

Policies & Procedures - 5.14.1 Operating Procedures for a Standards Development Sponsor - Individual

1.0 Introduction

In today's marketplace, standards development plays a critical role in product development and market share. In the IEEE, the responsibility for how a standard originates and evolves is managed by a [Sponsor](#). It is essential in the management of a standard's development to avoid any actions by the Sponsor or the participants that result in a violation of procedures.

Adherence to these Operating Procedures is an essential asset in determining the applicability of IEEE's indemnification policy.

These Operating Procedures outline the orderly transaction of business of ComSoc Standards Board (henceforth known as the "Sponsor") for standards projects. For the development of standards, openness and due process must apply, which means that any person with a direct professed and material interest who meets the requirements of these Operating Procedures has a right to participate by

- a. Expressing a position and its basis,
- b. Having that position considered, and
- c. Appealing if adversely affected.

Due process allows for equity and fair play. In addition, due process requires openness and balance (i.e., the standards development process should strive to have a balance of interests and not to be dominated by any single interest category). For the IEEE Standards Sponsor ballot, there shall be a balance of interests without dominance by any single interest category.

Participants engaged in the development of standards must comply with applicable federal, state, and international laws. In addition, for standards matters, the latest versions of several documents take precedence over this document in the following order:

New York State Not-for-Profit Corporation Law
IEEE Certificate of Incorporation
[IEEE Constitution](#)

[IEEE Bylaws](#)

[IEEE Policies](#)

IEEE Board of Directors Resolutions

[IEEE Standards Association Operations Manual](#)

IEEE-SA Board of Governors Resolutions

[IEEE-SA Standards Board Bylaws](#)

[IEEE-SA Standards Board Operations Manual](#)

IEEE-SA Standards Board Resolutions

Anything the Sponsor creates is hierarchically subordinate to the documents and resolutions that are listed above. The Operating Procedures of the Sponsor are hierarchically superior to other documents of the Sponsor. *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised (RONR)* is the recommended guide on questions of parliamentary procedure not addressed in these procedures.

This Sponsor's hierarchy, that is subordinate to the above hierarchy of governing documents, is as follows:

[IEEE TAB Operations Manual](#)

IEEE Technical Activities Board TAB Resolutions

[IEEE ComSoc Constitution](#)

[IEEE ComSoc Bylaws](#)

[IEEE ComSoc Policies and Procedures](#)

IEEE ComSoc Board of Governors Resolutions

IEEE ComSoc Standards Board Policies and Procedures

IEEE Standards Working Group Policies and Procedures

Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised

1.1 IEEE ComSoc Sponsor scope

The ComSoc Standards Board sponsors standards in Communications and Networking technologies and applications. These include the technical domains and interests reflected in the scope of ComSoc Technical Committees:

- Ad Hoc and Sensor Networks
- Cognitive Networks
- Communications and Information Security
- Communications Quality and Reliability
- Communications Software
- Communications Switching and Routing
- Computer Communications
- Communications Networks
- Internet
- Multimedia Communications
- Network Operations and Management
- Optical Communications and Networking

- Power Line Communications and Networking
- Radio, Satellite & Space, and Wireless Communications and Networks
- Signal Processing and Communications Electronics
- Transmission, Access, and Optical Systems

1.2 Organization of the Sponsor

The Sponsor shall consist of officers (see clause 3), and other members.

2.0 Responsibilities of the Sponsor

The Sponsor, i.e., IEEE ComSoc Standards Board, shall be responsible for at least the following:

- a. Developing proposed IEEE standards and ensuring that they are within the scope of the Sponsor.
- b. Initiating and overseeing ballots of proposed IEEE standards within its scope, including:
 1. Approving PARs from a subgroup of the Sponsor,
 2. Submitting a proposed Project Authorization Request (PAR) to the IEEE-SA Standards Board for consideration. Following approval of the PAR, the Sponsor shall submit necessary requests for extension, modification, or withdrawal of the PAR as required by the IEEE-SA Operations Manual, and
 3. Submitting draft standards from a subgroup of the Sponsor to the IEEE Standards Association for Sponsor Ballot.
- c. Maintaining standards developed by the Sponsor in accordance with the [IEEE-SA Standards Board Operations Manual](#)
- d. Responding to requests for interpretations of the standards developed by the Sponsor
- e. Acting on other matters requiring Sponsor effort, as provided in these Procedures
- f. Cooperating with other appropriate standards development organizations
- g. Protecting against actions taken in the name of the Sponsor without proper Sponsor authorization
- h. Reporting annually to the [IEEE-SA Standards Board](#)
- i. Communicating with the IEEE-SA Standards Board on specific Sponsor activities as needed, and
- j. Conducting Expert Reviews of draft PARs, Standards and other Technical Documents produced by Study or Working Groups.

3.0 IEEE ComSoc Standards Development Sponsor Officers

There shall be a Chair, a Vice Chair, and a Secretary. The term of each office shall be two calendar years. The service of the ComSoc Standards Board Chair shall not exceed two consecutive terms. The term of service of the subgroup sponsor chair, the Vice Chair and Secretary of ComSoc Standards Board and subgroup sponsor may serve consecutive two-year

terms until a successor is available.

Officers shall be members of any grade (except undergraduate students) of the IEEE, ComSoc, and IEEE-SA. The officers shall organize the Sponsor; oversee the Sponsor's compliance with these Operating Procedures; and submit proposed documents approved by the Sponsor (with supporting documentation) for appropriate review and approval by the IEEE-SA Standards Board. Officers shall read and be familiar with training material available through [IEEE Standards Development Online](#).

3.1 Election or appointment of officers

After appointment of the ComSoc Standards Board Chair (a.k.a. ComSoc Director of Standards) by the IEEE ComSoc President, the ComSoc Standards Board Chair shall appoint a Vice Chair and Secretary for a two year term.

Appointment of Sponsor Chair shall be for two calendar years. The Chair may serve for no more than two consecutive terms.

3.2 Temporary appointments to vacancies

If an office other than the Chair becomes vacant due to resignation, removal, or for another reason, a temporary appointment can be made by the Chair for a period of up to 12 months. A permanent appointment for the vacated office shall be made in accordance with requirements in Clause 3.0 and Clause 3.1 till the end of the Chair's term.

3.3 Removal of officers

An officer (other than the Chair) may be removed by a two-thirds vote of the voting members of the Sponsor. Grounds for removal shall be included in any motion to remove an officer. The officer suggested for removal shall be given an opportunity to make a rebuttal prior to a vote on the motion for removal.

3.4 Responsibilities of officers

The officers of the Sponsor shall manage the day-to-day work of the Sponsor. The officers are responsible for implementing the decisions of the Sponsor and managing the activities that result from those decisions.

3.4.1 Chair

The responsibilities of the Chair include:

- a. Leading Sponsor activity according to all relevant policies and procedures
- b. Forming study groups, as necessary
- c. Appointing a subgroup with responsibility for interpreting of all approved standards
- d. Being objective
- e. Entertaining motions, but not making motions

- f. Not biasing discussions
- g. Delegating necessary functions
- h. Ensuring that all parties have the opportunity to express their views
- i. Setting goals and deadlines, and adhering to them
- j. Being knowledgeable in IEEE standards processes and parliamentary procedures, and ensuring that the processes and procedures are followed
- k. Seeking consensus of the Sponsor as a means of resolving issues
- l. Prioritizing work to best serve the Sponsor and its goals
- m. Complying with the Chair's responsibility with respect to the IEEE-SA Intellectual Property Policies, including but not limited to the IEEE-SA Patent Policy (see [IEEE-SA Standards Board Operations Manual 6.3.2](#)) and [IEEE-SA Copyright Policy](#) (see [IEEE-SA Standards Board Bylaws 7](#))
- n. Submitting approved P&P to the [IEEE-SA Standards Board Audit Committee](#) (AudCom).
- o. Submitting the Sponsor's annual report to the IEEE-SA Standards Board
- p. Submitting an Annual Financial Report (IEEE SA Form L50-S) to the Business Manager, Business Administration, or assignee, for the operation of the Sponsor and all of its subgroups.

3.4.2 Vice Chair

The Vice Chair shall carry out the Chair's duties if the Chair is temporarily unable to do so or chooses to recuse him- or herself (e.g., to speak for or against a motion).

3.4.3 Secretary

The responsibilities of the Secretary include:

- a. Scheduling meetings in coordination with the Chair and distributing a meeting notice at least 30 calendar days before face-to-face meetings and seven calendar days before telecons
- b. Distributing the agenda at least 14 calendar days before face-to-face meetings and seven calendar days before telecons—notification of the potential for action shall be included in any distributed agendas for meetings
- c. Conducting electronic voting
- d. Recording minutes of each meeting and publishing them within 60 calendar days of the end of the meeting
- e. Creating and maintaining the participant roster and submitting it to the IEEE Standards Department annually
- f. Being responsible for the management and distribution of Sponsor documentation
- g. Maintaining lists of unresolved issues, action items, and assignments
- h. Recording attendance of all attendees
- i. Maintaining a current list of the names of the voting members and distributing it to ComSoc Standards Board members upon request
- j. Forwarding all changes to the roster of voting members to the Chair
- k. Collecting Working Group financial reports (forms L50S) and creating a composite financial

report per IEEE-SA requirements

4.0 Membership

4.1 Voting membership

Each member of ComSoc Standards Board is expected to attend meetings *in person or by teleconference*. Attendance at a meeting via teleconferencing and/or electronic means (e.g., Internet conferencing) counts toward the attendance requirements. Members of the Standards Board are eligible to vote during the meeting if they attended at least one of the two immediately previous meetings.

4.1.1 Application

A request for membership shall be addressed to the Chair, indicating the applicant's professed and/or material interest in the Board's work, qualifications, and willingness to actively participate.

4.2 Review of membership

The Chair shall review the voting membership list at every meeting. Voting members are expected to fulfill the obligations of active participation as defined in Clause 4.1. When a voting member is found in habitual default of these obligations, the Chair shall consider the matter for appropriate action, which may include termination of membership.

4.3 Membership roster

The Secretary shall maintain a current and accurate Sponsor roster. ComSoc Standards Board roster shall be public. Due to privacy concerns, the roster for sponsor subgroups shall not be distributed except to the IEEE-SA Board of Governors, IEEE-SA Standards Board, and IEEE-SA staff unless all Sponsor members have submitted their written approval for such distribution

The roster shall include the following:

- a. Title of the Sponsor and its designation
- b. Scope of the Sponsor
- c. Officers: Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary
- d. Members: Name, e-mail address, and affiliation for each member.
- e. For each subgroup: subgroup title, Chair, and names, e-mail addresses, and affiliations of all members

4.4 Membership list

The Secretary shall maintain a current and accurate membership list. The membership list of ComSoc Standards Board can be posted on the Sponsor web site, included in ComSoc directory, and can be publically distributed. The membership list shall be limited to the following:

- a. Title of the Committee and its designation
- b. Scope of the Committee
- c. Officers: Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary (Treasurer)
- d. Members: Name, affiliation, email address, and mailing address

The subgroup sponsor membership list shall be limited to the following:

- a. Title of the Subgroup and its designation
- b. Scope of the Subgroup
- c. Officers: Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer
- d. Members: Name and affiliation

5.0 Subgroups created by the Sponsor

5.1 Administrative subgroups

When one or more standing subcommittees are formed to expedite the administrative work of the Sponsor (e.g., AdCom, ExCom), their formation (and later disbandment) requires a majority vote of the Sponsor as defined in sub clause 7.1..

An Oversight Committee may be formed to oversee operation of a Standard Development Working Group. The formation, the roster, the charter, and responsibilities of the Oversight Committee require a majority approval of ComSoc Standards Board. The ComSoc Standards Board shall attain approval of the Oversight Committee creation from ComSoc Board of Governors and it shall be subject to review by the IEEE-SA Standards Board at its discretion.

5.2 Other subgroups

The formation and disbandment of subgroups other than administrative subgroups (e.g., Working Groups, Technical Subcommittees, and Writing Groups) require approval by a majority vote of the Sponsor. The Chair of a subgroup shall be appointed by the Chair of the Sponsor. The scope and duties delegated to the subgroup shall be approved at the time it is formed, and subsequent changes in scope or duties shall also require approval by a majority vote of the Sponsor. The scope, duties, and membership of all subgroups shall be annually reviewed by the Sponsor. The charge to the subgroup shall clearly state which of the following complementary activities is appropriate:

1. The subgroup is responsible for the definitive content of one or more documents, and for responding to views and objections thereon. Such subgroups shall maintain a membership roster and shall comply with the provisions for preparing standard(s).
2. The subgroup is responsible for assisting the Sponsor (for example, drafting all or a portion of a document, drafting responses to comments, drafting public statements on standards, or other purely advisory functions).

A Standards Development Working Group Chair is appointed by the ComSoc Standards Board.

Other WG and sub-group officers must be elected by the corresponding membership and approved by the ComSoc Standards Board.

Working Groups with individual representation must create P&Ps based on the [IEEE-SA baseline model P&Ps for individual projects](#).

The ComSoc Standards Board shall approve WG P&Ps by majority vote.

5.3 Study Group

The Chair may form a Study Group for the purpose of developing a new PAR and determining availability of resources. This is usually done in the absence of any other group willing or able to develop a new project.

The life of a Study Group is limited to six months, and may be extended once for up to six more months, with approval of the Chair of the Sponsor.

A Study Group is disbanded when it contributes its proposed PAR to the Sponsor Chair for submission to the IEEE-SA Standards Board via the IEEE-SA Standards Board New Standards Committee (NesCom).

6.0 Meetings

Sponsor meetings shall be held, as determined by the Sponsor Chair, or by petition of five or more voting members, to conduct business, such as making assignments, receiving reports of work, progressing draft standards, resolving differences among subgroups, and considering views and objections from any source. A 30-calendar day meeting notice and 14 day agenda shall be distributed at least to all members. (Meetings of subgroups may be held as decided upon by the members or Chair of the subgroup.) Notification of the potential for action shall be included on any distributed agendas for meetings. At least two Face-to-Face ComSoc Standards Board meetings per year shall be held in conjunction with ComSoc Board of Governors meetings.

At the discretion of the Chair interim meetings can be conducted by teleconferencing. These meetings shall be announced at least seven calendar days in advance and agenda distributed together with the announcement. Email discussions and voting are also permissible.

Please note that all IEEE Standards development meetings are open to anyone who has a professed and/or material interest and wishes to attend. However, some meetings may occur in Executive Session (see Clause 6.3).

6.1 Quorum

A quorum must be identified before beginning Sponsor business at a meeting. However, if a quorum is not present, actions may be taken subject to confirmation by letter or electronic ballot, as detailed in sub clause [7.4](#). For Sponsors with less than 50 members, a quorum shall be

defined as a majority of the current total membership. For Sponsors with 50 or more members, a quorum shall be defined as 10% of the current total membership or 26, whichever is greater. Members who recuse themselves shall not be counted in the equation to determine whether a quorum exists.

6.2 Conduct

Meeting attendees shall demonstrate respect and courtesy toward each other, and shall allow each participant a fair and equal opportunity to contribute to the meeting, in accordance with the [IEEE Code of Ethics](#).

All working group participants shall comply with all applicable laws (nation-based and international) and act in accordance with all IEEE Standards policies and procedures. Where applicable, working group participants shall comply with IEEE Policies Section 9.8 on Conflict of Interest.

6.3 Executive session

Meetings to discuss personnel or business matters (e.g., the negotiation of contracts), or for other appropriate non-public matters (e.g., the receipt of legal advice), may be conducted in Executive Session.

6.4 Meeting fees

The Sponsor may charge a meeting fee to cover the expenses of the Sponsor. The fee shall not be used to restrict participation by any interested parties. The Sponsor Officers [and Treasurer] shall set the meeting fees in consultation with those planning a particular meeting.

Everyone who attends a meeting shall pay the meeting fee, except those specifically excluded due to hardship. In the event that a member of the Sponsor has a financial difficulty and is unable to pay the meeting fee, the member may apply to the Sponsor Chair for a partial or complete waiver of the meeting fee. The Chair shall make the decision to grant such relief. These discussions will remain private.

6.5 Minutes

The minutes shall record the essentials, including the following:

1. Name of group
2. Date and location of meeting
3. Presiding Officer, including the name of the secretary who wrote the minutes
4. Attendees, including affiliation
5. Call-to-order and Chair's remarks
6. Approval of minutes from previous meeting
7. Approval of agenda
8. Technical topics
 - a. Brief summary of discussion, pros and cons, and conclusions

- b. Motions and actions items with name and due date
 - c. Copies of handouts
 - d. Minutes should not include names, except for movers and seconders of motions, and those who request that their negative/abstain vote be recorded, unless a roll-call vote is ordered
9. Subcommittee reports
10. Next meeting - date and location

7.0 Voting

7.1 Approval of an action

Approval of an action requires approval by a majority (or two-thirds) vote as specified below in 7.1.1 and 7.1.2. A majority (or two-thirds) vote is defined as either:

- a. At a meeting (including teleconferences) where quorum has been established, a vote carried by majority (or two-thirds) approval of the votes cast (i.e., Approve or Do Not Approve votes, excluding abstentions) by the voting members in attendance.
- b. By electronic means (including email), a vote carried by majority (or two-thirds) of the votes cast (i.e., Approve or Do Not Approve votes, excluding abstentions), provided a majority of all the voting members of the Sponsor responded.

7.1.1 Actions requiring approval by a majority vote

The following actions require approval by a majority vote:

- a. Formation or modification of a subgroup, including its procedures, scope, and duties
- b. Disbandment of subgroups
- c. Approval of minutes
- d. Delegation to a sub-group for authorization of a Sponsor Ballot

7.1.2 Actions requiring approval by a two-thirds vote

The following actions require approval by a two-thirds vote:

- a. Adoption of new or revised Sponsor procedures, interest categories, or revisions thereof
- b. Approval of public statements
- c. Approval of change of the Sponsor scope*
- d. Approval of termination of the Sponsor
- e. Removal of an officer, except the Chair

*Following Sponsor approval, items (c) and (d) require approval by the IEEE-SA Standards Board.

7.2 Approval of moving a draft standard to Sponsor ballot

Approval for moving a draft standard to Sponsor ballot, or approval of any substantive change in the scope of a standard proposed by a subgroup, shall be referred to the Sponsor for approval. The Sponsor may delegate approval authority and form a subgroup for this purpose. Approval to move a standard to Sponsor ballot from a subgroup requires a majority vote. The ComSoc Standards Board may conduct an Expert Review of the PAR or Draft Standard. An Expert Team must be composed of industry and/or academia subject matter experts that have subject-matter knowledge and professed, but not material, interest in the standard. Each Sponsor member shall vote one of the following positions:

1. Approve
2. Do Not Approve (the reasons for a negative vote should be given)
3. Abstain

7.3 Proxy Voting

Proxy voting is not allowed for the operation of the ComSoc Standards Board, but can be practiced by the Working Groups at the discretion of the Working Group.

7.4 Voting between meetings

The Sponsor shall be allowed to conduct Sponsor business between meetings at the discretion of the Chair by use of a letter or electronic ballot. If such actions are to be taken, they shall follow the rules of [IEEE Bylaw I-300.4\(4\)](#).

8.0 Communications

All correspondence on behalf of the Sponsor shall contain identification of the Sponsor as the source of the correspondence.

8.1 Formal internal communication

If correspondence between subcommittees or between Working Groups of different subcommittees involves issues or decisions (that is, non-routine matters) affecting other subcommittees, copies shall be sent to all affected subcommittee Chairs and the Sponsor officers.

8.2 External communication

Inquiries relating to the Sponsor should be directed to the Chair, and members should so inform individuals who raise such questions. All replies to inquiries shall be made through the Chair.

8.3 Public statements for standards

All Sponsor public communications shall comply with the policies of the [IEEE-SA Standards Board Operations Manual](#).

8.3.1 Sponsor and subgroup public statements

Sponsor public statements shall not be released without prior approval by the Sponsor, which requires two-thirds vote per Clause [7.6](#) of these procedures.

8.3.2 Subgroup public statements

Subgroup public statements shall not be released without prior approval of the subgroup. Such public statements also require approval of the Sponsor.

Subgroup public statements shall be [identified](#) in the first paragraph of the public statement as being specifically the position of the subgroup. These statements shall be issued by the subgroup Chair and shall include the Sponsor Chair in the distribution. Such statements shall not bear the IEEE, the IEEE-SA, or the Sponsor logos.

8.3.3 Public statements to be issued by other entities

If the Sponsor wishes to go to another IEEE entity (as defined in Section [15](#) of the *IEEE Policy and Procedures*) to have that entity offer a public statement on a standards matter, they shall do so after agreement from the IEEE-SA Standards Board and after informing the IEEE-SA Board of Governors. Upon Sponsor approval, proposed public statements that need to be issued by other IEEE entities shall be forwarded to the IEEE-SA Standards Board Secretary for further action.

8.4 Informal communications

Informal communications shall not imply that they are a formal position of the IEEE, the IEEE-SA, or the Sponsor.

8.5 Standards publicity

The Sponsor is encouraged to prepare press releases and other forms of publicity to promote their activities. Please see sub clause [5.1.4](#) of the *IEEE-SA Standards Board Operations Manual* for further instructions.

9.0 Interpretations

The procedures stated in the [IEEE-SA Standards Board Operations Manual](#) shall be followed.

Interpretations shall be approved by at least a two-thirds approval vote of a group determined by the Sponsor. Every effort should be made to ensure that the group reflects a balance of those who are professed and/or are materially interested.

10.0. Appeals

The Sponsor recognizes the right of appeal on procedural grounds. Technical appeals may employ help from independent expert groups formed with the help of appropriate ComSoc Technical Committees. Every effort should be made to ensure that impartial handling of complaints regarding any action or inaction on the part of the Sponsor is performed in an

identifiable manner. The appeals process shall be substantially similar to the [appeals processes](#) of the IEEE-SA Standards Board.

Appellant File:

The appeal brief shall state the nature of the objection(s) including any adverse effects, the clause(s) of the procedures or the standard(s) that are at issue, actions or inaction that are at issue, and the specific remedial action(s) that would satisfy the appellant's concerns.

If ComSoc Standards Board makes a decision to hear the appeal a copy of the appellant brief shall be sent to the appellee within 20 days.

Notice to appellant, and appellee indicating time and location of hearing (hearing announcement), must be decided within the 20 day clock.

Hearing Schedule Calculation – Add minimum 60 days to the decision date

Reply Brief:

Within 45 days of receipt of the hearing notice, the appellee may send the appellant and Secretary a written reply brief, which specifically and explicitly addresses each allegation of fact in the appeal brief to the extent of the appellee's knowledge. If the appellee furnishes a reply brief, the brief shall include documentation supporting all statements contained in the reply brief.

Appeals Panel

The ComSoc Director of Standards (Sponsor Chair) shall appoint from the ComSoc Standards Board an Appeal Panel consisting of a chair and two other members who have not been directly involved in the matter in dispute, and who will not be materially or directly affected by any decisions made concerning the dispute ("Appeal Panel"). At least two members shall be acceptable to the appellant and at least two shall be acceptable to the appellee. If the parties to the appeal cannot agree on an Appeal Panel within a reasonable amount of time, the matter shall be referred to the ComSoc Standards Board, which shall appoint the members of the Appeal Panel. If an Appeal Panel member resigns or is removed from the Appeal Panel at any time before the appeal hearing, then the ComSoc Standards Board Chair shall appoint a replacement from the ComSoc Standards Board membership. The replacement shall be subject to the acceptability criteria described above.

A notice shall be sent to the two parties on the acceptability of the panel.

Conduct Of The Hearing

The number of participating (i.e., speaking) representatives for each of the parties to the appeal is limited to a maximum of three. Other individuals may attend the hearing, but will not be permitted to address, or be addressed by, the Appeal Panel or either of the parties to the appeal at any time (including during the question and answer period). No recordings or verbatim transcriptions of the hearing are allowed.

The Appeal Panel may call an Executive Session before, during the course of, or following an appeal hearing to consider its action on a specific appeal.

No party to an appeal may communicate with any member of the Appeal Panel regarding the appeal while the matter is pending (i.e., from the time of filing of the appeal brief to finalization of the Appeal Panel decision).

The appellant has the burden of demonstrating adverse effects, improper action(s) or inaction, and the efficacy of the requested remedial action. Each party may adduce other pertinent arguments, and members of the Appeal Panel may address questions to individuals. The Appeal Panel shall only consider documentation included in the appeal brief and reply brief, unless

- a. Significant new evidence has come to light; and
- b. Such evidence reasonably was not available to the appellant or appellee, as appropriate, at the time of filing; and
- c. Such evidence was provided by the appellant or appellee, as appropriate, to the other parties as soon as it became available.

Prior to the hearing, the members of the Appeal Panel may convene to review the ground rules before the participants appear.

Appeals panel decision

The Appeal Panel shall not consider making findings with respect to ethical rules, but shall limit its consideration to procedural and technical matters. The Appeal Panel shall render its decision, based upon majority vote of the Appeal Panel (Appeal Panel members shall vote to find in favor of the appellant or the appellee and shall not abstain), in writing within 30 days of the hearing, stating findings of fact and conclusions, with reasons therefore, based on a preponderance of the evidence. Consideration may be given to the following positions, among others, in formulating the decision:

- a. Finding for the appellant, remanding the action to the appellee, with a specific statement of the issues and facts in regard to which fair and equitable action was not taken;
- b. Finding against the appellant, with a specific statement of the facts that demonstrate that appellant failed to meet its burden to demonstrate that fair and equitable treatment of the appellant was not taken;
- c. Finding that new, substantive evidence has been introduced, and remanding the entire action to the appropriate committee for reconsideration.

The Appeal Panel Chair, through the ComSoc Standards Board, shall notify the appellant, the appellee, and members of the ComSoc Standards Board in writing of the decision of the Appeal Panel.

If an Appeal Panel member resigns or is removed after a hearing, then the remaining two

members of the Appeal Panel may issue a decision if their decision is unanimous. If it is not unanimous, then the ComSoc Standards Board Chair shall appoint a replacement from the ComSoc Standards Board members and a re-hearing shall be conducted.

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