

THE PREPARATION AND PUBLICATION OF GLOSSARIES BY THE INTERNATIONAL ELECTROTECHNICAL COMMITTEE

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1. GENERAL

The International Electrotechnical Committee (IEC) is responsible, internationally, for standardisation in the electrotechnical field. The British Standards Institution (BSI) is the national organisation which sends delegates to the IEC, circulates and sends comments on drafts, and finally approves (or otherwise) the proposed standard. The English text is then usually published as a British Standard. The BSI performs the same function as regards the Standards proposed by the International Standardisation Organisation (ISO).

2. THE INTERNATIONAL ELECTROTECHNICAL VOCABULARY

The first edition was published in 1938 with some 2,000 terms. The second edition, completed in 1970, contained 8,000 terms. In 1975 a bi-lingual (English and French) general index was published, containing 11,000 terms. Since then more than 3,000 terms have been added.

Work is proceeding on the publication of a bilingual dictionary, which it is hoped will be available in 1983.

3. IEC METHOD OF PREPARATION OF A VOCABULARY IN A PARTICULAR FIELD

The Technical Committee (TC) concerned sets up a Working Group which prepared and circulates to the TC a draft containing the proposed terms and definitions, in English and French. After comment and amendment by the members of the TC, the draft is circulated to all National Committees of the IEC (IEC Secretariat Document). The National Committees' comments are circulated to ALL the National Committees. The Technical Committee then invites those of its members concerned with the vocabulary to a meeting to discuss the comments made by the National Committees. It is also usual to invite representatives from the National Committees which commented on the draft.

As a result of the meeting a revised draft (a Central Office Document) is sent to all National Committees for approval (6 month rule). After approval the terms (only, not the definitions) in six other languages are added, the indexes are prepared for all the languages, and the Glossary published with the texts in English and French.

For some subjects the texts of the definitions are published also in German and Russian. The BSI then usually publishes the English text as a British Standard.

4. HARMONISATION OF ENGLISH AND FRENCH TEXTS

There is one overriding rule as regards the British Standards terms, which is that USAGE IS THE SOLE CRITERION, unless it can be shown that usage is misleading or incorrect. This rule should preclude any UK delegate from inventing a term to agree with the French term. When a term does not exist in the other languages the procedure in the IEC TCI (Vocabulary Committee) publications is to show a series of dots for the title, but the definition is given in both languages.