

ASSE & ANSI

A Brief History

Companies and other organizations use national voluntary consensus standards to establish good industry practices, enhance compliance with OSHA standards, reference as the latest state-of-the-art practices and technology, and utilize when no regulatory standards address certain topics. ASSE currently serves as secretariat for 12 families of ANSI consensus standards.

ASSE's standards activities have had a long, rich history dating back nearly 90 years. The Society has appointed representatives to other organization standards committees, such as AIHA, NFPA, ASTM International and International Organization for Standardization (ISO). Since today's SH&E professionals are expected to have expertise in everything from environmental regulations to workers' compensation, serving on a standards committee can be an effective way to influence the profession by setting the benchmarks of managing SH&E and risk, maintaining professional certifications, establishing credibility and broadening experience.

As secretariat, ASSE's committees develop and maintain ANSI standards, ensure that ANSI procedures for standards review are followed and publish the final products. In addition, ASSE has representatives on many other ANSI standards committees, as well as members who serve on other national and international standards committees representing their organizations' interests. ASSE and its members have provided this service since 1921.

Early Days: Sponsorship/Secretariats

ASSE accepted its first secretariat position (then called sponsorship) in December 1921 for the A14 Ladder Standards project (see "A14 History" sidebar). At that time, the Society was headquartered in New York, NY. The project was officially inaugurated 10 days after ASSE accepted the offer. Such quick action was only possible because of the Society's physical proximity to the then American Engineering Standards Committee. This

process is now more deliberative and much more transparent.

The A14 standards project had several cosecretariats, but ASSE remained the administrative secretariat until 1973-74 when it transferred that role to the Alliance of American Insurers (then American Mutual Insurance Alliance).

ASSE was awarded a second secretariat in the early 1960s for A92, Elevating Work Platforms. At the time, only one standards project existed that addressed the growing use of boom trucks with multiple work features in the electrical transmission industry.

In 1969, A92.2, Vehicle-Mounted Elevating and Rotating Work Platforms, was adopted. In 1971, A92.1 (now A14.7), Safety Requirements for Manually Propelled Mobile Work Platforms and Scaffolds, was adopted.

Due to economic pressures and other factors in the early 1970s, ASSE withdrew as the A14 and A92 secretariats. However, 12 years later, ASSE returned to standards development.

A1264 Standards Project

In the 1990s, ASSE became more active in the standards arena. One project it took on was the consolidated A1264 standards committee. This project brought together two standards: A12, which addressed requirements for railings, toe boards and wall openings, and A64, which focused on specifications for industrial stairs. By acquiring these standards, the Society hoped to reposition itself as a key player in standards development. It also set the stage for ASSE to become involved in tribometry (the tribometer is a device for measuring coefficient of friction).

In 1993, a second project, A1264.2, was initiated to address the provisions of slip resistance. A1264.2 was originally approved in 2001 and was revised in 2006. The third revision has been balloted and is currently under review by its subcommittee.

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Thomas F. Bresnahan

Frank L. Burg

Wayne C. Christensen

Chris Gates

J. Terrence Grisim

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Larry Oldendorf

Robert Potts

John Rabovsky

A14 History

The American Standards Association, a predecessor to ANSI, gave the designation A14 to the ladder committee in 1923 when the first safety standard for portable wooden ladders was approved. Since then, advancements in technology have led to ladders being constructed from other materials, such as metal and reinforced synthetic fibers. Many types and styles of ladders have evolved or been invented, performance tests for ladders have been developed and on-product labeling has emerged. Today's A14 group consists of several subcommittees that develop standards.

Note. Adapted from the American Ladder Institute.

Two-Column Format

The two-column format for standards provides in the second, right-hand column an explanation or information demonstrating implementation of the standard requirement in the first, left-hand column. ASSE has used this widely accepted format to provide improved understanding and utility for those using its standards. ASSE also promotes the use of appendices in standards.

Using a two-column format, A1264.2 sets forth provisions in workplaces for protecting persons where they could slip and fall as a result of surface characteristics or conditions (see "Two-Column Format" sidebar). ASSE also produced "Technical Report: Using Variable Angle Tribometers for Measurement of the Slip Resistance of Walkway Surfaces" (ANSI/ASSE A1264.3-2007).

A14 Standards Project

In 1990, ASSE became cosecretariat of the A14 Ladder Standards Project with American Ladder Institute (ALI). ASSE determined that ALI's resources and philosophy could better serve the standard's future needs. ALI eventually became the sole secretariat of the A14 ladder standards.

A10 Standards Project

In 2004, ASSE became secretariat for the A10 Accredited Standards Committee (ASC) for Construction and Demolition Operations. This committee was originally founded in the early 1940s and is one of the oldest ANSI-accredited standards committees in the U.S. The committee has almost 50 accredited standards and projects running from contractor management to ergonomics.

Z15 Standards Project

The Z15 (formerly D15) Motor Vehicle Fleet Operations standard was established on Feb. 27, 2001. While promoted as the Motor Fleet Statistical standard, the project grew to include other standards addressing motor fleet programs, inspections, maintenance, related equipment, and statistical analysis and nomenclature of motor fleet operations. The Z15.1-2012 standard, Safe Practices for Motor Vehicle Operations, aims to help businesses reduce roadway crashes and the high costs associated with them. It provides guidelines for developing a motor

vehicle safety program for employers with one vehicle or a fleet of hundreds, be they passenger vehicles or light to medium trucks.

After public review, the revised standard, Safe Practices for Motor Vehicle Operations (ANSI/ASSE Z15.1-2012), was approved by ANSI on March 28, 2012.

Z87 Standards Project

In 1988, National Society for the Prevention of Blindness (NSPB) withdrew as secretariat of the Z87 Eye and Face Protection standards project. ANSI urged ASSE to take on this secretariat, which it did in February 1989. In 2003, this secretariat was transferred to the International Safety Equipment Association. However, ASSE has maintained strong interest in eye injury prevention by engaging with NSPB's successor association, Prevent Blindness, and offering public service publications.

Z117 Standards Project

The confined space standards project lay dormant since 1975 when Ameri-

can Petroleum Institute dropped it as a project. However, as OSHA moved toward a regulation, the project was revitalized under ASSE.

The Z117 standard, originally issued in 1988, was unique in several ways. First, extraordinary measures were taken to have various industries help develop the most state-of-the-art procedures for the standard. Second, OSHA was accepted to sit on the committee as an observer to gain insight into the issues that would need to be addressed in any pending regulation development. Perhaps recognizing the committee's expertise, OSHA's confined space standard, issued 4 years later, resembles ANSI Z117. The current Z117 standard was released in 2009.

Z244 Standards Project

In March 1973, the ASC Z244 held its first organizational meeting in New York, NY, to develop a standard on lockout/tagout. NSC was as the initial secretariat and provided a draft document, "Guidelines for a Lockout Program" (November 1971) that the committee used as a reference for deliberations.

By the end of 1975, the standard development work was complete, and public review and balloting were finished. However, various administrative and procedural problems precluded the standard from being released officially.

In March 1982, Z.2441 American National Standard for Personnel

Current Z359 Projects

- ANSI/ASSE Z359.8-200x: Requirements for Rope Access
- ANSI/ASSE Z359.11-200x: Safety Requirements for Full Body Harness for Personal Fall Arrest Systems (PFAS)
- ANSI/ASSE Z359.15-200x: Safety Requirements for Vertical Lifelines for Personal Fall Arrest Systems (PFAS)
- ANSI/ASSE Z359.16-200x: Safety Requirements for Fall Arresters for Personal Fall Arrest Systems (PFAS)
- ANSI/ASSE Z359.17-200x: Safety Requirements for Horizontal Lifelines for Personal Fall Arrest Systems (PFAS)
- ANSI/ASSE Z359.18-200x: Safety Requirements for Anchorage Connectors for Personal Fall Arrest Systems (PFAS)

Protection—Lockout/Tagout of Energy Sources—Minimum Safety Requirements was approved and published. In 1987, the standard was reaffirmed without any changes in content.

In April 1988, OSHA released a proposed rule, 29 CFR 1910.147, The Control of Hazardous Energy Sources (Lockout/Tagout), which used ANSI Z244.1 as a principal reference source that became a final rule in September 1989. Again in 1992, the ANSI standard was reaffirmed without change. ASSE became secretariat of the Z244 Lockout/Tagout Committee in 2003. The standard was revised in 2003 and was reaffirmed without technical change in 2008.

Z359 Standards Project

In 1985, the Z359 Standard for Fall Protection Equipment project was initiated. In 1998, ASSE became the U.S. Technical Advisory Group (TAG) for Fall Protection Equipment within ISO. Shortly after Z359.1, Safety Requirements for Personal Fall Arrest Systems, Subsystems and Components, was approved in 1993, initiatives were established for three subcommittees to work on other phases of the project.

Around this time, the Society recognized the valuable role it could play in standards activity. The Society expanded its standards development staff, who urged that ASSE establish other projects within the overall Z359 project. The original Z359.1 was approved in 1992, reaffirmed in 1999 and revised in 2007.

Eventually, these projects evolved into the ANSI/ASSE Z359 Fall Protection Code, a series of voluntary national consensus standards to protect general industry workers from fall hazards. A second version of the code was released in 2009. See the “Current Z359 Projects” sidebar for ongoing projects.

Z390 Standards Project

In 1992, the Z390 Hydrogen Sulfide Training standards project was initiated. First approved on May 26, 1995, the standard has been translated into Spanish for training purposes in Mexico and South American countries. It has also been translated into Chinese as part of ASSE’s global initiative to expand its standards outreach. A

ASSE Members Representing the Society on ANSI, NFPA & ISO Standards Committees

- **John Alderman, P.E., CSP**, NFPA 101, Industrial, Storage and Special Occupancies (High Rises)
- **Shane Ashby, CSP**, NFPA 99, Healthcare Facilities
- **David Bondor, CSP, ARM**, NFPA 101, Detention & Correctional Occupancies
- **Wayne Brannan, ARM**, NFPA 99, Healthcare Facilities
- **David Brayton**, A10, Construction Safety
- **Thomas F. Bresnahan, CSP**, NFPA 170, Signs & Symbols
- **Richard Casey**, Z87, Eye & Face Protection
- **Bob Coffey**, NFPA 472, HazMat Response Personnel
- **Dave Crowley, CSP, CHMM, GET**, Z15, Motor Vehicle Fleet Safety
- **Sam Dannaway, P.E.**, NFPA 101, Healthcare
- **Steven DiPilla, ARM**, NFPA 101, Means of Egress
- **David Dodge, P.E., CSP**, Z244, Lockout/Tagout of Energy Sources; NFPA 101, Merchant/Business
- **Tom Fleming**, Z136, Lasers
- **Paul Frantz**, Z390, Hydrogen Sulfide Safety Training; Z535, Signs, Symbols & Colors
- **Carl Griffith, CPEA**, Z359, Fall Protection Equipment
- **Harold Grossman II, CHMM**, NFPA 30, Flammable & Combustible Liquids Technical Committee on Operations
- **Neal Growney, P.E.**, O1, Woodworking Equipment
- **Ed Grund Jr., P.E., CSP**, Z117, Confined Spaces
- **Jubal Hammernik, P.E.**, Z359, Fall Protection Equipment
- **Richard Harley, CSP**, Z88, Respiratory Protection
- **Jack Hirschmann Jr.**, Z87, Eye & Face Protection
- **Kimberlie Johnson, CSP, CFPS**, NFPA 101, Merchant/Business
- **George Karosas, P.E., CSP**, B11, Metal Working Machines; Z244, Lockout/Tagout of Energy Sources
- **Mike Lorenzo, CSP**, A14, Ladder Standards
- **Bruce Main, P.E., CSP**, B11, Metal Working Machines
- **Bill Marletta, CSP**, A117, Accessible & Usable Buildings & Facilities
- **Jeff Nesbitt, CSP, CIH**, Z9, Ventilation
- **Walt Nickens, CSP, CHCM**, Z136, Lasers
- **Larry Oldendorf, P.E.**, A1264, Railing/Industrial Stairs
- **Paul Osley, P.E., CSP, CIM, CHMM**, Z9, Ventilation
- **Frank Perry, P.E., CSP**, Z490, SH&E Training
- **Tim Rhoades, P.E., CPE**, Z390, Hydrogen Sulfide Safety Training; Z535, Signs, Symbols & Colors
- **Kathy Seabrook, CSP, CMIOSH**, Z10, Occupational Safety & Health Systems; TC207, ISO 14000/14001
- **Ken Shorter, CSP, ARM**, A10, Construction Safety
- **Jim Smith, CSP**, Z10, Occupational Safety & Health Systems
- **Michael Stelzer, P.E., CSP**, NFPA 101, Industrial/Storage
- **L.A. Weaver III, CSP**, O1, Woodworking Equipment
- **Barry Weissman, CSP, CHMM**, NFPA 472, HazMat Response Personnel
- **Mary Winkler, CSP**, A117, Accessible & Usable Buildings & Facilities
- **Bryant Winterholer, P.E., CSP**, TC207, ISO 14000/14001
- **Edward Ziegler, P.E., CSP**, Z49, Welding & Cutting

reaffirmed version of the standard was released in 2010.

Z490 Standards Project

The Z490 Best Practices for SH&E Training project began as a result of a proposal to create a third-party accreditation to certify the quality of SH&E training programs. The first step toward developing such quality training was the creation of an ANSI project, which was approved in 1997. After organizing the full committee of 40 members, the first meeting was held on April 1, 1998, and the standard itself was approved on July 2, 2001.

On approval, Z490 Committee officers were asked to present to the National Advisory Committee on Occupational Safety and Health and inform it of the various issues covered by the standard, which would then be available to OSHA to fill a potential standard need. While OSHA has not incorporated Z490.1, an agency in the U.S. Homeland Security Department has done so in its regulations. And as required by ANSI procedures, the first revision was developed, balloted and approved in 2009, thus keeping these effective best practices current.

Z590 Standards Project

The Z590 Safety Professional Competency Standards Project was established in January 1998. The Society identified a need for an ANSI standards project, along with other related initiatives, to promote the SH&E profession through national consensus standards. While the Z590.1 draft standard, Criteria for Establishing Levels of Competence in Certification in the Safety Profession, has met some resistance, its future looks bright.

For example, Z590.2, Scope and Function of the Professional Safety Position, was approved. For professional consultants involved in litigation, this standard is an excellent reference to the often-asked question, What does a safety professional do?

A third standard in this series, Z590.3, Prevention Through Design: Guidelines for Addressing Occupational Hazards and Risks in Design and Redesign Processes, was approved in 2011.

U.S. TAG on Fall Protection: First Entry Into International Standards Arena

The U.S. TAG consists of more than 20 entities with an interest in fall

protection, including governmental agencies, fall arrest systems users, professional societies representing safety professionals, fall arrest equipment manufacturers and employers of those who use the equipment. ANSI accredited the U.S. TAG on Fall Protection in October 1999 with ASSE designated as the TAG administrator. The official vote on such standards is cast by ANSI, which is the U.S. voting representative to ISO.

U.S. TAG on Risk Management

ASSE also is U.S. TAG to the ISO Technical Management Board Working Group (ISO/TMB/RM) on Risk Management. Voting ISO countries approved the creation during 2003-04. U.S. TAG for Risk Management uses a consensus process to advise ANSI of how the U.S. should vote and comment to ISO (ANSI is the voting organization for the U.S.) and develops the ISO 31000 series of risk management standards.

ANSI/ASSE/ISO Risk Management Standards

ASSE helped develop three risk management standards intended to streamline best practices for SH&E professionals working in the risk management and insurance industry. They received final ANSI approval in 2011:

For More Information

•ANSI Essential Requirements: Due Process Requirements for American National Standards

<http://goo.gl/KTFUi>

•ASSE Position Statement on Consensus Standards & Governmental Regulations in Occupational Safety & Health

www.asse.org/publications/standards/docs/PositionStatementonConsensusStandards.pdf

•Memorandum of Understanding Between the Occupational Safety and Health Administration and the American National Standards Institute

www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owadispl.show_document?p_table=MOU&p_id=323

•Safeguarding: Are ANSI Standards Really Voluntary?

www.ansi.org/news_publications/other_documents/safeguarding.aspx#.UVsM56t35nd

•What Is the Difference Between an OSHA Rule and an ANSI Standard?

www.lomontimt.com/documents/Dembystandardsarticle3-21-2006.pdf

ASSE's Standards Development Committee

Frank L. Burg, CSP

Jeffery C. Camplin, CSP, CPEA

Chris Gates, ARM

J. Terrence Grisim, CSP, ARM, CPSM

Timothy Healey

C. Gary Lopez, CSP

Robert Potts, CSP

John Rabovsky, CSP, ARM

Safety Resources Catalog

- ANSI/ASSE/ISO Guide 73 (Z690.1-2011) Vocabulary for Risk Management (identical national adoption of ISO Guide 73:2009);

- ANSI/ASSE/ISO 31000 (Z690.2-2011) Risk Management—Principles and Guidelines (identical national adoption of ISO 31000:2009);

- ANSI/ASSE/IEC/ISO 31010 (Z690.3-2011) Risk Assessment Techniques (identical national adoption of ISO/IEC 31010:2009).

The Future of ASSE Standards Activity

ASSE's standards development and advocacy are a key mission. Through its Standards Development Committee (SDC), the Society seeks new areas where standards can contribute to and enhance safety and risk management. These enhancements include the way standards are sold and distributed.

Included in this distribution approach is the increasing move toward electronic delivery of standards on new devices that require more sophisticated delivery applications. As the world has become more technology centered, so has the standards industry. A decade ago, standards were not even sold electronically; now more than 70% sold are in digital format. To better serve its members, the Society, through its SDC, will continue to explore new delivery platforms for members.

The SDC, in conjunction with ASSE's Government Affairs group, has met with OSHA to urge the agency to adopt more ANSI voluntary standards instead of using the traditional standards-development process. The goal is to help OSHA enhance its ability to enact necessary standards thanks to ANSI requirements, which would help ensure that these standards are updated on a regular basis. Initial problems encountered with this approach have been the legal restrictions OSHA has on its standards-development process and the possibility that such standards would need to be provided to the public at no charge.

ASSE's mission for the next 100 years will include significant standards-development work as an intrinsic part of the Society's advancement of the SH&E profession. For a complete list of ASSE standards, visit www.asse.org/cartpage.php?link=standards.



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