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## **Standards Review White Paper (Response)**

### **Introduction**

Lighting Council New Zealand is the Peak Body of the industry and represents the lighting industry with regard to the formulation of regulation, compliance and environmental issues all of which have had and will have an increasingly significant impact on our industry in the future. Our combined membership turnover accounts for approximately 75% of the lighting spend in New Zealand and LCNZ members participate in the formulation of International (IEC) and Joint Standards with Australia, ensuring the industry is in step with other similar markets.

Lighting Council New Zealand works closely with other industry groups such as ECANZ, and is a member of BusinessNZ, New Zealand's foremost Business Organisation. Council also has strong links to Regulators and Government Departments such as MBIE, EECA and MfE.

One of Council's prime concerns is the safety of lighting products with respect to both lives and property and the industry has an excellent record in this regard through our history of close cooperation with the NZ Energy Safety Service and similar regulatory Bodies.

### **Response to the Review Document.**

Council is very supportive of a Standards structure, believing that without recognition of and adherence to, robust standards, safety and performance would be compromised in our industry. The use of IEC based standards is also supported as a large proportion of lighting equipment sold in New Zealand is imported and mostly originates in other IEC standardised markets.

It is noted from the Paper that Government is equally supportive of the standards process, particularly so when internationally accepted bodies are recognised. However, the recent level of Government Departmental participation has not reflected that support. Since the demise of Government departments such as the Ministry of Works, BIA and NZ Post & Telephone (for example) the industry has witnessed a gradual Government withdrawal of active participation in lighting standards for both design, performance and safety. At one stage this was noted at a Joint Standards level with Australia in 2005, resulting in the de-jointing of a standard (AS2293 – Emergency Lighting) that was cited in the NZ Building Code in 2006. The only active participants from NZ at the time were industry funded delegates who could not be said to fully represent all the NZ stakeholders. At this stage the Standard remains an Australia only document and remains as a cited standard in the NZBC – Clause F6. Recent discussions with representatives from the DBH section of the MBIE have indicated a further withdrawal from the process. Whilst Council is not in favour of highly prescriptive standards, loose "outcome-based" standards as promoted by some officers in Government departments should be avoided. These provide an environment akin to trying to play football on a pitch with few if any rules, where only the goal line is marked, no touchlines and all with the referee absent.

The only serious participation by an NZ Government Department in recent years has been that of EECA's involvement in MEPS standards for light sources and control gear. No doubt this is strictly in line with EECA's mandate. However this was marred early on by a technical decision that was at odds with the market trends and with our Joint Standards partner (Australia) and illustrated the divide between Government and industry. It should be said that EECA has worked a lot more closely with the industry since then and we have managed to avoid a repetition.

There are a number of Amendment A Documents that are in force at present which indicates that NZ's wider interests are not being fully represented at Joint Standards meetings The result is that we have defacto Australian Standards with NZ Amendments enforced by Regulation in

NZ. A body such as Council, which could be considering applying for an SDO status, would not be encouraged by arm's length recognition of the Joint Standards processes by the Government departments concerned.

The industry is pleased to receive some financial support from EECA for its role in Standards participation. This funding covers approximately 30% of the costs of attendance and is primarily set aside for our work as NZ representatives on IEC TC34 Technical Committees. This was taken on partly to ensure NZ had a voice on such a body and partly to support Australia in its efforts to see IEC Standards remaining suitable parent documents for our mutual Joint Standards documents. The other 70% of the funding is from industry levies and fees. It should be noted that Australian Government departments support our sister body (LCA) for 66.6% of the costs of a similar role.

Lighting standards represent an area of interest to both the Safety Regulator and the Energy Sector, as both use them as part of the regulatory framework. The adoption of IEC Standards as robust and viable documents by both the Government and industry is therefore a logical and practical objective. It should be the mandate of any SDO formed to oversee the standards for our industry. However, given the recent distancing of Departments from participation, the industry remains unconvinced by the Review's statements regarding Government support for the Standards process. Council is therefore unable to see any benefit from taking on such a costly and time consuming role as an SDO when the results could be subjugated or even overturned by Government policy.

## Summary

1. Council supports the appointment of an NSB to oversee the Standards Process. There is considerable experience and IP locked into the present Standards NZ organisation. This should not be overlooked in the formation of any new NSB.
2. The commercial viability of such a body is obviously questionable; therefore public funds need to be allocated. We understand that NZ is the only ISO country which expects its NSB to run at a financial surplus.
3. The Lighting Industry is willing to continue to participate in Standards work, however the existing level of public funding is insufficient to support a long term sustainable commitment.
4. Council does not see that adopting IEC standards with the usual modifications for "Country Specific" requirements as particularly onerous provided the Parent standard covers our basic requirements.
5. The future of robust, safe and sustainable standards for a financially viable industry will require active and financial participation from both industry and Government. Council's opinion is that this process should be participated in by Government particularly where safety and sustainability matters are debated.
6. Lighting technology has evolved as rapidly as any other comparable industry in recent years and we do not see the rate of change declining in the near future. It is therefore imperative that standards are maintained – and enforced - to ensure that best practice products are supported against questionable products from low cost producers and countries. This is not going to occur without Government taking a visible role in process.