



PARTNERS FOR A SAFER WORKPLACE

THE NEW WMIA/ANSI COLLABORATION WILL HELP AFFECT GLOBAL WOOD MACHINERY STANDARDS.

The Woodworking Machinery Industry Association has instituted a partnership with the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) on the administration of a new ANSI-accredited U.S./ Technical Advisory Group (TAG) for ISO/TC 39/ SC 4, an international committee developing global standards for woodworking machinery. WMIA will provide funding and technical support for the effort and ANSI will serve as the US/TAG administrating body, managing the day-to-day operations and providing process and procedural guidance.

“The mission of the US/TAG is to thoroughly review the ISO standards for woodworking machines and produce an ISO standard which can later be nationally adopted as an ANSI-approved American National Standard,” says Mark Craig, CEO of Giben America and WMIA ANSI Chair. Craig is responsible for the activities related to the committee and its participation in the ANSI ASC 01.

The Accredited Standards Committee 01 (ASC 01) is able to write and propose American standards to ANSI for consideration and eventual publication. Until recently, Craig says, WMIA’s

main relationship with ANSI was with the Wood Machinery Manufacturers of America and their role on the ASC 01 in regards to writing standards from a North American perspective.

The U.S. stakeholders participating on the US/TAG now will also be responsible for determining U.S. national consensus positions on any draft international standards under development in the ISO (International Standards Organization) committee.

According to Craig, global standards are reached after careful consideration and discussion between all participating members of the TC39 SC4 committee. Everyone has a vote and opportunities to raise concerns and discuss comments. If any topic becomes too technical for general discussion, a special Technical Committee (TC) can be formed to discuss topics in more detail.

“We firmly believe that harmonizing U.S. and ISO (world) standards will benefit the entire industry including machinery manufacturers, both domestic and abroad, as well as end users,” says John Park, WMIA president.

The importance of standards cannot be over-

emphasized. “Standards represent guidelines,” Craig says. “Guidelines create clarity and clarity in standards helps the manufacturers to design better, safer machines. Standards also allow business owners and machine operators to enjoy safer and more standardized working conditions, rendering the workplace safer.”

Everyone generally benefits from safety standards, and Craig says that although large production shops may tend to be more safety oriented by nature, properly thought out and implemented standards can benefit woodworking facilities of all sizes — production or custom — without negatively affecting potential output.

“Standards help simplify the design process as they represent rules and guidelines to follow,” Craig says. “Simplicity generally translates to cost savings for manufacturers. For the end users, machine standards allow for safer working environments therefore, less potential accidents, less accident-related costs and less lost production time.”

Persons interested in participating or learning more about the US/TAG should contact the WMIA at info@WMIA.org. ■