard development process is of particular significance.

[9] Full and authoritative Terms of Reference for the CS are available at PO(2014)0611.

[10] Full and authoritative Governance Model for NATO Standardization Support is available at C-M(2014)0012. The NAC-approved NSO mission statement is found in the latest MC 0500 series.

[11] MC 0020 series, Military Committee Policy for Military Operational Standardization

Implementation of the Policy

9.   Allies and Partners are encouraged to incorporate this policy into relevant national policy and guidance to the maximum extent.

10.   NATO senior committees, including their supporting staff, and NATO Bodies shall fully implement this policy in their respective fields.