

**IEEE Communication Society Power Line Communications  
Standards Committee (PLC-SC) Sponsor policies and  
procedures**

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# IEEE Standards Association (IEEE-SA) Sponsor Baseline Policies and Procedures for Standards Development

## 1. 0 Introduction

In today's market, standards development plays a critical role in product development and market share. In the IEEE, the responsibility for how a standard originates and evolves is managed by a Sponsor. It is essential in the management of a standard's development to avoid any actions by the Sponsor or the participants that result in a violation of procedures.

Adherence to these Policies and Procedures is an essential asset in determining the applicability of IEEE's indemnification policy.

These Policies and Procedures outline the orderly transaction of standards activities of the Communications Society PLC Standards Committee (PLC-SC) referred to as the 'Sponsor' throughout this document. For the development of standards, openness and due process shall be applied, which means that any person with a direct and material interest who meets the requirements of these Policies and Procedures has a right to participate by

- a) Expressing a position and its basis,
- b) Having that position considered, and
- c) Appealing if adversely affected.

Due process allows for equity and fair play. In addition, due process requires openness and balance (i.e., the standards development process should strive to have a balance of interests and not to be dominated by any single interest category). However, for the IEEE Standards Sponsor ballot, there shall be a balance of interests without dominance by any single interest category.

Participants engaged in the development of standards must comply with applicable federal, state, and international laws. In addition, for standards matters, the latest versions of several documents take precedence over this document in the following order:

New York State Not-for-Profit Corporation Law  
IEEE Certificate of Incorporation  
IEEE Constitution  
IEEE Bylaws  
IEEE Policies  
IEEE Board of Directors Resolutions  
IEEE Standards Association Operations Manual  
IEEE-SA Board of Governors Resolutions  
IEEE-SA Standards Board Bylaws  
IEEE-SA Standards Board Operations Manual  
IEEE-SA Standards Board Resolutions

## Policies and Procedures of the PLC-SC

Anything the Sponsor creates is hierarchically inferior to the documents and resolutions that are listed above its Policies and Procedures. The Policies and Procedures of the Sponsor are hierarchically superior to other documents of the Sponsor. *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised (RONR)* is the recommended guide on questions of parliamentary procedure not addressed in these procedures.

### 1.1 IEEE Sponsor scope

The scope of the PLC-SC is to develop and maintain:

- Standards in Communications and Networking over Power Lines including in access, in-home and enterprise, in-vehicle and Vehicle to Grid
- Standards related to Heterogeneous Networking involving Power Line Communication in various networking scenarios
- Standards relevant to Equipment for PLC or other modes of communication that are designed for Power Grid Applications which is to be deployed on Power Utility facilities and interfaces to communication equipment directly connected to the Power Grid

### 1.2 Organization of the Sponsor

The Sponsor shall consist of officers (see clause 3), and other members.

### 2.0 Responsibilities of the Sponsor

The Sponsor shall be responsible for at least the following:

- a) Developing proposed IEEE standards and ensuring that they are within the scope of the Sponsor.
- b) Initiating and overseeing ballots of proposed IEEE standards within its scope, including:
  1. Approving PARs from a subgroup or the Sponsor
  2. Submitting a proposed Project Authorization Request (PAR) to the IEEE-SA Standards Board for consideration. Following approval of the PAR, the Sponsor shall submit necessary requests for extension, modification, or withdrawal of the PAR as required by the IEEE-SA Operations Manual
  3. Submitting draft standards from a subgroup or the Sponsor to the Standards Association for Sponsor ballot.
- c) Maintaining the standards developed by the Sponsor in accordance with the *IEEE-SA Standards Board Operations Manual*
- d) Responding to requests for interpretations of the standards developed by the Sponsor
- e) Acting on other matters requiring Sponsor effort as provided in these procedures
- f) Cooperating with other appropriate standards development organizations

- g) Protecting against actions taken in the name of the Sponsor without proper Sponsor authorization
- h) Limiting distribution of the membership roster to appropriate parties
- i) Reporting annually to the [IEEE-SA Standards Board](#)
- j) Communicating with the IEEE-SA Standards Board on specific Sponsor activities as needed
- k) Handling appeals as described in clause 10

## **2.1 Sponsorship**

The PLC-SC is responsible for the development and coordination of standards project(s), including their maintenance after the approval of the standard(s) by the IEEE-SA Standards Board. Specifically, the PLC-SC is responsible for those IEEE-SA Standards Board approved project(s) for which PLC-SC has been identified as either the sponsoring organization or where the PLC-SC has been identified by a project being sponsored by two or more sponsors.

### **2.1.1 Sole sponsor responsibility/accountability**

When the interest in a standard falls solely within the scope of the PLC-SC, PLC-SC shall assume the responsibility, and be accountable for the standard. Each PLC-SC assigned standards project(s) as well as each of the IEEE published standards that were developed within the PLC-SC is the responsibility of the PLC-SC. This development and maintenance of standards shall be accomplished as defined within the clauses of these Policies and Procedures.

### **2.1.2 Co-sponsor responsibility/accountability**

When the breadth of interest in a standard is great enough that one or more Committees outside of this PLC-SC have been identified as having a sponsorship role, PLC-SC shall either, assume the responsibility and be accountable for the standard, or by recorded vote of the PLC-SC, allow for another sponsor to assume the responsibility for the project or develop a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the co-sponsors. If the PLC-SC vote to allow another sponsor to take responsibility of the project is successful, the PLC-SC shall request iterative drafts and progress reports to the other sponsor. This development and maintenance of standards shall be accomplished as defined within the clauses of these Policies and Procedures. The PLC-SC agreement to co-sponsor a standard requires a majority approval vote of PLC-SC.

## **3.0 Officers**

There shall be a Chair, a Vice Chair, a Treasurer (if significant funds are involved in the operation of the Sponsor and its subgroups), and a Secretary. A person may simultaneously hold the positions of Secretary and Treasurer.

The Chair shall be a member of any grade (except students) of the IEEE and a member of the IEEE-SA. (IEEE-SASB Bylaw 5.2.1) The officers shall organize the Sponsor; oversee the Sponsor's compliance with these Policies and Procedures; and submit proposed documents

approved by the Sponsor (with supporting documentation) for appropriate review and approval by the IEEE-SA Standards Board. Officers shall read the training material available through [IEEE Standards Development Online](#).

### **3.1 Election or appointment of officers**

An officer may serve any number of consecutive terms. The term for all officers of the Sponsor shall be one calendar year except for the term of initial chair that is of two calendar years.

#### PLC-SC Chair

The IEEE ComSoc Standards Board appoints the initial Chair for a term of two calendar years (2012 and 2013). For next terms the Chair is elected by the members of the Sponsor and confirmed by the IEEE ComSoc Standards Board.

The Sponsor Chair shall appoint an Elections Officer, whose function is to gather nominations and conduct an election. The Elections Officer shall not be a nominee in the election. The Elections Officer shall prepare and conduct the election by letter or electronic ballot. Voting will conclude in a time determined by the Sponsor, but no less than 14 calendar days. Each voting member may cast one approval vote for as many nominees for an office as they choose. The nominee with the greatest number of approval votes shall win the election, provided ballots are returned by a majority of the eligible voters for that election.

There shall be an annual vote of the Sponsor to elect the Chair. Voting members shall nominate to the Elections Officer one or more individuals for the Chair Office to be filled at the election. Nominees shall be eligible to hold the office for which they are elected. Upon written notification, the nominee has 14 calendar days to indicate acceptance or rejection of the nomination. If no nomination is received or accepted for the office, a temporary appointment shall be made in accordance with Clause 3.2.

#### PLC-SC Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer

These positions are appointed by the PLC-SC Chair and confirmed by the members of the Sponsor.

If an election or appointment is not confirmed, the person last holding the position will continue to serve until confirmation of an election or appointment is achieved. Should that person be unable or unwilling to serve, the position may be left vacant, or filled by temporary appointment by the PLC-SC Chair.

All members of PLC-SC shall be members of the IEEE Communications Society and the IEEE Standards Association.

### **3.2 Temporary appointments to vacancies**

If an office other than the Chair becomes vacant for any reason, such as resignation, removal, lack of nomination at an election, a temporary appointment shall be made by the Chair for a

period of up to 12 months. An appointment or election for the vacated office shall be made in accordance with requirements in Clause 3.0 and Clause 3.1.

### **3.3 Removal of officers**

An officer (other than the chair) may be removed by a two-thirds vote of the voting members of the Sponsor. Grounds for removal shall be included in any motion to remove an officer. The officer suggested for removal shall be given an opportunity to make a rebuttal prior to the vote on the motion for removal.

### **3.4 Responsibilities of officers**

The officers of the Sponsor shall manage the day-to-day work of the Sponsor. The officers are responsible for implementing the decisions of the Sponsor and managing the activities that result from those decisions.

#### **3.4.1 Chair**

The responsibilities of the Chair include

- a) Leading the activity according to all of the relevant policies and procedures
- b) Forming study groups, as necessary
- c) Appointing a subgroup with responsibility for interpretations of all approved standards
- d) Being objective
- e) Entertaining motions, but not making motions
- f) Not biasing discussions
- g) Delegating necessary functions
- h) Ensuring that all parties have the opportunity to express their views
- i) Setting goals and deadlines and adhering to them
- j) Being knowledgeable in IEEE standards processes and parliamentary procedures and ensuring that the processes and procedures are followed
- k) Seeking consensus of the Sponsor as a means of resolving issues
- l) Prioritizing work to best serve the Sponsor and its goals
- m) Complying with the Chair's responsibility with respect to the IEEE-SA Intellectual Property Policies, including but not limited to the IEEE-SA Patent Policy (see IEEE-SA Standards Board Operations Manual 6.3.2, <http://standards.ieee.org/board/pat/index.html>) and IEEE-SA Copyright Policy (see IEEE-SA Standards Board Bylaws 7, <http://standards.ieee.org/guides/bylaws/sect6-7.html#7> )
- n) Submitting approved Sponsor P&P to the IEEE-SA Standards Board Audit Committee (AudCom—see <http://standards.ieee.org/board/aud/index.html> )

- o) Ensuring that each working group has a set of P&P approved by the Sponsor. The chair will provide the working group P&Ps to AudCom upon request.
- p) Submitting the Sponsor's annual report to the IEEE-SA Standards Board
- q) Submitting appropriate Annual Financial Reports (IEEE SA Form L50-S) to the Business Manager, Business Administration, or assignee, for the operation of the Sponsor and all of its subgroups.

### **3.4.2 Vice Chair**

The Vice Chair shall carry out the Chair's duties if the Chair is temporarily unable to do so or chooses to recuse him- or herself (e.g., to speak for or against a motion).

### **3.4.3 Secretary**

The responsibilities of the Secretary include

- a) Scheduling meetings in coordination with the Chair and distributing a meeting notice at least 30 calendar days before the meeting
- b) Distributing the agenda at least 14 calendar days before the meeting—notification of the potential for action shall be included on any distributed agendas for meetings
- c) Recording minutes of each meeting and publishing them within 60 calendar days of the end of the meeting
- d) Creating and maintaining the participant roster and submitting it to the IEEE Standards Department annually
- e) Being responsible for the management and distribution of Sponsor documentation
- f) Maintaining lists of unresolved issues, action items, and assignments
- g) Recording attendance of all attendees
- h) Maintaining a current list of the names of the voting members and distributing it to the members upon request
- i) Forwarding all changes to the roster of voting members to the Chair

### **3.4.4 Treasurer**

Treasurer shall

- a) Maintain a budget
- b) Control all funds, including any into and out of the Committee's bank account
- c) Follow IEEE policies concerning standards meetings and finances
- d) Adhere to the [IEEE Finance Operations Manual](#)

## **4.0 Membership**

### **4.1 Voting membership**

Membership of the PLC-SC shall be composed of a minimum of five voting members.

PLC-SC membership includes the following voting members referred to as default voting members:

- Chairs of Standards development Working Groups sponsored by the PLC-SC (provided that they are not serving as officers as defined in Clause 3)
- Officers as defined in Clause 3

If the number of default voting members is less than five the PLC-SC Chair shall appoint additional voting PLC-SC members for one-year term to reach the minimum of five voting members. Additional voting members are confirmed by the PLC-SC.

In addition, the PLC-SC may include the following non-voting members:

- Working Groups Acting positions (prior to confirmation)
- Chairs of other Standards development Working Groups
- Members Emeritus

Each member of PLC-SC is expected to attend meetings in person or by teleconference. Attendance at a meeting via teleconferencing and/or electronic means (e.g., Internet conferencing) counts toward the attendance requirements. Voting members of the PLC-SC are eligible to vote during the meeting if they attended at least one of the two immediately previous meetings.

#### **4.1.1 Application**

This clause is not applicable.

### **4.2 Review of membership**

The Chair shall review the voting membership list at least annually. Voting members are expected to fulfill the obligations of active participation as defined in Clause 4.1. When a voting member is found in habitual default of these obligations, the Chair shall consider the matter for appropriate action, which may include termination of membership.

### **4.3 Membership roster**

A current and accurate Sponsor roster shall be maintained. Due to privacy concerns, the roster shall not be distributed except to the IEEE-SA Board of Governors, IEEE-SA Standards Board, and IEEE-SA staff unless all Sponsor members have submitted their written approval for such distribution. The roster shall include the following:

- a) Title of the Sponsor and its designation
- b) Scope of the Sponsor
- c) Officers: Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary (Treasurer)
- d) Members: for all, name, e-mail address and affiliation.

#### **4.4 Membership list**

A current and accurate membership list shall be maintained. The membership list can be posted on the Sponsor web site and can be publically distributed. The membership list shall be limited to the following:

- a) Title of the Sponsor and its designation
- b) Scope of the Sponsor
- c) Officers: Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary (Treasurer)
- d) Members: for all, name, affiliation

### **5.0 Subgroups, Study Groups and Working Groups created by the Sponsor**

#### **5.1 Administrative subgroups**

When one or more subgroups are formed to expedite the administrative work of the Sponsor (e.g., AdCom, ExCom), their formation (and later disbandment) requires a majority vote of the Sponsor as defined in Subclause 7.1

#### **5.2 Working Groups – Individual Method**

Standards working groups are responsible for the definitive content of one or more documents and for responding to views and objections thereon. Such working groups shall maintain a membership roster and shall comply with the provisions for preparing standards. The Sponsor shall appoint the Working Group chair.

The Sponsor shall ensure that all working groups adopt procedures consistent with the baseline Operating Procedures for Standards Working Groups – Individual Method and review amendments to these procedures to ensure that they are not in conflict with the IEEE-SA Standards Board Operations Manual.

#### **5.3 Working Groups – Entity Method**

If a working group being formed has entity-based membership, the Sponsor shall ensure that the entity standards working group adopts the [IEEE-SA Baseline Policies and Procedures – IEEE Standard WGs – Entity Working Groups](#) and reviews amendments to the Operating Procedures for Corporate Standards Working Groups to ensure that they are not in conflict with IEEE policies and procedures and New York State Not-for-Profit Corporation Law.

## 5.4 Standards study groups

When a Sponsor is presented with a proposal concerning a standards development project, the Sponsor may form a Standards Study Group to examine the proposal to determine if there is a need for a standard to be developed. The life of a Standards Study Group is limited to 6 months. If the proposal merits formation of a project, the Study Group will draft a Project Authorization Request (PAR) for consideration by the Sponsor.

Groups should refer to the approved Study Group guidelines on how a Standards Study Group should conduct business and the criteria it should apply to consideration of a proposal.

Guidelines located at: <http://standards.ieee.org/board/pro/study-group.doc>

A Study Group is disbanded upon approval of the PAR by the IEEE-SA Standards Board.

## 5.5 Other subgroups

The formation and disbandment of subgroups other than administrative subgroups (e.g., technical subcommittees, and writing groups) require approval by a majority vote of the Sponsor. The Chair of a subgroup shall be appointed by the Chair of the Sponsor or decided by nomination and election. The scope and duties delegated to the subgroup shall be approved at the time it is formed, and subsequent changes in scope or duties shall also require approval by a majority vote of the Sponsor. The scope, duties, and membership of all subgroups shall be reviewed by the Sponsor annually. The charge to the subgroup shall clearly state which of the following complementary activities is appropriate:

1. The subgroup is responsible for the definitive content of one or more documents and for responding to views and objections thereon. Such subgroups shall maintain a membership roster and shall comply with the provisions for preparing standard(s).
2. The subgroup is responsible for assisting the Sponsor (for example, drafting all or a portion of a document, drafting responses to comments, drafting public statements on standards, or other purely advisory functions).

## 6.0 Meetings

Sponsor meetings shall be held, as decided by the Sponsor Chair, or by petition of 5 or more voting members, to conduct business, such as making assignments, receiving reports of work, progressing draft standards, resolving differences among subgroups, and considering views and objections from any source. A 30-calendar day meeting notice and 14 day agenda shall be distributed at least to all members. Notification of the potential for action shall be included on any distributed agendas for meetings.

Please note that all IEEE Standards development meetings are open to anyone who has a material interest and wishes to attend. However, some meetings may occur in Executive Session (see Clause 6.3).

## 6.1 Quorum

A quorum must be identified before the initiation of Sponsor business at a meeting, but if a quorum is not present, actions may be taken subject to confirmation by letter or electronic ballot, as detailed in subclause [7.4](#). For Sponsors with less than 50 voting members, a quorum shall be defined as a majority of the current total voting membership. For Sponsors with 50 or more voting members, a quorum shall be defined as 10% of the current total voting membership or 26, whichever is greater. Voting members who recuse themselves shall not be counted in the equation to determine whether a quorum exists.

## 6.2 Conduct

Meeting attendees shall demonstrate respect and courtesy toward each other and shall allow each participant a fair and equal opportunity to contribute to the meeting, in accordance with the [IEEE Code of Ethics](#).

All working group participants shall act in accordance with all IEEE Standards policies and procedures.

## 6.3 Executive session

Meetings to discuss personnel or sensitive business matters (e.g., the negotiation of contracts), or for other appropriate non-public matters (e.g., the receipt of legal advice), may be conducted in Executive Session.

## 6.4 Meeting fees

The Sponsor may charge a meeting fee to cover the expenses of the Sponsor. The fee shall not be used to restrict participation by any interested parties. The Sponsor Officers shall set the meeting fees in consultation with those planning a particular meeting.

Everyone who attends a meeting, except for those specifically excluded due to hardship, shall pay the meeting fee. In the event that a member of the Sponsor has a financial difficulty and is unable to pay the meeting fee, the member may apply to the Sponsor Chair for a partial or complete waiver of the meeting fee. The Chair (and Treasurer) shall make the decision to grant such relief. These discussions shall remain private.

## 6.5 Minutes

The minutes shall record the essentials, including the following:

1. Name of group
2. Date and location of meeting
3. Officer presiding, including the name of the secretary who wrote the minutes
4. Attendance, including affiliation

5. Call to order, Chair's remarks
6. Approval of minutes of previous meeting
7. Approval of agenda
8. Technical topics
  - a) Brief summary of discussion, pros and cons, and conclusions
  - b) Motions and actions items with name and due date
  - c) Copies of handouts
  - d) Do not include names, except for movers and seconders of motions and those who request that their negative/abstain vote is recorded, unless a roll-call vote is ordered
9. Subcommittee reports
10. Items reported out of executive session
11. Next meeting--date and location

## **7.0 Vote**

### **7.1 Approval of an action**

Approval of an action requires approval by a majority (or two-thirds) vote as specified below in 7.1.1 and 7.1.2. A majority (or two-thirds) vote is defined as either:

- a) At a meeting (including teleconferences) where quorum has been established, a vote carried by majority (or two-thirds) approval of the votes cast (i.e., Approve or Do Not Approve votes, excluding abstentions) by the voting members in attendance.
- b) By electronic means (including email), a vote carried by majority (or two-thirds) of the votes cast (i.e., Approve or Do Not Approve votes, excluding abstentions), provided a majority of all the voting members of the Sponsor responded.

#### **7.1.1 Actions requiring approval by a majority vote**

The following actions require approval by a majority vote:

- a) Formation or modification of a subgroup, including its procedures, scope, and duties
- b) Disbandment of subgroups
- c) Approval of minutes
- d) Authorization of a Sponsor ballot

#### **7.1.2 Actions requiring approval by a two-thirds vote**

The following actions require approval by a two-thirds vote:

- a) Adoption of new or revised Sponsor procedures, interest categories, or revisions thereof
- b) Approval of public statements
- c) Approval of change of the Sponsor scope\*
- d) Approval of termination of the Sponsor
- e) Removal of an officer except the Chair

\*Following Sponsor approval, items c and d require notice to the IEEE-SA Standards Board.

## **7.2 Approval of moving a draft standard to Sponsor ballot**

Approval for moving a draft standard to Sponsor ballot, or approval of any substantive change in the scope of a standard proposed by a subgroup, shall be referred to the Sponsor for approval. The Sponsor may delegate approval authority and form a subgroup for this purpose. Approval to move a standard to Sponsor ballot from a subgroup requires a majority vote. This vote shall be limited to procedural issues and PAR alignment only.

Each voting Sponsor member shall vote one of the following positions:

1. Approve
2. Do Not Approve (the reasons for a negative vote should be given)
3. Abstain

## **7.3 Proxy Voting**

Proxy voting is not permitted within the Sponsor.

## **7.4 Voting between meetings**

At the discretion of the Chair, the Sponsor shall be allowed to conduct voting between meetings by the use of a letter or electronic ballot. If such actions are to be taken, they shall follow the rules of [IEEE Bylaw I-300.4\(4\)](#).

## **8.0 Communications**

All correspondence on behalf of the Sponsor shall contain identification of the Sponsor as the source of the correspondence.

### **8.1 Formal internal communication**

If correspondence between subcommittees or between working groups of different subcommittees involves issues or decisions (that is, non-routine matters) affecting other subcommittees, copies shall be sent to all affected subcommittee Chairs and the Sponsor officers.

## **8.2 External communication**

Inquiries relating to the Sponsor should be directed to the Chair, and members should so inform individuals who raise such questions. All replies to inquiries shall be made through the Chair.

## **8.3 Public statements for standards**

All Sponsor public communications shall comply with the policies of the *IEEE-SA Standards Board Operations Manual*.

Individuals making public statements that have not been approved by the Sponsor shall state that they are speaking as individuals.

### **8.3.1 Sponsor and subgroup public statements**

Sponsor public statements shall not be released without prior approval as per Clause 7.1.2 of these procedures.

### **8.3.2 Subgroup public statements**

Subgroup public statements shall not be released without prior approval of the subgroup. Such public statements also require approval of the Sponsor.

Subgroup public statements shall be identified in the first paragraph of the public statement as being specifically the position of the subgroup. These statements shall be issued by the subgroup Chair and shall include the Sponsor Chair in the distribution. Such statements shall not bear the IEEE, the IEEE-SA, or the Sponsor logos.

### **8.3.3 Public statements to be issued by other entities**

If the Sponsor wishes to go to another IEEE entity (as defined in Section 15 of the *IEEE Policy and Procedures*) to have that entity offer a public statement on a standards matter, they shall do so after agreement from the IEEE-SA Standards Board and after informing the IEEE-SA Board of Governors. Upon Sponsor approval, proposed public statements that need to be issued by other IEEE entities shall be forwarded to the IEEE-SA Standards Board Secretary for further action.

## **8.4 Informal communications**

Informal communications shall not imply that they are a formal position of the IEEE, the IEEE-SA, or the Sponsor.

## **8.5 Standards publicity**

The Sponsor is encouraged to prepare press releases and other forms of publicity to promote their activities. Please see subclause [5.1.4](#) of the *IEEE-SA Standards Board Operations Manual* for further instructions.

## **9.0 Interpretations**

The procedures stated in the *IEEE-SA Standards Board Operations Manual* shall be followed.

Interpretations of standards shall be approved by at least a two-thirds approval vote of a group determined by the Sponsor. Every effort should be made to ensure that the group reflects a balance of those who are materially interested.

## **10.0. Appeals**

The Sponsor recognizes the right of appeal on procedural grounds. Technical appeals are referred back to working groups. Every effort should be made to ensure that impartial handling of complaints regarding any action or inaction on the part of the Sponsor is performed in an identifiable manner. If the Sponsor conducts an appeal, it shall model its appeals process on the appeals process of clause 5.8 of the *IEEE-SA Standards Board Operations Manual*.