

Engineering Activities

Development of American Standards

Motion picture — and related television — standards in the United States are today developed primarily by SMPTE Engineering Committees. While that is widespread knowledge, the steps in that development are probably not so well known. A brief review of the procedures used in producing American Standards in cinematography is therefore given below. It is hoped that an awareness of these procedures will make for an even wider participation in standards activity, which can only serve to improve the quality and observance of these standards.

1. Request for Standard: The need for a standard may be brought to the attention of the Society's Engineering Vice-President by anyone interested: manufacturer, consumer, Society member, government body, etc.

2. Drafting the Standard: The Engineering Vice-President estimates the general value of the request and refers the project to the appropriate Engineering Committee. The Committee, a broad representative group of some phase of the motion picture industry, makes any required studies or surveys and prepares a draft standard.

3. Reviewing the Standard: After the Engineering Committee approves its "final" draft, the proposed standard goes through an extensive review to assure the kind of acceptance required under our system of voluntary standards.

a. Standards Committee: The SMPTE Standards Committee is composed, in the main, of the chairmen of the engineering committees. This first review of the proposal is therefore designed to achieve agreement within the Society. Approval by the Standards Committee is required before the draft can be published in the *Journal*.

b. Journal Publication: Publication of the draft for some stated period (usually 3 months) for trial and comment provides all *Journal* readers an opportunity to study and criticize the proposal.

c. ASA Sectional Committee, PH22: If no adverse comments have been received during the trial period, the Engineering Vice-President transmits the proposed standard

to PH22 with a recommendation that it be processed as an American Standard. PH22 is composed of representatives from every group having a vital interest in cinematographic standards. Approval by PH22 generally indicates that the technical content of the standard is in good order.

d. SMPTE Board of Governors: After approval, PH22 returns the standard to the Society for sponsor approval which is conferred by Board of Governors action.

e. Photographic Standards Correlating Committee: At this point and on behalf of the Board of Governors, the Executive Secretary formally transmits the proposed standard to the Director of the ASA, concluding Society action on that particular standard. The Correlating Committee is an ASA body formed to integrate the standards activity of all elements of the photographic industry and so reviews all photographic standards proposals before final approval is granted.

4. American Standard: A proposed standard acquires the stamp "American Standard" upon approval of the ASA Standards Council, the final board of review. This group has representatives from each ASA Member Body and thus provides a clearing house for vast numbers of standards from widely diversified industries. Publication in the *SMPTE Journal* completes the lengthy journey from request to American Standard.

It should be noted that any group may submit a proposed standard to PH22 for processing as an American Standard and this the Motion Picture Research Council has done in quite a few instances. This in no way changes the ensuing procedure since the SMPTE as sponsor of PH22 must review the proposal in order to authorize the required sponsor approval.

Your attention is also drawn to the fact that the technical committees of the Society are not closed corporations. A request to have your organization represented on one or several engineering committees would be welcomed by the Engineering Vice-President and would receive serious consideration — *Henry Kogel*, Staff Engineer.