

## Role of the THC

The Technical Harmonization Committee (THC) is basically defined as the group responsible for developing the technical content of the proposed draft harmonized standard and for resolving all comments generated. Formal definitions from the harmonization procedures are attached below. Though this definition seems pretty simple, the role of the THC is actually quite involved. The THC has an active role at multiple stages throughout the harmonization process, including, but not limited to:

- Proposal development – members of the THC or the THC as a whole may develop new proposals for a co-published standard.
- Early proposal review – proposals submitted to any of the SDOs generally are sent to the THC for early review and comment. The purpose of this step is to allow for a binational or trinational group to review the proposals and identify any early concerns, particularly related to the code/safety issues of all three countries. The THC is able to ask questions and make suggested changes to the proposal at this point. Note that the THC does not serve as a “veto body.” If a proposal is not accepted by the THC, the submitter will have the option of proceeding with the proposal as is, modifying the proposal to address the concerns raised by the THC or accepting the comments suggested by the THC, or withdrawing the proposal completely. The THC may be involved in some discussions at this point, particularly if there were some issues raised requiring additional justification.
- Comment Resolution following Preliminary Review – The THC will be involved in reviewing the comments generated as part of the preliminary review phase at all SDOs involved, and modifying the proposals appropriately. (Again, if any proposals were submitted from outside the THC, additional coordination with the original proposal submitter may be needed). Although UL does not require a formal response at this stage, the THC is encouraged to give the comments full attention in hopes of addressing comments at this stage, rather than at the more formal ballot stage.
- Comment resolution following Ballot – Similar stage as following preliminary review, although formal responses are required. The input received from the THC will be reviewed for completeness by all SDOs before any formal comment disposition is distributed.
- Comment resolution following Recirculation – Similar to above.

The Role of the THC chair is to lead the THC towards prompt resolution of the items listed above. This may mean:

- Maintaining close contact with the publication coordinator and the other SDO Project Managers to be aware of project status.
- Establishing THC meetings or teleconferences based on the project schedules so that delays aren't introduced while meetings are established.
- Following up with anyone who is holding up the project. This includes each of the SDOs and individual THC members. Although the UL PM will follow up as

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well, follow-ups from the industry (and particularly the THC chair) will mean more.

- Monitors progress towards agreed upon completion dates
- Ensures that all members of the committee have the opportunity to express their viewpoints.
- Assists the committee in establishing necessary working groups.

The THC chair has an obligation to act impartially and to ensure that the process operates impartially. If at anytime the chair finds that he/she is in an actual or potential conflict of interest, he/she must disclose this to the committee.

The THC chair may also want to consider:

- Establishing a formal Revision Cycle Schedule. Having a formal schedule in place allows everyone involved to be aware of the anticipated dates and times when resources will be needed, and it also provides a framework for accountability for everyone involved.
- Holding a THC meeting in conjunction with other pertinent meetings.
- Establishing THC positions for confirmation by the THC. When comments are provided to the THC chair for consideration, the chair can help minimize delays by reviewing the comments and offering a draft response, that can then be reviewed and approved by the THC. This option is especially beneficial when the comments are not severe enough to warrant a face-to-face meeting.

## **Definitions of THC, THC Chair, and THC Secretary**

**THC (Technical Harmonization Committee)** — the group of individuals who are responsible for developing the technical content of the proposed draft harmonized standard and for resolving all comments generated. The THC consists of industry representatives from each country involved, the Secretariat, the THC Chair, and representatives of the SDOs involved, if applicable. The THC may remain in existence after publication of the harmonized standard or be re-formed to serve as a forum for addressing necessary technical revisions to the standard.

Generally, technical work, including harmonization of standards and initiation of new standards development, is done within a Technical Harmonization Committee (THC), which is established with a specific scope. A THC may establish Technical Harmonization Subcommittees (THSCs) or Working Groups (THWGs) as necessary to address specific standards, portions of standards, or any specific or general issue within the scope of the THC. These THSCs or Working Groups report annually to the THC.

**THC chair** — the individual responsible for organizing the THC meetings and for the progression of the development of the harmonized standard. The THC Chair is appointed by the sponsoring trade association.

**THC secretariat** — the individual responsible for

- (a) issuing agendas (at least four weeks prior to the meeting) and meeting reports for the THC meetings;
- (b) collecting the THC comments and distributing them to the entire THC for consideration;
- (c) making sure that the THC provides a draft of the harmonized standard in accordance with the processes and format defined in these procedures; and
- (d) providing copies of THC meeting agendas, reports, and draft standards to the Publication Coordinator.

The Secretariat is a member of the THC or is contracted by the THC.