

International and regional items of interest for July 2019 are as follows:

1. WTO/OECD report highlights unique contribution of TBT/SPS Agreements to regulatory cooperation
2. WTO members review progress of Trade Facilitation Agreement Implementation
3. Trade-restrictive measures continue at historically high level

ISO items of interest for July 2019 are as follows:

1. New proposal to establish an ISO Technical Committee on Natural and engineered stones (TS/P 281)
2. Connecting the dots in a circular economy: a new ISO technical committee just formed
3. New ISO standard for urban resilience in development
4. Understanding risk with new International Standard

IEC items of interest for July 2019 are as follows:

1. Robots, AI and big data pave way for smart farming
2. Moving data around the network
3. How secure is your data self?

* For further information about any article please email: mail@standards.org.au

International

1. [WTO/OECD report highlights unique contribution of TBT/SPS Agreements to regulatory cooperation](#)

The WTO Agreements on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) and on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS), and their related Committees, provide a unique framework for international regulatory co-operation contributing to ease trade frictions, according to a joint publication issued by the WTO and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) on 3 July at the Aid for Trade Global Review 2019.

"In a nutshell, this is about members working together to bridge differences in their regulatory systems, including through increased dialogue, transparency and cooperation. This may happen, for example, by agreeing to align with international standards, or by mutual recognition," said WTO Director General Roberto Azevêdo.

Learn more [here](#).

2. [WTO members review progress of Trade Facilitation Agreement Implementation](#)

WTO members discussed the implementation of the Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) at the meeting of the Committee on Trade Facilitation on 25 June. Members analysed the progress made and highlighted remaining work to be done, with some drawing attention to upcoming notification deadlines, related challenges and available support.

Members reviewed a record number of over 50 new notifications since the last Committee meeting in February. They were assisted by a WTO Secretariat update on the state of the ratification and notification process, which showed that 144 or almost 90 per cent of all members have already deposited a ratification instrument. The most recent ratifications were from Egypt, Morocco and Angola. The Agreement entered into force on 22 February 2017 when the WTO crossed the required threshold of 110 member ratifications.

Australia is a signatory to the Trade Facilitation Agreement

Learn more [here](#). Learn more about Australia's involvement and initiatives under the agreement [here](#).

3. [Trade-restrictive measures continue at historically high level](#)

Trade flows hit by new restrictions implemented by WTO members continued at a historically high level between mid-October 2018 and mid-May 2019, according to the Director-General's latest mid-year report on trade-related developments presented to members on 22 July. The report, which was reviewed at a meeting of the WTO's Trade Policy Review Body, notes that the trade coverage of import-restrictive measures implemented during the review period is estimated at USD 339.5 billion, the second-highest figure on record after the USD 588.3 billion reported in the previous period. Together, these two periods represent a dramatic spike in the trade coverage of import-restrictive measures.

This Report highlights the continuing challenges in global trade. Collectively, WTO members must follow through on their commitment to trade and to the rules-based international trading system and work together urgently to ease trade tensions and to improve and strengthen the WTO.

Learn more [here](#).

ISO

1. [New proposal to establish an ISO Technical Committee on Natural and engineered stones \(TS/P 281\)](#)

A proposal to establish a new ISO technical committee on “Natural and engineered stones” has been submitted by UNI (Italy).

The scope of the proposal is the following: Definitions, requirements and test methods for natural stones relating to rough blocks, slabs, semi-finished and finished products intended for use in building and for monuments and for engineered stones with resin or cement binders or a combination of the two, intended for use in counter tops and vanities, floor and wall coverings, ancillary uses, for interior and exterior.

For more information or to comment on this proposal, please email us at sem@standards.org.au.

2. [Connecting the dots in a circular economy: a new ISO technical committee just formed](#)

In our ‘throw away’ society, the linear model of make, use and discard is depleting the resources of our planet – and our pockets. The solution is a circular economy, where nothing is wasted, rather it gets reused or transformed. While standards and initiatives abound for components of this, such as recycling, there is no current agreed global vision on how an organization can complete the circle. A new ISO technical committee for the circular economy has just been formed to do just that.

A circular economy is one where it is restorative or regenerative. Instead of buy, use, throw, the idea is that nothing, or little is ‘thrown’, rather it reused, or regenerated, thus reducing waste as well as the use of our resources. A new ISO technical committee intends to address this.

ISO/TC 323, Circular economy, is currently made up of experts from over 65 different countries and growing.

Australia is currently an Observing Member of ISO/TC 323.

Learn more [here](#).

3. [New ISO standard for urban resilience in development](#)

Urbanization is increasing, placing pressure on resources and infrastructure like never before. There’s no stemming the tide, so city leaders need to build resilience in order to cope. Work on a new International Standard for urban resilience, led by the United Nations, has just kicked off, aiming to help local governments build safer and more sustainable urban environments.

The development of the standard is being led by UN-Habitat, the United Nations programme for human settlements, as part of their urban resilience programme. It will benefit from their 15 years of experience in the field, as well as that of international experts on the ISO technical committee responsible for the standard, ISO/TC 292, *Security and resilience*.

Australia is currently a Participating Member of ISO/TC 292.

Learn more [here](#).

4. [Understanding risk with new International Standard](#)

When the only certainty is uncertainty, the IEC and ISO 'risk management toolbox' helps organizations to keep ahead of threats that could be detrimental to their success. All businesses face threats on an ongoing basis, ranging from unpredictable political landscapes to rapidly evolving technology and competitive disruption. IEC and ISO have developed a toolbox of risk management standards to help businesses prepare, respond and recover more efficiently. It includes a newly updated standard on risk assessment techniques.

IEC 31010, *Risk management — Risk assessment techniques*, features a range of techniques to identify and understand risk. It has been updated to expand its range of applications and to add more detail than ever before. It complements ISO 31000, *Risk management*. IEC 31010 was developed by Joint Working Group 16, which brings together experts from IEC Technical Committee 56, *Dependability*, and ISO/TC 262, *Risk management*.

Australia is currently a Participating member on ISO/TC 262 and IEC/TC 56, and participated on JWG 16.

Learn more [here](#).

IEC

1. [Robots, AI and big data pave way for smart farming](#)

The introduction of robots, artificial intelligence (AI) and big data in agriculture marks the fourth phase in modern farming, the so-called Agriculture 4.0. It follows the first one, which dates back to the introduction in Britain, in the early 18th century, of basic machinery using animal power to execute simple tasks, and the second phase, which started after tractors were first used around 1918, leading to the introduction of more powered machines. The current, third farming model, industrial agriculture, applied in many developed countries, is often based on monoculture relying on the wide use of machinery, phytosanitary products like herbicides, fertilizers and insecticides. Likewise, raising animals for meat or milk production is based on industrial methods.

All these autonomous robots depend on technologies and systems that rely on standards developed by IEC technical committees (TCs) and subcommittees (SCs). Standards for AI and big data, increasingly important for Agriculture 4.0, are prepared by ISO/IEC JTC 1/SC 42, a SC of the Joint Technical Committee for Information Technology set up by IEC and ISO.

Australia is currently a Participating member on ISO/IEC JTC 1/SC 24 *Artificial Intelligence*.

Learn more [here](#).

2. [Moving data around the network](#)

The digitalization of information is underway. It is enabling the use of data to better understand our preferences and provide us with the services that match our needs. At home, the data collected and analyzed ensures that the preferred room temperature is calibrated depending on the occupancy and time of day. Farm animals are monitored from afar to provide the correct quantities of food and water for consumption and guard against illnesses. Manufacturers rely on digital twins to enhance their production capabilities and predict glitches before they occur. Information is being gathered, analyzed and applied to improve experiences in all parts of our lives.

Data networking is the one common thread throughout these digital trends. Regardless of whether the network is cabled or wireless, collected data needs to be carried through networks to be analyzed and dispatched. The work to standardize the interfaces and generic cabling necessary for data networking is undertaken by a joint IEC and ISO technical committee, ISO/IEC JTC 1/SC 25, focusing on the interconnections of IT equipment.

Australia is currently a Participating member of ISO/IEC JTC 1/SC 25 *Interconnection of information technology equipment*.

Learn more [here](#).

3. [How secure is your data self?](#)

In 2019, a day of data includes 500 million tweets, 294 billion emails, four terabytes produced by a connected car, 65 billion messages sent over WhatsApp and two billion minutes of voice and video calls made, five billion searches and 95 million photos and videos shared on Instagram, according to research by Raconteur data journalism specialists. By 2020 it is expected that wearable devices will produce 28 petabytes (1000⁵ bytes) of data.

One way to protect data is through standardization. IEC and ISO develop international standards for information technology through their joint technical committee (ISO/IEC JTC 1), which covers different aspects of data, including privacy, security and storage. Work is also under way to address ethics and other societal concerns, such as transparency and accountability, as well as bias of data sets for algorithms, which are then used in health, financial and many other applications.

e-tech caught up with Ian Oppermann, President of the JTC 1 Strategic Advisory Committee in Australia, to learn about the need to develop international standards for data sharing frameworks.

Ian Oppermann is the Chair of the Australian IEC National Committee.

Learn more [here](#).