



Press Release
2017-05-23

COPANT WORKSHOP ON ISO/CASCO

THE ISO COMMITTEE FOR STANDARDS ON CONFORMITY ASSESSMENT ON SPOTLIGHT BY COPANT

On the occasion of the annual Plenary meeting of ISO/CASCO, the ISO standards committee on conformity assessment, held in Vancouver, Canada, on April, 26 and 27, COPANT took the initiative to organize a workshop on this Committee for its members, which was held in the same city on April 25.

This workshop was supported by PTB (Physikalisch-Technische Bundesanstalt), within the framework of the regional project on Quality Infrastructure for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energies.

It was attended by 16 people representing the following 14 countries: Argentina, Barbados, Bolivia, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Spain, Guyana, Panama and Paraguay.

The workshop was given by Lic. Mario Wittner: Former President of ISO/CASCO (2003 - 2006 (two periods)). Former Director General of IRAM. Participant in the ISO/CASCO Working Groups WG 42 (Accreditation), WG 44 (Laboratories), WG 45 (Service certification) and WG 46 (Verification and validation bodies).

It had the contribution of experts who supported in the course, specifically the following people:

- Reinaldo Figueiredo, from ANSI, who presented the operation of the ISO/CASCO National Mirror Committee in the United States: members, meetings, preparation of comments for CASCO documents, etc.
- Cristina Draghici from SCC, who presented the operation of the ISO/CASCO National Mirror Committee in Canada: members, meetings, preparation of comments for CASCO documents, etc.
- Javier Muñoz from UNE (Spain), who commented on the operation of CASCO's STTF (Spanish Translation Task Force) proposing improvements
- Claudia Cerda of INN (Chile) who explained how the COPANT Focus Group on CASCO is integrated and functioning, with proposals for improvement.

The **objectives** of the workshop were the following:

- Improve the participation of COPANT NSBs members at international standardization, specifically in ISO/CASCO Plenary.
- Prepare COPANT members for participation in ISO/CASCO, especially those who do not participate regularly or is their first participation in ISO/CASCO meetings.
- Analyze with the trainer the Plenary Agenda and know, discuss and/or harmonize positions on possible contentious points.
- Reinforce the tasks of the Spanish Translation Task Force (STTF) and the COPANT Focal Group on CASCO.



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Some background

COPANT has been developing an organized plan to improve participation of its members in CASCO activities due to the fact that conformity assessment standards are adopted as national standards and widely used in technical regulations, as recommended in the WTO-TBT agreement¹.

Previously, different training activities took place:

- 2014: in ICONTEC – Colombia, support program for NSBs members of COPANT;
- 2015: virtual training on the main ISO/CASCO standards, for COPANT members;
- 2016: in INN – Chile and in SLBS - St. Lucia, training on participation in international standardization.

In fact, participation of COPANT members in the different CASCO WGs has increased with various of them being participant (P) members, sending comments and voting during the balloting processes.

The COPANT Focal Group for CASCO is working, even though there is room for improvements in the effective participation and sharing of national comments.

Many of COPANT members have created their NMC for CASCO involving the national interested parties.

The **methodology of the Workshop** was based on:

- Critical analysis of the main issues of the Agenda of the CASCO Plenary meeting as well as information on the previous Plenary hold in Dubai in 2016;
- Presentation by the trainer of the main CASCO WGs activities;
- Presentations by the invited lecturers; UNE, ANSI, INN, SCC;
- Intensive interventions of the participants during the entire Workshop, motivated by the trainer.
- Final discussion with the participants to develop inputs for recommendations to COPANT and its members in order to improve activities of the COPANT Focal Group for CASCO and participation in CASCO WGs.
- Short meetings with groups or individual COPANT participants during CASCO Plenary to clarify discussion and presentations made by CASCO Conveners.

Conclusions and recommendations

The participants suggested the following recommendations for future activities:

- To elaborate a COPANT training program to be applied by the members at national level to improve the competency of their NMCs (National Mirror Committees)
- To strengthen the Focal Group activities related to CASCO to achieve effective participation of the members
- To look for financial resources through regional or international projects to facilitate participation continuity in CASCO programs
- To analyze the possible strategies to be developed with governmental authorities to promote the use of ISO/CASCO standards

¹ Technical Barriers to Trade agreement of the World Trade Organization