

Commonwealth Standards Network Online Resources

International standards, formulated by experts, are an agreed way of doing something by implementing best practice. They bring confidence to regulators, businesses and consumers that products and services are safe, reliable and of good quality. For businesses who implement them, they can help improve performance, reduce risks, increase sustainability and reduce technical barriers to trade.

The Challenge:

The Commonwealth Standards Network (CSN) aims to increase its members technical and institutional capacity to use and participate in the development of international standards.

International standards play an important role in promoting productivity and efficiency, reducing costs, removing barriers to trade, and driving economic growth. As such, the CSN is especially relevant to National Standards Bodies (NSBs) from Commonwealth nations that are looking to boost their international trade capabilities.

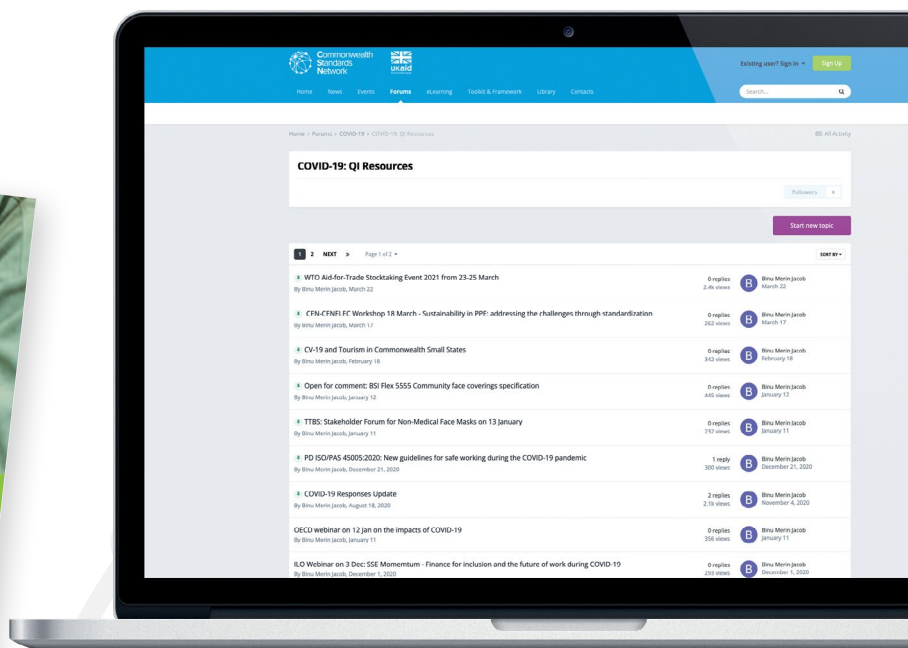
A focus of the CSN work programme in 2020-21 was to provide training to Commonwealth NSBs to help them boost international standards development and use

within their countries. It was initially intended that a large proportion of this training would be conducted face-to-face as had been the case with CSN NSB training since its inception in 2018. However, due to the global Covid-19 pandemic, travel and meeting restrictions meant that the training could not be delivered face-to-face – and the training content needed to better reflect the changing requirements of the NSBs given the on-going impacts of Covid-19.

The Solution:

The CSN quickly adjusted its 2020-21 Commonwealth NSB training programme so that no face-to-face training sessions took place – all training was delivered via a variety of online resources:

- **Online Portal www.commonwealthstandards.net**
 - A specific 'Covid-19' section of the CSN portal was developed and resources including access to freely available standards for topics such as PPE and ventilators were provided.
- **Online Training. 32 online training courses were provided to delegates from Commonwealth NSBs in 2020-21, topics included:**
 - Occupational Health and Safety and 'train the trainer'
 - Pandemic Preparedness
 - Business Continuity
 - Safe working during Covid 19
 - Trade and Policy
 - Good Standardization Practice remote audits
 - Consumer Engagement
 - Gender Responsive Standards Initiative
 - Quality Infrastructure development
- **eLearning. Five freely accessible eLearning modules were developed in 2020/21:**
 - International standards background information
 - Benefits of using international standards
 - International standards: A tool to support policy
 - Business continuity
 - Covid-19 safe working guidelines
- **Written training and guidance resources were developed and made freely available online in 2020/21 include:**
 - Revised CSN Toolkit
 - Revised CSN Framework of International Standards
 - The role of standards in supporting policy... and the challenges NSBs face
 - Roadmap for National Standards Bodies



The Results:

Highlighted statistics and results of the CSN online work programme:

- **Online Portal and Forum**
 - Registered users from 49 Commonwealth countries.
 - Covid-19 section accessed over 20,000 times.
- **Online Training:**
 - More than 500 delegates from 25 Commonwealth countries attended CSN online training sessions in 2020/21.
 - Positive feedback score of 90%
 - “The information gained will help me in my daily work of explaining the role of standards in National development.”
 - “This has increased our understanding of the role of international standards in trade promotion and technical barriers to trade. This is crucial to our NSB”
 - “(the training) has really helped in developing a sense of responsibility amongst traders by considering that they get involved in the development and implementation standards.”
- **eLearning courses**
 - Accessed over 4,000 times.
 - More than 99% of survey respondents found the courses to be extremely or very useful.
 - “The information contained in the course will enhance my competence as a Chief Standards Officer. Information would be shared with subordinate staff.”
- **Written Resources:**
 - Downloaded over 1,000 times. “The online material is very useful as a knowledge base of standards and conformity assessment information”

The audience that has gained the greatest positive impact from CSN's online resources are those that are involved with standards and need to increase their understanding of the 'bigger picture' so they can clearly explain it to their stakeholders.

The CSN online resources explain the benefits of using international standards and assist CSN members to embed the use and development of them into their working practices and organisations, they also assist them to effectively communicate this information to their stakeholders (particularly government and private sector) - leading to positive developmental outcomes.

The CSN is a collaborative network that supports trade, economic growth and prosperity throughout the Commonwealth by promoting increased awareness, development and use of international standards.

International standards play an important role in promoting productivity and efficiency, reducing costs, removing barriers to trade, and driving economic growth. As such, the CSN is especially relevant to National Standards Bodies from Commonwealth nations that are looking to boost support of their nations international trade capabilities.

The CSN is a collaborative network open to all Commonwealth countries, its members are actively involved in shaping its development so that outcomes will best suit their needs.

→ Find out more...

📅 If you would like find out more about the CSN or wish to participate or support this important initiative, please visit www.commonwealthstandards.net

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