

UL STANDARDS & ENGAGEMENT POSITION STATEMENT

UL Standards & Engagement Adherence to the World Trade Organization Principles for the Development of International Standards

March 20, 2026

The World Trade Organization is a global organization overseeing trade, its rules, disputes, and negotiations among nations. The WTO promotes the use of international standards and outlines Technical Barriers to Trade to facilitate fairness in global trade.¹ The WTO TBT Agreement outlines the Code of Good Practice for the Preparation, Adoption and Application of Standards to further facilitate international trade and standards.

UL Standards & Engagement is a nonprofit global standards development organization that translates safety science into action through standards development, partnerships, and advocacy. We collaborate with stakeholders from around the world to develop standards that guide the safety, performance, and sustainability of products and services worldwide. Our standards are informed by safety research, scientific expertise, and stakeholder input, and are developed through consensus to deliver solutions for products and systems that include (but are not limited to) household appliances, smoke alarms, building materials, batteries and battery-powered devices, cybersecurity, sustainability, and emerging technologies such as autonomous products.

We support WTO's multilateral, rule-based system calling for harmonization of standards and regulations to facilitate international trade and

economic integration. Our standards development process follows the principles laid out by the WTO/TBT Committee Decision on Principles for the Development of International Standards, Guides and Recommendations.

ULSE's Adherence to the WTO/TBT Committee Decision Is Demonstrated in Multiple Ways:

Transparency

Notification of new and revised standards proposals and their corresponding ballots and public commenting period are announced through electronic platforms freely available to the public through ULSE's Collaborative Standards Development System. CSDS is our online collaboration platform, which provides free access to any current proposals involving new or existing ULSE standards and their pertinent information. Our open process allows anyone to submit proposals to develop a new standard or suggest revisions to published standards, as well as to review and provide comments on proposals submitted by others. Interested parties can also visit our interactive Standards Activity Report on CSDS, which lists real-time status updates for ULSE standards currently going through development or revision and their associated statuses.²

¹ https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/tbt_e/tbt_info_e.htm

² <https://csds.ul.org/StandardsActivity>

As part of our requirements as an accredited SDO in the United States and Canada, we notify stakeholders of projects for new or revised ULSE standards that could potentially affect them. This is done through external platforms such as the American National Standards Institute's Standards Action for U.S.-based stakeholders and the Standards Council of Canada's Notice of Intent, as well as the publication of the ULSE Work Program for Canadian stakeholders.

ULSE provides its free Digital View program to allow registered users to view online copies of all current editions and revisions of ULSE standards. This program enables accessibility to ULSE's library of standards no cost. Access Digital View, browse and buy ULSE standards and other documents at [ShopULstandards.com](https://shopulstandards.com).

Openness

ULSE's technical committees are the consensus bodies reviewing and approving proposals of new ULSE standards or revision of UL standards. Getting involved in these technical committees is open to anyone, at no cost, and without geographic limitations. All TC members and non-voting stakeholders can participate in all stages of the ULSE standards development process from new proposal submissions for a new topic or revision to a standard, attendance at TC meetings, and through proposal review and comment resolution. Only TC members may vote to approve proposals. All stages of the ULSE standards development process are managed on CSDS at CSDS.ul.org.

Aside from being a platform for TC activities, CSDS also serves as a platform for any interested parties to stay in touch with ULSE standards development as subscribers. Upon registration, users may subscribe to any standards about which they would like to receive notifications, submit comments on existing proposals, and submit new proposals. This open access to CSDS provides a fair, non-discriminatory, and transparent environment for all interested parties.

Consensus and Impartiality

Our stakeholders are essential to the development of ULSE standards through their participation in technical committees, stakeholder groups, and as subscribers who receive information on proposals, ballots, and any changes being made to the standards. ULSE standards are developed as consensus-based standards by balanced groups of TC members that vote on proposals. Each TC is managed by the chair and project manager, who are dedicated ULSE staff members responsible for administering the process and do not have voting rights. Anyone, regardless of TC membership, can submit new proposals and comments to be considered.

Each TC is composed of a balanced group of individuals representing various interest categories to help ensure that various groups and viewpoints are considered, and to avoid dominance by any stakeholder category. All comments are considered and responded to for any of our ballots as part of the consensus process. Stakeholders can view TC rosters, proposals, and the votes and comments on a proposal. The consensus process follows clear due process, which has been reviewed internally and through independent external assessments, which also includes a formal appeals process to address any technical and procedural disputes.

Effectiveness and Relevance

ULSE relies on its TC members and stakeholders to help develop robust standards. Our stakeholders represent diverse groups such as government, manufacturers, academia, consumers, trade associations, regulators, and other authorities, along with other varied vested interests. Our stakeholders represent more than 60 countries and participate in the development of ULSE standards at varied levels. Voting on ULSE standards and other related official activities such as commenting are conducted entirely online. Attendance at face-to-face TC meetings is encouraged (but not mandatory) to create a level playing field for international participants. An increasing number of virtual meetings are being held to support accessibility.

ULSE TCs are managed and monitored by full time staff members dedicated to the effective compliance and implementation of ULSE's standards development procedure, which adheres to WTO TBT principles for development of international standards without any unnecessary delays. ULSE standards development is supported by ULSE's own engineering team, which provides technical expertise to drive greater sustainability and relevance of standards documents. ULSE employs a Data Science and an Insights team to review market needs — especially in emerging fields to identify new products and technologies to standardize. ULSE is also supported by its affiliate organization, UL Research Institutes, which specializes in fire safety, electrochemical safety, chemical safety, digital safety, and materials discovery, to provide a broad scientific base for new standards development.³

The combination of stakeholders and dedicated in-house capabilities helps ensure ULSE can be responsive to rapidly changing industry needs without compromising its commitment to this set of international principles.

Coherence

ULSE is a strong proponent of global standards harmonization. ULSE standards are not created to overlap with other international standards. At the international level, ULSE supports harmonization by direct participation and contribution to other international standardizing bodies such as the International Electrotechnical Commission, the International Organization for Standardization, and the National Fire Protection Association.

We are accredited by ANSI and the SCC to develop and publish national standards for the United States and Canada. ULSE is authorized by the Dirección General de Normas to develop standards in Mexico. This allows us to develop trinational standards, which contributes directly to standards harmonization for these three countries. Any new ULSE standards

projects are brought to the attention of other SDOs through timely announcements to avoid potential duplication.

Through global collaboration agreements and joint workshops, ULSE proactively works with national standards bodies around the world to solicit input, exchange information, and foster adoption of ULSE standards in support of standards harmonization goals.

Development Dimension

ULSE has a dedicated collaboration program for standards development organizations around the world, including those from developing countries. Under such a collaboration framework, developing countries utilize ULSE resources to strengthen their national standardization systems. These resources include access to the catalog of ULSE standards, participation on ULSE TCs, and adoption and use of ULSE standards to address national and local needs. ULSE is committed to providing technical assistance to developing countries and raising awareness to more international stakeholders. The program is supported by ULSE regional managers around the world.

As demonstrated by our long track record of standards development driven by safety science, ULSE not only adheres to the WTO TBT principles, but we aim to be proactive in each of its areas to eliminate barriers and engage stakeholders throughout the world. These principles allow ULSE to be more effective in supporting international trade, prosperity, safety, and sustainability — keeping us aligned to our mission of working for a safer world.

For further information, please visit [ULSE.org](https://ul.org)

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³ <https://ul.org/about>