International Fire Safety Standards

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UN, Geneva

Paper 5 - Implementation

5.1   Purpose

The purpose of creating IFSS is not the writing of the standards, but to ensure IFSS is used (adopted) in the market place. This paper will give background for a discussion on implementation strategy.

5.2   IFSS and other standards

Many organisations in the Coalition already have their own standards or work in countries with their own state and other standards, that directly or indirectly relate to fire safety. In many of these cases these standards need to exist due to local law and practice that it may be possible or appropriate to reflect in an international standard.

In these cases we need to ensure that IFSS compliments the local standard; the local standard simply provides the guidance and technical detail as to how IFSS can be implemented locally. Or, in some cases it might be the case of dual reporting – given a specific client or project's needs; information could be reported both based on IFSS and based on another local standard. This would be two separate sections in any report, but clearly communicating what they are, why they are different and the purpose of each so the end user is clear.

It is expected, as per the Declaration, that each Coalition Member adopts IFSS. In some cases this might be replacing current standards. For others it might be converting the current standard into the detailed implementation guidance for IFSS. In other situations it might mean the dual reporting model described above – in some situations IFSS is needed; in other situations another standard for specific reasons.

5.3   Winning Support and Adoption of Key Stakeholders

It might not be the case that professional bodies working alone can achieve universal implementation of one international set of standards. We need the active support of governments, companies, and other interested entities.

The key to winning government support is the fact we are a Coalition. While governments might support their 'local' body or department to set standards, multiple world governments are not all going to support the same private body or an individual nation's department to set an international standard.

Through creating a shared, united, international process and set of standards, we can win the trust of governments and other key stakeholders. Through a world class standard

setting process and governance model we can avoid the fragmentation and inconsistency of professional bodies going it alone and never achieving the Coalition aims of global consistency of fire safety in the public interest.

The International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) Model
This is the lesson and example of IFRS. The accounting professional bodies and firms globally supported IFRS, not the individual country standards of UK GAAP, Mexican GAAP etc. A united profession lead to governments following the profession and adopting IFRS. In the last 10 years 130 countries have required or permitted IFRS. As the accountants have created this model; it is suggested that we follow it.

The Message to Governments
Given that every substantial government in the world either requires or permits IFRS (even the USA permits foreign listed entities to report under IFRS) it is logical that we connect to this success.

IFRS will represent a large percentage of what ends up on the accountant's balance sheet. IFSS underpins IVS (International Valuation Standards) which underpins IFRS. This is our message to governments. One must build and manage buildings for fire safety consistently before one can value and then report financial information consistently. Garbage in, garbage out. If professionals are using inconsistent fire safety standards, inconsistent and incomparable data will be fed into financial reporting standards.

This inconsistency in professional standards has a direct impact on the current state of the world economy. One can argue that inconsistency, and the related lack of trust, in the construction and real estate industry harms the economy.

Universal adoption of IFSS can help address this problem. This is the beginning of our united message to governments. Adopt IFSS and ensure confidence, trust, transparency, comparability and consistency.

Questions for Discussion:
- As a coalition, how can we best work together to reach governments and win adoption
- What other key market entities must we reach, and how do we reach them?