

Report on SMPTE Standard for Signal Parameters — 1125/60 High-Definition Production System, SMPTE 240M

At its meeting of January 25, 1990, the SMPTE Board of Governors asked that this report on the actions concerning approval of SMPTE 240M by the Society and by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) be prepared for the Society's membership. The purpose of the report is to clarify for the membership the status of SMPTE 240M and the roles of the Society and of ANSI in the standardization process.

The Status of SMPTE 240M

SMPTE Standard for Signal Parameters — 1125/60 High-Definition Production System, SMPTE 240M, received final approval by the SMPTE on March 14, 1988. The approval process included confirmation by the Society's Working Group on High-Definition Electronic Production, the Committee on New Television Technology, and the Standards Committee, publication for public comment in the *SMPTE Journal*, and approval by the Executive Committee for Standards Approval. All of these approvals were taken without objection.

With this development and review process, the SMPTE established the technical competence and utility of the specific system described in the standard. Thus, SMPTE 240M achieved the same accreditation and status as all other approved SMPTE engineering documents.

The SMPTE Role in Standardization

The SMPTE Engineering Committees develop and approve Standards, Recommended Practices, and Engineering Guidelines in many of the technical areas of television and motion pictures. Under the procedures defined in the Society's Administrative Practices, and in keeping with ANSI requirements, the Society's Technology Committees and Working Groups consider the technical adequacy of the proposal, consider other national and international standards with regard to harmonization

and duplication of content, resolve identified significant conflicts with other standards, consider evidence of current or potential national use of the proposal, and determine that there is no evidence of unfair provisions and that there is no evidence that the proposal is contrary to the public interest.

In their considerations, SMPTE Technology Committees and Working Groups must afford "due process." Due process requires that any materially and directly affected person or organization has the right to participate in the consideration of a standard by expressing a position and its basis, to have that position considered, and to have the right of appeal if adversely affected. All of these requirements are provided for in the procedures under which the Engineering Committees work.

In addition, the SMPTE Engineering Committees must reach consensus in their decisions concerning engineering documents. Consensus is defined as substantial agreement (much more than a simple majority but not necessarily unanimity). The determination that consensus exists further requires that all dissenting viewpoints have been considered and that an objective effort has been made toward their resolution.

When the SMPTE process is completed, Society engineering documents that fulfill the requirements for ANSI Standards are submitted to ANSI for their own subsequent consideration as American National Standards.

It should be noted that while sub-

mission of SMPTE Standards to ANSI for consideration as American National Standards has been the Society's regular practice, this action is taken upon the recommendation of the SMPTE Technology Committee responsible for the document. These two accreditations, as a SMPTE Standard and as an ANSI Standard, are independent.

The ANSI Role in Standardization

ANSI's role in adopting standards sponsored by the SMPTE as American National Standards is to verify that the standard developer has met the requirements for due process, consensus, and the criteria for standardization. ANSI does not itself judge the technical merits of the proposed American National Standard. As part of its procedures, ANSI publishes notice of the proposal and affords interested parties another opportunity for comment or objection.

ANSI Consideration of SMPTE 240M

The ANSI Board of Standards Review approved SMPTE 240M as an American National Standard after the completion of ANSI's own public review process on October 6, 1988. This action was subsequently appealed to the Board of Standards Review, and the appeal was denied on February 6, 1989.

The ANSI approval of SMPTE 240M was again appealed to the ANSI Appeals Board, and on April 18, 1989, the appeal was upheld, overturning the previous decision and the subsequent reaffirmation of the ANSI Board of Standards Review.

The appellant claimed three grounds for its appeal of the ANSI approvals:

1. SMPTE 240M has not achieved industry consensus.

2. SMPTE 240M is unsuitable for national use.

3. The requirements of due process were not followed by SMPTE in promulgating the standard.

In the published findings of the Appeals Board rehearing on August 15, 1989, ANSI said, "A majority of the Appeals Board finds that the second and third grounds for the appeal are without support, but there does exist a lack of industry consensus." ANSI further said, "... the standard can be resubmitted at any time in the future — either in its present form or with modifications necessary to obtain the required consensus," and "During SMPTE's work on this standard, considerable opportunity for expressing negative views was provided and no opposition was forthcoming at that time."

Thus the ANSI decision finds no fault and does not question the SMPTE's practices or procedures in preparing SMPTE 240M or any other engineering documents, and ANSI's independent action does not affect the status of SMPTE 240M as a SMPTE Standard.

What Standards Are

It is important that the Society's

membership and the general public understand that SMPTE Standards and ANSI Standards are not and cannot be exclusionary; that is, the existence of one standard does not preclude the existence of another standard. In the title and scope of each standard, the particular system to which the standard applies is carefully spelled out, just as SMPTE 240M spells out its application to the 1125/60 high-definition system.

Because this nonexclusionary principle can, and occasionally does, lead to "multiple standards," it is entirely proper for the Society to offer the forum of its Engineering Committee meetings to attempt to reconcile and consolidate multiple proposals for standardization. However, the Society cannot force such agreement and cannot refuse the standardization of a proposal which meets the requirements for standardization and is within its assigned jurisdictions.

In the U.S. standardization system, the use of standards is voluntary; persons are free to accept or reject any standard as they see fit in the exercise of their individual discretion. The only exception to this voluntary use of standards occurs when a standard is incorporated into law; for example, an

electrical standard may become part of an electrical code and thus be compulsory under that code. While a user is free to ask a manufacturer to provide a piece of equipment which complies with a certain standard, the manufacturer is equally free to try to convince the user that some other piece of equipment, under another standard or even nonstandardized, is more appropriate.

In effect, a SMPTE or an ANSI standard says, "If this is what you want to do, here is how you can do it to achieve the greatest compatibility and interchangeability at this time, under this system." Standards do not say, "This is the best or only way to do something." Clearly, to do so would freeze technology and could not possibly address every existing or potential use of a technology.

The Society's engineering efforts are of great importance to the motion-picture, television, and allied arts and sciences, both nationally and internationally. An understanding of the purposes of standardization, and the process by which it is achieved, should prove useful to all of those who are affected by the SMPTE's standardization efforts.

132nd SMPTE Technical Conference and Equipment Exhibit

Jacob K. Javits Convention Center, New York City

October 13–17, 1990

Plans are under way for the SMPTE's upcoming 132nd Technical Conference and Equipment Exhibit, to be held at the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center, New York City, October 13–17, 1990.

The event, themed *Film and Television — One World?*, will feature approximately 200 technical presentations by industry authorities, 300 equipment exhibits by leading national and international manufacturers, and attendance by 15,000 key industry personnel from around the world.

Committee Chairmen Appointed

Several committee chairmen have been appointed and have begun preparation for the conference. Charles Jablonski (NBC) will serve as General Arrangements Chairman, Michael E. Johnson (Eastman Kodak Co.) has been appointed Assistant Auditor, Jay H. Ballard (NBC) will serve as A/V & Projection Chairman, Neal R. Pilzer (MPE) has been appointed Banquet Chairman, Alan Rosenfeld (Limelight Video) will serve as Dis- play Chairman, John C. Gates (Gates

Service Group, Inc.) and Tim Spitzer (Du Art Video) have been assigned as Facilities Co-Chairmen, Herb Ohlandt (National Video Center) has been appointed Hospitality/Information Chairman, Charles Spicer (NBC) will be Hotel/Assistant General Arrangements Chairman, Roger Salles (Geocam Corp.) has been named Luncheons Chairman, Edgar Schuller (Entertainment Video Systems) will serve as Membership Chairman, Paul Heimbach (Viacom International) has been appointed