



**CONSUMERS  
FEDERATION  
OF AUSTRALIA**

Developing and promoting  
the consumer interest

## Consumers' Federation of Australia Standards Project

### Policy Statement – Policy on Consumer Representation to Standards Australia Technical Committees

#### A. Consumers Federation of Australia and Standards Australia

The Consumers Federation of Australia (CFA) is recognised by Standards Australia (SA) as the peak national body for consumer organisations in Australia. In general, consumer representatives for Standards Australia's Technical Committees are sought through the CFA and its member organisations.

Consumers are a key stakeholder group in the development of standards. Consumer focused input can improve standards by making the product or service more market relevant; enhancing consumer confidence; addressing societal issues; and providing feedback from the point of view of the end user. The work of CFA representatives results in better, more relevant standards and more desirable end products giving Australians greater confidence in the products, services and systems they use.

#### B. Role of the consumer representative on the committee

Committees are composed of representatives of organisations that represent the views of a constituency. CFA is a 'Nominating Organisation' since it nominates its representatives to the committees, and the representative must represent the interests of the organisation that nominated them, as opposed to their own individual interests.

Nominated representatives must be

- i. appropriately qualified, knowledgeable and empowered to effectively contribute to the work of the committee by representing the views of consumers
- ii. only represent their Nominating Organisation (CFA) on a committee
- iii. represent consumers without conflict of interest
- iv. where a clear CFA policy position is not available, use experience and judgement in ensuring the rights and interests of consumers are represented
- v. able to competently and actively participate in all committee meetings in person or via remote access; and
- vi. aware of their responsibilities to CFA and to Standards Australia
- vii. aware of and adhere to the [Technical group and committee member code of conduct](#)
- viii. able to actively engage in committee activity throughout the course of a project.

A detailed **Role Profile** is available.

**Reporting:** The representative will report back to CFA via the Standards Coordinator on relevant issues and decisions arising from committee meetings and consult regularly on matters relevant to their role, to ensure the viewpoint of CFA is understood and expressed.

**Financial support:** The consumer representative's role on the Standards technical committee is voluntary with no sitting fees paid. However, the Project reimburses out of pocket expenses to attend meetings outside the representative's domicile.

**Member of CFA:** The consumer representative on Standards technical committees becomes a non-voting member of CFA. Since this is a voluntary unpaid position, the membership fee is waived.

### **C. Principles for the Appointment of Consumer Representatives**

The CFA is guided by the Commonwealth Consumer Affairs Advisory Council [Principles for the Appointment of Consumer Representatives: A Process for Governments and Industry](#), the selection criteria for committees that develop standards of direct interest to consumers and an internal selection process.

These committees are chosen by CFA according to a list of priorities:

1. Health, safety and welfare of vulnerable consumers, and overwhelming public interest.
2. Health, safety and welfare of consumers generally.
3. Accessibility and fair trading of essential services and products.
4. Information and consumers' right to know.
5. Environmental impact of services and products.
6. Fair trading of non-essential services and products.

We are also guided by the [UN Guidelines for Consumer Protection \(2016\)](#)

### **D. CFA Nomination of Consumer Representatives**

The Standards Coordinator is the central point of contact for standards development activities and coordinates any requests for consumer representatives received by CFA and acts as the focus point for nominations.

CFA will generally advertise the position within its networks and call for applications. CFA may also approach organisations and individuals to identify potential suitable nominees and encourages individuals to register their interest in representing CFA on committees.

- a) CFA requests potential nominees to complete the Nomination Form (attached), provide an up to date CV and a written statement on why they believe they would make an effective consumer representative.
- b) The successful nominee agrees to fulfil their responsibilities and adhere to the [Technical group and committee code of conduct](#), undertake relevant learning modules in the Standards Academy, and become familiar with standards development processes (Standards Guides.)
- c) The successful nominee signs the CFA Representatives Agreement with the Consumer Action Law Centre (attached) and Standards Australia Committee Member Deed.

- d) Once the representative returns the signed Committee Member Deed, they will be granted access to committee documentation and will be included in committee communications and meetings.
- e) The Standards Coordinator is appointed “for information” on the committee to support the role of the representative and keep across committee activity.

**E. Privacy**

All personal information provided to the CFA by applicants seeking nominations as a CFA endorsed consumer representatives to Standards Australia Technical Committees will be used for the purposes of determining that nomination. It will not be added to a mailing list for any other purpose nor will it be used or disclosed for any other purpose without the consent of applicant who provided the information except as required by law (such as subpoena or warrant)

## CFA Standards Representative Nomination Form

*This form is to be completed by individuals wishing to represent Consumers Federation of Australia (CFA) on a Standards Australia technical committee, for the purposes of participation in Standards development activities.*

Date

Name

Employer

Contact

Phone

Email

Address

Provide a summary of why you want to be a consumer representative and why does it interest you.

Provide a summary of how you see the role of the CFA representative on the committee.

Provide a summary of your relevant skills and knowledge as well as any experience as a consumer representative. *Attached any relevant supporting information in a brief CV.*

Provide details of your previous or other technical committee participation

*Once completed this form should be emailed with any supporting information to the Standards Coordinator [standards@consumeraction.org.au](mailto:standards@consumeraction.org.au)*

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## **Consumer Representatives on Standards Australia Committees Project REPRESENTATIVES AGREEMENT**

This agreement is between:

and

Consumer Action Law Centre (**CALC**)

The Consumer Representatives on Standards Australia Committees Project (the **Project**) is managed by CALC on behalf of the Consumers' Federation of Australia Inc (**CFA**).

This agreement sets out the broad principles to which an individual, nominated as a CFA endorsed consumer representative to a Standards Australia committee (the **Committee**), agrees to be bound.

### **Committee participation**

The representative agrees to participate fully in the work of the Committee, to attend meetings whenever possible and to contribute to discussions. The representative's role on the Committee is to advocate for the best interests of end-use consumers, with special consideration of the needs of vulnerable consumers, whilst also seeking consensus within the Committee and the ultimate achievement of a high-quality standard.

### **Reporting**

The representative agrees to report back to CALC on relevant issues within the Committee. A brief written report must be submitted following each Committee meeting attended. More detailed reports may be requested by the Standards Coordinator from time to time.

### **Consultation**

The representative will consult with CFA members and other consumer groups as appropriate on matters relevant to their role on the Committee. The Standards Coordinator will assist with any consultation. Possible consultation mechanisms include email, surveys and face-to-face meetings.

### **Confidentiality of Information**

The representative will respect any confidentiality requirements imposed by their position on a Committee. Such confidentiality requirements, however, should not be used inappropriately as a mechanism for stifling discussion or avoiding consultation. The representative should consult the Standards Coordinator if they have concerns about any confidentiality requirements.

### **Conflict of Interest**

Should the representative find themselves in a position of conflict of interest, they must seek guidance from the Standards Coordinator. The most appropriate action will be determined based on the specific circumstances. Possible actions in situations of conflict of interest include:

- acknowledgement of the conflict by the Consumer Representative to Standards Australia and fellow Committee members;
- abstinence from participation in particular work of the committee; or
- resignation from the committee.

**Financial support**

The representative acting on behalf of the CFA will not be remunerated for their work as they are working on a voluntary basis.

The representative, acting on behalf of the CFA, is entitled to have reasonable travel expenses reimbursed by CALC. All travel arrangements (domestic and international) may only be made in consultation with the Standards Coordinator and is based on Australian Tax Office guidelines and rates.

In signing this agreement, the representative confirms the understanding that they would not otherwise have received reimbursement of these expenses from another source, such as their employer.

**Insurance**

Covers volunteer representatives when attending meetings in Australia. Pre-existing conditions must be disclosed.

**Termination**

Should a representative not comply with this agreement, the CALC, on behalf of the CFA, may remove their endorsement and the consumer representative must resign from the Committee. The CALC further reserves the right to terminate this agreement if insufficient funding is provided to continue effective management of the Project.

The representative has the right to terminate this agreement and resign from a Committee at any time.

Signed

Date:

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(representative)

Signed

Date:

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(on behalf of CALC and CFA)