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HL7®

Co-Chair Handbook

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Revision History

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**NOTE**: Co-chairs are encouraged to read and review the co-chair handbook and return comments to the Process Improvement Work Group [list server](mailto:pic@hl7.org?subject=Comment%20on%20C0-chair%20Handbook).

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# FOREWORD

There are numerous responsibilities that you assume as co-chair of an HL7 Work Group (WG) or Board appointed committee. This booklet is provided to assist you with those responsibilities. In addition to this guide, all co-chairs should be familiar with:

* The HL7 [Bylaws](http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?Bylaws)
* The HL7 Governance and Operations Manual ([GOM](http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?GOM)) – may be updated three time a year
* The HL7 Essential Requirements: Due Process Requirements for HL7 American National Standards ([HL7 ER](http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?EssentialRequirements)) – may be updated three times a year
* The [Co-Chair Handbook](http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?CoChairHandbook)

Suggestions for improvements/corrections to this document should be sent to the Associate Executive Director of HL7 ([Karenvan@hl7.org](mailto:Karenvan@hl7.org)) and the [Co-chairs](http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?PICLeadership) of the Process Improvement WG.

This booklet is divided into the following sections:

**Organizational Structure** – provides a breakdown of the HL7 organizational structure.

**Administrative Responsibilities** – provides instructions for completing the administrative responsibilities of being a co-chair, such as draft agendas, chairing the meetings, taking/posting minutes, etc.

**Balloting** – many new co-chairs have questions about balloting. This section provides a flowchart of the ballot process for both normative and review documents. There are three types of review ballot: comment only, informative document, and draft standard for trial use (DSTU).

**Decision Making Practices (DMP)** – provides guidance for conducting the business of the WG you are co-chairing. This sections covers areas such as what constitutes a quorum, how to make decision on conference calls, etc.

**Robert’s Rules of Order** – provides an overview of and tips for conducting meetings using the official Robert’s Rules of Order followed by the rules themselves.

# HL7 ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

As with all growing organizations, the HL7 organization undergoes continuous review and updates. For the most current organization chart with explanation of Steering Divisions (SD), WGs, and Board appointed committees please refer to the Organization and Process documentation which can be found in the [Organization and Process presentation](http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?HL7OrgAndProcessPresentation).

# ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES

## Your Term as Co-Chair

Co-chairs are typically elected to two-year terms and may be re-elected without limit. When a new WG is formed half the co-chairs will be elected to one-year terms and half the co-chairs will be elected to two-year terms. This ensures that the elections from that point on will be staggered so that there is continuity of leadership.

Prior to the Working Group Meeting (WGM) when your term as co-chair is due to expire, HL7 staff will notify you and the membership at large that the WG will be holding co-chair elections at the next WGM. The HL7 process for electing co-chairs ([GOM](http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?GOM) §05.02 WG Co-chair Nomination and Election) involves a 30-day nomination period that is announced to the membership. Anyone who is a current individual member or voting representative of a current organizational or Affiliate member can be nominated and you can nominate yourself. HL7 Headquarters will contact all nominees to ensure that they wish to serve if elected. Each nominee will be asked to draft and submit a brief position statement. These statements are published to the membership at large, along with an announcement of the elections, which are held Monday – Wednesday at the WGM.

Should you or one of the other co-chairs need to resign before your two-year commitment expires, notify HL7 Headquarters by sending an email to HQ@hl7.org. HQ will attempt to seek nominees and include the open co-chair position in the next regularly scheduled election. If there is not enough time to prior to the WGM, your WG may appoint an interim co-chair to serve until the election. The interim co-chair may be a nominee for election. HQ will then formally announce the open co-chair position as part of the normal process and elections will be held at the next WGM.

## Engaging with the Steering Division (SD)

In addition to co-chairing the WG, co-chairs are expected to engage with the SD to which their WG belongs. The co-chairs that comprise each SD elect the SD co-chairs and vote on projects, proposed changes to work group missions and charters, the dissolution or addition of new work groups, etc. Co-chairs should view their SD as the first point of contact in resolving any number of issues that they or their WG face and/or would like to escalate to the TSC for discussion and resolution.

Likewise, the steering division co-chairs are the conduits of communication from the TSC to the WG co-chairs. The SD typically schedule regular conference calls and meet immediately following the Monday evening co-chairs’ meeting at each of the three WGM. At least one co-chair from each WG is expected to attend these calls and meetings. Upon your election as co-chair, you will automatically be subscribed to the list server of the Steering Division to which your WG belongs.

## Work Group Health Reports

There is an ongoing effort to ensure that WGs are open, active and effective within each SD. The measures of perceived WG health include a few simple items identified to better align the WGs with HL7 expectations for effective WGs. WG Health Report Cards are produced before each WGM. The following TSC wiki page includes the details on what is measured in the [WG Health Report Cards](http://hl7tsc.org/wiki/index.php?title=Work_Group_Health), as well as approval requirements for the Work Group Mission and Charter Statement (M&C), Decision Making Practices (DMP), and Strength / Weakness / Opportunity / Threat (SWOT) analysis.

## Attending the Co-chairs Dinner / Meeting

The Co-chairs dinner/meeting is composed of the co-chairs of all WGs and committees within HL7, HL7 leadership, and staff. Additionally, any WGM attendees are allowed to observe but not actively participate in discussion or decision making unless they have been invited to participate on specific topics. While registering for the WGM, co-chairs should indicate their intent to attend this meeting. It is typically scheduled for Monday evening at each WGM. Check the meeting brochure to confirm the date/time and location of this meeting. While all co-chairs are encouraged to attend the meeting, only one co-chair per WG is required to attend. Should this not be possible, notification to the SD is appropriate. One co-chair is selected from amongest the co-chairs of each WG to represent the interests of that WG at the Co-chairs dinner/meeting. They are the official spokesperson and voting co-chair. The Co-chairs dinner/meeting is typically followed by the SD meetings. Co-chair representation from each WG is required at the SD meeting. When not possible, notification to the SD and WG is appropriate. SD meeting attendance by representatives from each WG is a WG Health metric

## Co-chairs Division of Labor

Each WG is typically led by at least two co-chairs. Each WG has unique projects and needs; the division of responsibilities should be approached with that in mind. For instance, for those WGs whose work involves both V2 and V3, it is advisable to divide responsibilities between the co-chairs. One successful model is to specify a V2 co-chair, a V3 co-chair and an administrative co-chair (who assumes responsibility for meeting minutes and other administrative duties). Dividing the responsibilities in this way ensures that all areas are covered without overburdening a single person. Another model, when there are four co-chairs, is to designate/elect both an experienced and new co-chair per version and split administrative duties amongst the four co-chairs.

## Links to Frequently Used Templates, Forms, Documents and other Information

There are a number of templates, forms, documents and links on the website to assist co-chairs. A partial list is included below.

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| **Form/Template** | **Description** | **Permalink/URL** |
| Amalgamation Macro Spreadsheet | To assist W G Co-chairs in summarizing ballot comments, an amalgamation utility with macros to combine all submitted comment spreadsheets is provided for ballot reconciliation. This zip file contains a spreadsheet and instructions for performing this task. | <http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?AmalgamationMacro> |
| Copyright Assignment Form | This form is used by HL7 faculty, frequently the co-chairs, to assign copyright to HL7 for tutorial materials. | <http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?CopyrightAssign> |
| Education Portal | The Education Portal provides a gateway to training and education opportunities for the HL7 communitywith access to information about Professional Development and Certification Opportunities beneficial to Project/Product Managers, Implementers, Software Engineers, Clinicians and Business Analysts working in the HL7 space.  The portal also links you to exam preparation materials and registration for any certification exam at locations around the world. | <http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?EducationPortal> |
| Informative Document Publication Request Template | In accordance with GOM §13.01.05, informative documents, once approved, require the concurrence of the TSC to be released for publication. Use this form to submit the request to the TSC. | <http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?PublicationRequestTemplate> |
| DSTU Publication Request Template | In accordance with GOM §13.02.05, a proposed draft standard, upon approval and with the concurrence of the TSC, shall be released for publication as a Draft Standard for Trial Use (DSTU). Use this form to submit the request to the TSC. | <http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?PublicationRequestTemplate> |
| GForge Homebase Project Request Template | Use this form to request a WG page from the HL7 Project Homebase site. | <http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?GForgeHomebaseProjectRequestForm> |
| Harmonization Proposal Template | Use this template to submit proposed RIM or Vocabulary changes for Harmonization. | <http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?HL7HarmonizationProposal> |

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| HL7 Document Cover Page Template | This is a template for the cover page for HL7 documents. Please use this template for all documents published by your WG with the exception of Version 3 documents that are published via the publishing database. | <http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?CoverPageTemplate> |
| Meeting Minutes Template - Website | This template provides instructions and tips for capturing WG meeting minutes in Word. | <http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?MinutesTemplate> |
| Meeting Minutes Template – Wiki | Provides instructions and tips for capturing minutes on the HL7 wiki. | <http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?WikiMinutesTemplate> |
| Notice of Withdrawal of American National Standard (ANS) Project Template | Form used to request withdrawal of a proposed ANS; that is, to notify ANSI that work on a candidate normative standard is being discontinued by a WG. | <http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?WithdrawANS> |
| Notice of Intent to Ballot Form | Online form used by WG Co-chairs to officially request that a proposed standard or item be included in an upcoming ballot cycle. | <http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?NIB> |
| Out-of-Cycle Meeting Request Form | Form Co-chairs use to request an out-of-cycle meeting. | <http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?OOCMeetingRequest> |
| Press Release Request Form | Used to convey relevant and press release worthy information to HQ Director of Communications. | <http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?PRRequestForm> |
| Project Scope Statement Template | Word template for the Project Scope statement; includes HL7’s Project Approval Process. | <http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?ProjectScopeStatement> |

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| Project Wiki Template | Wiki template for WGs that wish to track and make their project information available on the HL7 wiki | <http://wiki.hl7.org/index.php?title=Template:Project_Page> |
| Three Year Plan Guidelines | Document describing WG three-year plans and how to develop them. | http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?3YearPlans |
| Travel Expense Reimbursement Form | Used to submit expenses for reimbursement when traveling on behalf of HL7. | <http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?TravelExpenseForm> |
| WGM Agenda Template | Template, including session icons, for representation of the WGs’ WGM agendas. | <http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?WGMAgendaTemplate> |
| WGM Attendance Template | Template for tracking WGM attendance. | <http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?WGMAttendanceTemplate> |
| WGM Agenda Icons (used in agendas) | Icons used to identify the type of session (business, reconciliation, technical) on the WG agenda. | <http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?AgendaIcons> |
| WG Dissolution Template | Form used to request dissolution of a WG. | <http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?WGDissolveTemplate> |
| WG Mission and Charter Guidelines | Guidelines for developing WG mission and charter. | <http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?MissionCharter> |
| WG Creation Template | Template for creating a WG. | <http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?WorkGroupCreationTemplate> |
| WG Meeting Checklist | Generic checklist of tasks that co-chairs need to complete for each WGM | <http://gforge.hl7.org/gf/project/psc/docman/?action=DocmanFileEdit&id=7577> |
| Link to TSC Wiki | Link to the TSC wiki. TSC minutes and other details are kept on the wiki. | <http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?TSCWiki> |
| Link to HL7 Wiki | Many work groups and projects maintain a presence on the HL7 wiki. This link takes you to that site. | <http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?HL7Wiki> |
| Link to Project Insight | HL7 uses Project Insight to track its projects. This link takes you to the tool. | <http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?ProjectInsight> |
| First Time Attendee Presentation | Link to the most current First Time Attendees session presentation. | <http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?FirstTimeAttendeesPresentation> |
| Organization and Process Tutorial | Link to the most current Organization and Process tutorial provided for WGM first time attendees. | <http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?HL7OrgAndProcessPresentation> |
| Schedule of Upcoming Webinars | Link to the most current calendar of webinars, including Member Advantage webinars (free to members) and webinars for which members and non-members are required to pay. | http://www.hl7.org/events/webinars.cfm?ref=nav |
| Schedule of Upcoming WGM | Calendar of upcoming WGMs | <http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?WGM> |
| HL7 webmaster | Email for HL7’s webmaster | [webmaster@HL7.org](mailto:webmaster@HL7.org) |
| HL7 List Servers | Provides a link to all the HL7 list servers to which you can subscribe. | <http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?Listserv> |
| Co-chair Utility Page/Procedures | Links to the co-chair only accessible page which provide utilities for uploading and cataloging meeting minutes, etc. | <http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?Procedures> |

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| Time and Date Conversion | Links to a site that will assist with converting dates and times. Particularly useful for scheduling conference calls. | <http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?DateTimeConversion> |
| Minutes Repository | Links to a search utility that enables you to search the website, WG Documents, WG Meeting Minutes and the membership directory. | <http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?Search> |
| Publishing Work Group | Link to the Publishing Work Group webpage. | <http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?Publishing> |
| Version 2 Change Database | Links to the database where members log their proposed changes to the V2 standard. | <http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?V2Tracker> |
| CDA Changes Database | Links to the database where members log their proposed changes to the CDA standard. | <http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?CDATracker> |
| Ballot Desktop | Used to vote on HL7 standards. Co-chairs can see who voted, view comments submitted, and communicate with voters in the ballot pools related to their WG. Reconciliation packages are posted to this site and co-chairs communicate with negative voters via this site. | <http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?BallotDesktop> |
| Reference Information Model (RIM) | Link to the HL7RIM. | <http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?RIM> |

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| Decision Making Practices (DMP)Template | Links to the webpage that houses the default set of DMP and the specific DMPs for the various WGs. | <http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?DMP> |
| Process Improvement WG | Links to the Process Improvement WG webpage. | <http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?PICLeadership> |
| Robert’s Rules | Links to online version of Robert’s Rules for managing meetings. | <http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?RobertsRules> |
| HL7 Bylaws | Links to the organization’s current Bylaws | <http://hl7.org/permalink?bylaws> |
| HL7 Governance and Operations Manual (GOM) | Links to the current GOM | <http://hl7.org/permalink?GOM> |
| HL7 Essential Requirements: Due process requirements for HL7 American National Standards (HL7 ER) | Link to the current HL7 ER, which indicates how normative standards are balloted and how HL7 adheres to ANSI Essential Requirements | www.hl7.org/permalink/?EssentialRequirements |
| HL7 Code of Ethics | GOM §06.05 describes the code of ethics in place for all members of HL7 | <http://www.hl7.org/permalink?GOM> |
| List of Current Facilitators | Links to the current list of all facilitators. Please advise HQ of updates by emailing [Karenvan@HL7.org](mailto:Karenvan@HL7.org?subject=Update%20for%20facilatators%20list) | <http://www.hl7.org/documentcenter/public/membership/Facilitators%20Summary%20List.pdf> |
| Facilitators Summary of Expectations | Job descriptions for the various types of facilitators | <http://www.hl7.org/about/hl7facilitators.cfm> |

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| HL7 Ballots – Voting Made Easy | Useful document for new co-chairs wishing to understand the HL7 ballot process. | http://www.hl7.org/permalink/VotingMadeEasy |
| Electronic Ballot Chart | Provides a quick reference to information related to each level of HL7 electronic balloting. | <http://gforge.hl7.org/gf/project/psc/docman/?subdir=390> |
| Link to HL7 Mobile App | Allows WGM attendees to keep up with event announcements/changes, view the site map and meeting agendas and create your own schedule | <http://eventmobi.com/hl7> |

## Who Can Speak on Behalf of HL7

Co-Chairs cannot speak on behalf of HL7 except where allowed by the policy, as provided in [GOM](http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?GOM) §07.02.02 Representing HL7.

## Formal Relationships with Groups Outside of HL7

[Relationships with outside organizations](http://www.hl7.org/about/agreements.cfm?ref=nav) are managed by the Board of Directors. Co-chairs should refrain from inviting outside organizations to meet with a particular WG without approval from the HL7 Board of Directors. The Board of Directors has established an Organizational Relations Committee to manage these relationships. The Organizational Relations Committee chair and membership are available on the HL7 [website.](http://www.hl7.org/Special/committees/orgrelations/leadership.cfm)

## Subscribing to and Participating on the List Servers

You must read emails sent from the HL7 Co-chairs List. HL7 Headquarters will subscribe you to this list when it learns of your election to a chair position. The list is [cochairs@lists.hl7.org](mailto:cochairs@lists.hl7.org). Additionally, co-chairs are automatically subscribed to the appropriate steering division list server.

You must sign up for and participate in any list servers involving or dedicated to your WG including list servers for projects for which your WG is responsible. A [complete list of list servers](http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?Listserv) <is> available.

Most co-chairs should also sign up for the Modeling and Methodology (MnM) list.

## Assuming Stewardship for the Work Group Page on the HL7 Web Site

Any updates to your WG page should be conveyed to the webmaster ([webmaster@HL7.org](mailto:webmaster@HL7.org?subject=Updates%20to%20WG%20Page)). Some guidelines for what information must be kept up-to-date are available from the monitoring done in the [WG Health Metrics](http://hl7tsc.org/wiki/index.php?title=Work_Group_Health) which includes historical metrics and description of their measures.

This includes approved changes to your mission/charter statement (which requires SD approval), changes to your contact information, Decision Making Practices (DMPs), etc.

### If you are a newly elected Co-chair

HL7 HQ will update the page dedicated to your WG on the HL7 web site to reflect your status as co-chair. HQ staff will not update individual WG wiki pages. Wiki page edits are the responsibility of the WG co-chairs.

### If you are a newly elected Co-chair of a new WG

When the TSC approves a new WG, a task will be opened in gForge to authorize the webmaster to create all the appropriate web services that will be needed including the WG page and list server. Review the task to make sure the most [current version of your mission/charter statement](http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?MissionCharter) guidelines and your "[New Work Group Formation Template](http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?WorkGroupCreationTemplate)"   
have been attached to the task. Until both of these documents are available by being attached to the task, the webmaster will not be able to complete the task of making a web presence for your WG. Please give the webmaster at least 5 business days to complete this task. A new list server will be created for your group, as well. The new group/list server will typically be announced in the newsletter and via an electronic update from Headquarters that is sent to all members.

### Keeping WG Mission and Charters Up-to-Date

Co-chairs should ensure that their WG’s [mission and charter statement](http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?MissionCharter) is kept up-to-date. Mission and charter statements must be reviewed periodically, not more than every two years as reflected in WG Health metrics, with or without updates made. Updated mission and charter statements (M & C) are sent to the SD for review and approval. If no updates are made, please indicate that the M & C was reviewed and no changes made. The review date can then be updated on the WG's web site.

A WG may have informal relationships with a number of organizations. For example, a WG may have several active projects, which in turn may identify early adopters or organizations that are working with HL7 to develop a standards document. These are informal relationships that are and should be identified in project scope statements; these should not be listed in the Formal Relationship portion of your WG’s mission and charter statement. Occasionally a WG, such as Imaging Integration, may be formed in collaboration with another standards group or organization. These formal relationships are formalized with a Statement of Understanding (SOU) or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). A list of these [formal relationships](http://www.hl7.org/about/agreements.cfm?ref=nav) is available.

Refer to section 3.8 above for additional information on formal relationships with groups outside of HL7.

### Keeping Work Group SWOT Statements up-to-Date

Co-chairs should ensure that their WG's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) documentation is kept up-to-date, not to exceed three years old. The presence of a current SWOT statement is a Work Group Health Metric.

## File Upload/Viewing Capability

As co-chair of an HL7 WG, you are responsible for posting meeting minutes and documents related to all meetings/business of the WG that you chair. There is a file naming convention and a couple of utilities that are available to co-chairs to assist with this responsibility.

### File naming convention

The suggested file naming conventions are as follows:

CCYY-MM-DD\_<Work Group Acronym>\_WGM\_Agenda

CCYY-MM-DD\_<Work Group Acronym>\_WGM\_Minutes

CCYY-MM-DD\_<Work Group Acronym>\_Call\_Agenda

CCYY-MM-DD\_<Work Group Acronym>\_Call\_Minutes

### Co-chair utility page

Templates and other helpful instructions are available on the [Utilities page](http://www.hl7.org/Special/committees/tsc/tsc.cfm) of the HL7 website. The page is divided into four sections: Balloting, File Maintenance Utilities, Reports, and Robert’s Rules and Other. Selections under each section are briefly described below.

### Wiki page

The HL7 wiki also provides the opportunity for editable pages for the WG to provide information on their activities, as well as file upload capability for documents or meeting agendas and minutes.

### Balloting

There are a number of useful files available on the website to assist with balloting.

The following utilities are available to assist co-chairs with balloting process:

* Ballot Comment [Amalgamation Macro](http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?AmalgamationMacro) Spreadsheet Assists WG co-chairs in summarizing ballot comments, an amalgamation utility with macros to combine all submitted comment spreadsheets is provided for ballot reconciliation. The zip file contains a spreadsheet and instructions for performing this task. Refer to the balloting section later in this document for further information.
* Current [Ballot Cycle Planning Page](http://www.hl7.org/special/committees/tsc/ballotmanagement/index_cbc.cfm) This online form allows WG co-chairs to indicate their intentions for balloting items in upcoming ballot cycles, and to flag items that have completed balloting in the most recently completed ballot cycle. The deadline for completion of this form is the same as for the submission of new Project Scope Statements, that is, the Sunday following the Sunday of the week that closes a WGM.
* [Notice of Intent to Ballot](http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?NIB) (NIB) form   
  Headquarters requires specific information in preparation for a ballot cycle well in advance of the actual cycle start. Use this online form to submit a Notification of Intent to Ballot for an upcoming cycle. Members are then alerted that this document will be balloted in the upcoming ballot cycle and are invited to join the ballot pool.
* [Special Request Documents Upload Site](http://www.hl7.org/special/committees/tsc/specialuploads/index.cfm) This site allows you to check Intent to Ballot forms or their supporting Project Scope information.

### File Maintenance Utilities

The following utilities are provided to help post minutes and documents to the website.

* [Upload and Catalog Document](http://www.hl7.org/special/Committees/_common/upload.cfm) - Documents and publications are uploaded using this utility, which is available only to co-chairs and staff.
* [Upload WG Meeting Minutes](http://www.hl7.org/special/Committees/_common/upload.cfm?wg_docs_subfolder_name=minutes) - Meeting minutes are uploaded directly on your WG home page where there is a file utility. Alternately, you can use this utility to post minutes. This utility, along with the upload utility on your WG home page, is available only to co-chairs and staff. Other members of your WG do not have access to this utility.   
  We suggest that you choose a naming convention such as Date WG Call/WG Minutes (e.g. 2014-01 PAFM\_Call\_Minutes .doc). The minutes will display in date upload order on the web page for your WG.

### Reports

The following reports related to balloting are provided to assist co-chairs in keeping track of the status of their open ballot projects:

* [Active Ballots with no Reconciliation Package Posted](http://www.hl7.org/special/committees/tsc/ballotmanagement/reports/NoReconPackage_by_wg.cfm) – This report lists active ballots for which a reconciliation package has not been posted. It is ordered by WG and ballot cycle.
* [PBS Metric Guidance](http://www.hl7.org/documentcenter/public/wg/projectServices/PBSMetricGuidanceforSDCoChairsFinal.doc) for SD Co-chairs – This document provides guidance for SD Co-chairs on using PBS (Projects, Ballots and Standards) Metrics to evaluate a work group's capacity to undertake new efforts
* [PBS Metrics Reports](http://gforge.hl7.org/gf/project/tsc/frs/?action=FrsReleaseBrowse&frs_package_id=169) – This is an archive of PBS metric reports based on WGM meeting cycle.

### Robert’s Rules

The following documents related to Robert’s Rules are available on the website:

* [Robert’s Rules on-line](http://www.rulesonline.com) website – This links to the complete original 1915 edition of Robert’s Rules
* [Robert’s Rules](http://hl7.amg-hq.net/library/robertsrules/roberts_rules_2.zip) that apply to WG co-chairs – This links to a brief document that outlines the essentials from Robert’s Rules for Work Group co-chairs.
* [Robert’s Rules](http://www.robertsrules.com/) website – Co-chairs needing/wanting more in-depth knowledge of Robert’s Rules can visit the Robert’s Rules website via this link.

### Other

* [Co-chair Handbook](http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?CoChairHandbook) – The TSC Utility Page provides a link to the co-chair handbook
* Templates – find links to the various templates in section 3.6 above.
* [New Co-Chair Training](http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?NewCoChairTraining) – This links to the most recent PowerPoint presentation used at the WGM to train new co-chairs.

## Conference Call Center

You will undoubtedly need to schedule a conference call at some time to discuss WG business. The conduct of business via conference calls between WGM is a WG Health metric. Conference calls are scheduled via a [conference call center](http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?Concalls). These may be scheduled to discuss business that was left over from the Working Group Meeting, to continue ballot reconciliation, or simply to agree on the agenda for the next meeting. Some groups schedule recurring calls every Monday at 10 am EST, for example, or every other Wednesday at 2 pm EST. The conference call number and access code(s) are included in the meeting invite.

### How do you schedule your Call?

Use the on-line conference call center. The call center allows you to schedule single (one time occurrence) or recurring (every week) calls for your group. You can also edit, cancel and delete calls using the Conference Calling Center.

Normally conference calls can only be scheduled through the next two WGMs and should be re-scheduled during or immediately following a WG so they are calendared on a continuous basis. For example, if the next WGM is the first week of May, after January 13th, you can request calls through the first week of October which is one month following the last day of the September Working Group Meeting.

### Where is the Conference Call Center?

Access the [conference call center](http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?Concalls). Anyone can view this information but security access determines what details are available and who can submit a request for a call.

### Process at a Glance

To summarize the process:

1. Go to the Conference Call Center
2. Use the navigation to add the type of call you want to request either one time or recurring
3. Make sure to select the list service that will be used by this call for automated messages
4. Your call is now online and will be tied to a dial-in and access number
5. A reminder for each call will automatically be sent to the list associated with the call one to two days (1-2) days prior depending on your time zone.

### Conference Call Center Features

On-screen tips are available to help while you learn the new interface for call scheduling. It is a straightforward guided system similar to ones you probably already use.

You can “name” your call when submitting a request. This enables topic or event driven calls to be obvious on the calendar. You should not name a call if the call is just a routine call (or a recurring series of calls) for a group. This is meant as a phrase for WGs (for example the EHR publishing group), not as an agenda description. There is a place provided for agendas.

If you have the privileges needed to schedule a call, you have an option to “secure” a call. Because everything you see on the calendar is public domain, securing a call is necessary for executive level committees. For WG calls the use of this function is discouraged.

If there are multiple list services available for the working group you have selected for a call, you can choose the list that reminders will go to.

Reminders for calls will automatically go out to the assigned list one to two days (1-2) days prior depending on your time zone.

You can change basic information for an individual call, even if it occurs as part of a series of calls.

Individual calls can be cancelled and an automatic reminder will go to the list to which that call has been assigned.

### Conference Call Reminders

You must have access privileges as a Co-chair, Board Member or HQ Staff in order to request a call

Do not “name” your call if the call is for a WG (see conference call features for information on naming a call) rather than a specific event. There is agenda space provide for these kinds of details

Do not forward your confirmation of a scheduled call to remind people of the call which happens automatically. Additionally, there is a manual reminder option should events dictate.

### Using the Conference Calling Service

Provide a desired start time to your call participants along with your access number and participant code which you are provided.

##### Dialing in

1. Dial the access number at the designated time provided for your call
2. Enter the participant pass code or if you are a moderator for a moderated call, the moderator pass code, followed by (#)

##### Moderator Features:

Note that all of these features are prefixed by the star (\*) key on your touch tone phone.

\*1 **Dial-Out to a Participant** – (If activated at account set-up) Pressing \*1 dials out to a participant. After the dial-out connection is made, pressing \*2 will join a participant or pressing \*3 will cancel the dial-out.

\*2 **Start/Stop Conference Recording** – Pressing \*2 starts the recording. Pressing \*2 again stops the recording. Replay instructions will be emailed to you.

\*3 unused

\*4 **Volume Control** – Dialing \*4 increases the volume, dialing \*4 again returns volume to original level.

\*5 **Listen-Only Mode** – Dialing \*5 places all participants in listen-only mode. Only the moderator can be heard. Dialing \*5 will again will return the call to fully interactive mode.

\*6 **Mute/Unmute Self** – Dialing \*6 will mute your line. Dialing \*6 again will unmute your line.

\*7 **Secure/Unsecure Conference** – When enabled, no other participants may enter the call. Press \*7 again to unsecure.

\*8 **Roll Call** (If activated at account set-up) – Pressing \*8 plays a recording of the participants on a call. With Private Roll Call, only the moderator hears the roll call. With Conference Roll Call all conferees hear the roll call.

\*0 Operator Assistance

##### Participant Features:

Note that all of these features are prefixed by the star (\*) key on your touch tone phone.

\*0 Operator Assistance

\*6 **Mute/Unmute** Use \*6 to mute your line; enter \*6 again to unmute your line

It is difficult, if not impossible, to accommodate everyone’s schedule for a conference call, especially with participants from around the world. If you need to know what time it is in a different country/city, we suggest that you consult the [World Clock](http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?DateTImeConversion).

## Responsibilities at WGM

### Chair All Meetings of Your WG at WGM and Conference Calls

Co-chairs are expected to attend all WGMs. Obviously, there will be occasions when you cannot, for work or personal reasons, attend. But generally you should plan on attending all WGMs. Refer to the DMP and Robert’s Rules sections of this handbook for tips on ensuring successful meetings. Arrive in time to meet all of your commitments as co-chair of your WG and to check over your meeting room. This will certainly include attending the co-chairs’ meeting on Monday evening as well as attending the SD meeting for your WG, which is a WG Health metric. Announce your agenda at your meeting. It is good practice to do introductions each quarter at the WGM. This helps new attendees become familiar with your work group and its members/participants, and allows new attendees to be introduced to the larger group. Before adjourning your meeting, work with your group to define an agenda for the next meeting; preferably no later than Wednesday of the WGM.

### Keep Attendees Apprised of Agenda Changes

Occasionally, WGs need to change their agendas or cancel or add meetings. To ensure that all WGM attendees are kept up to date on these types of changes, co-chairs are required to make announcements regarding these types of changes in a timeframe that aligns with the group's decision making practices. To ensure that these types of changes are communicated to all attendees, co-chairs are required to post these announcements to their WG listserv, and on the bulletin board near the WGM registration desk. Additionally, co-chairs may also wish to make these announcements via the [HL7 mobile app](http://eventmobi.com/hl7). Since all attendees do not use the mobile app, making these types of announcements only via the mobile app is not appropriate.

### Appoint an Acting Chair as Needed

Infrequently, there are occasions when no co-chairs from your WG will be available to attend a WGM. For these occasions, WGs may appoint an acting co-chair by bringing a formal motion to the WG in advance of the WGM. [GOM](http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?GOM) § 05.04 Majority Rule allows for any formal motion (including one to appoint an acting co-chair(s)), to be brought for vote to the WG using its Decision Making Practices. Acting co-chairs shall have allthe powers, privileges, and responsibilities of a Co-chair for a specific period of time with no expectation of election. An acting co-chair would typically be appointed to preside over the WG sessions at a WGM. The co-chair powers, duties and responsibilities revert back to the elected co-chairs at the conclusion of the WGM.

### Select an Interim Co-chair

HL7 has a formal process for electing co-chairs, which include a 30-day call for nominations and elections at the WGM. Occasionally, a co-chair will resign at a point in time that occurs after the 30-day call for nominations. When this occurs, WGs may select an interim co-chair by a vote of hands during their WG meeting. The interim co-chair will serve until such time as a formal election can be announced and held. Unlike an acting chair, an interim chair has all the powers, privileges and responsibilities until the formal election is held. Many times, the interim chair anticipates being elected during the formal election period. Interim co-chairs will be added to the appropriate list servers and web pages.

### Ensure that Meeting Minutes are Taken

If you have a WG secretary or a co-chair who is responsible for taking minutes, verify that he or she will be in attendance. Otherwise, appoint someone in advance who will provide notes or minutes in electronic form. You will not be able to lead a meeting and take minutes at the same time.

Minutes can vary widely in their depth of coverage. They should use the [meeting minutes template](http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?MinutesTemplate). This template is just that—an empty file (no words) with the appropriate styles for use with meeting minutes. A style guide is included with the template to assist co-chairs with the look/feel of meeting minutes.

The minutes should include:

1. A list of attendees
2. Precisely worded motions that were made along with indication of how successful they were (passed unanimously, passed without objection, or the actual number of votes for and against, and abstentions). Motions and tallies related to ballot reconciliation can, instead, be recorded in the reconciliation spreadsheet, and posted as noted under item 5 below.
3. Descriptions of any associated work products (white papers, draft documents, presentations, etc.).
4. The agenda for the next meeting
5. Electronic copies of all work products of the WG including papers that were presented at the meetings, overheads, etc. Text files, Microsoft Word documents and PowerPoint documents are the three most common ways of providing information. Combine the minutes and all related documents in a single .ZIP archive and upload it to the website.
6. Your WGM meeting minutes need to be posted within two weeks following the WGM. Conference call minutes should be posted as defined in the Decision Making Practices document.
7. If your WG did not achieve quorum, post a document stating that fact and that no business was conducted. While there can be no binding decisions on calls that do not achieve quorum, minutes of the discussions, should there be any, should be taken and posted to the website.

**Note that meeting minutes must be posted to the Work Group’s page on the HL7 website or to the HL7 wiki**. Work Groups posting minutes to a location other than the WG page on the HL7 website should direct visitors to the location using the Additional Resources tab. Notify the webmaster if you have alternate locations for Conference Call Notices, Documents, Issues/Hot Topics, Meeting Agendas, Meeting minutes, Other links, Presentations, Project Documents, or a Wiki page. The posting of minutes is a WG Health Metric

### Meeting Room and AV Requirements

Instructions for requesting meeting rooms for the next WGM are distributed at the Co-chairs Dinner/Meeting held on Monday evening of each WGM. Rooms are assigned in the following priority, based on room size and availability:

1. WGs
2. Board-Appointed Committees
3. HL7 Special Projects Groups
4. Ancillary Groups

Request only the space you will need and indicate the numbers of attendees you expect at the WG meeting. In the event more participants attend than were planned for, the HL7 Director of Meetings will have additional chairs brought in.

Meeting space for the next WGM is requested online. Room requests for all joint WGMs planned for the next WGM, must be submitted to the HL7 Director of Meetings no later than the Friday following the WGM as specified in the section below.

#### WG Meeting Room Requests

[Meeting room requests](http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?MeetingRoomRequestForm) for the next WGM are submitted online no later than Friday of the week following the current WGM, (7 calendar days). You must include your AV requirements in the online form.

Requests for meeting rooms for joint WG meetings are made after the Co-chairs of the WGs determine a day and quarter(s) which they would like to meet. The Co-chairs determine which WG will be designated as the Host. One of the Co-chairs of the Host WG will submit the meeting room request for the joint meeting when they submit the meeting room request for the WGM. The non-Host WG WILL NOT request a meeting room for the quarters when they are meeting jointly and should not include any reference to it in their WG meeting request.

#### AV Requests

When requesting AV support, consider your needs carefully and request only the items needed. The following items should be considered:

* LCD Projector
* Screen
* Sound system with microphone(s) for large groups and special presentations

### Guidelines for Requesting Photocopies during the Meeting

HL7, like many organizations, is “green” and therefore encourages the use of electronic rather than hardcopy documents. If you need photocopies at the WGM, bring them to the registration desk. Small jobs are usually done while you wait, larger ones may take longer. Typically copy jobs are double sided and done in black/white as a cost saving measure.

### Meeting Change Notification

Notify the WGM registration desk of any changes to your scheduled WG sessions. The headquarters staff posts changes to scheduled WG sessions to a bulletin board near the registration desk and can ensure the changes it posted to event mobi. This alerts interested attendees of the changes and advises the staff of changes. You may also need to announce meeting changes on your WG’s list server or via other means as defined in your WG’s Decision Making Practices.

### Prepare a Detailed Agenda for Your Meeting

WGs should plan the agenda for the following WGM by Wednesday of the current WGM in order to determine room requirements and joint meetings for the following WGM.

Agendas for upcoming WGM are to be posted as soon as possible to the [wiki site](http://wiki.hl7.org/index.php?title=WGM_information) so that WGM attendees can plan their participation well in advance of the meeting.

HL7 HQ will send several emails to Co-chairs reminding them to post their agendas. Agendas can be updated as needed and reposted to the wiki site. Once an agenda is set you should consult with your WG prior to changing the agenda, particularly for items that might impact travel schedules. For example, some organizations have different representatives for V2 and V3 work so changing those agenda items could adversely impact travel plans.

If the agenda is changed after the WGM has started, post those changes on the bulletin board near the WGM registration desk and announce the change on the WG list service. Agendas should be brief but cover the major topics including, but not limited to, votes or elections that may be coming up. The Plenary meeting (usually in September) has a general session Monday morning (Q1, Q2) with the WGM beginning after lunch (Q3.). Plan your agenda accordingly.

An agenda template is provided on the website. Refer to section 3.6 for a link to the template.

### WGM Checklist

A [generic checklist](http://gforge.hl7.org/gf/project/psc/docman/?action=DocmanFileEdit&id=7577), including the items discussed above, that WG Co-chairs need to coordinate both before and after the WGM is available online.

## Following the WGM

### Submit Meeting Room Requests for the Next WGM

Within one week following the end of a WGM you must submit your request for your regular meeting room for the next WGM via the web form announced at the TSC meeting during the WGM (as indicated in section 3.13.6.1).

### Submit Meeting Minutes within Two Weeks

Submit minutes and associated work products within two (2) weeks following the end of the WGM. Get the minutes from your secretary or the person who took notes for you. Review, edit and approve them; then upload them directly to the web site by going to the Minutes repository for the individual WG located on the WG page. You can upload you minutes in Word, PDF or Zip file format. You are encouraged to include machine-readable diagrams in your minutes. Alternately, WGs can post their meeting minutes to the HL7 wiki.

Communicate with your WG members via teleconference or by e-mail; monitor and facilitate any work towards deliverables that are due before or at the next WGM.

### Submit Co-Chair post-WGM Survey

One of the co-chairs of each Work Group must complete and submit the post-WGM co-chair survey feedback on the Working Group Meeting. This survey will not be available until the week of the WGM. Several emails will be distributed to the co-chairs listserv reminding co-chairs of the survey, its location, and date by which responses are due. Completion of this survey is a WG Health Metric so work groups are encouraged to complete the survey on time.

### Dissolving a Work Group

[GOM](http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?GOM) §09.02.03 defines the process for Dissolution of a WG. The [WG Dissolution Template](http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?WGDissolveTemplate) referenced in the GOM is available online.

## Project Management

WGs are expected to follow HL7’s project management methodology as described in the Project Life Cycle for Product Development ([PLCPD](http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?PLCPD)). This includes creating project scope statements for WG projects, following the project approval process, and maintaining project status in HL7’s project management tool, Project Insight. Each WG should recruit a project facilitator when possible to assist in these tasks, either for the WG projects in total, or on a project-by-project basis. Each Steering Division (SD) has a project facilitator who may provide guidance to the WG project facilitator(s). Project Services also hosts an “open forum” on weekly calls and is available to respond to any project-related questions. The Project Services WG maintains the Project Scope Statement, Project Approval Process, PLCPD, and facilitator responsibilities and other project-related artifacts; these documents are hyperlinked below or can be located at the [Project Services webpage](http://www.hl7.org/Special/committees/projectServices/index.cfm)

### Project Services WG artifacts

[HL7 Cover Page Template](http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?CoverPageTemplate) – provides a cover page for artifacts produced by your WG (excluding ballots)

[Project Services HL7 Electronic Ballot Charts](http://www.hl7.org/Library/Committees/projectservices/HL7%20PS%20-%20Electronic%20Ballot%20Chart%20-%20Final.pdf) – The Ballot Charts were developed as a supplement to the HL7 Co-Chair Handbook to provide a quick reference to information related to each level of HL7 electronic balloting.

[Project Templates](http://www.hl7.org/library/committees/projectServices/PSWG%20Project_Template%202008-08%20Release.xls) – describe the project steps in Project Insight for the various ballot types.

* [PMO Tutorial Project Insight Overview](http://www.hl7.org/Library/Committees/projectservices/PMO%20Tutorial%20-%20Project%20Insight%20Overview%20-%202010%20May.ppt) – describes the Project Insight tool
* [Project Approval Process](http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?ProjectScopeStatement) – describes the steps to take a project through the approval process, which is a requirement to ballot standards. There are different approval paths for different types of projects.  
    
  [Project Life Cycle for Product Development](http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?PLCPD) (PLCPD) – The Project Life Cycle for Product Development (PLCPD) describes the process to produce HL7 ‘products’ including standards and specifications and includes project initiative, analysis and requirements documentation, and specification design. The PLCPD depicted as a cyclical process flow, presents the HL7 strategy for protocol specification development, enhancement, and management, however, as described in the GOM, allows WGs flexibility to plan their strategy to produce their artifacts.
* [Project Scope Statement](http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?ProjectScopeStatement) (PSS) – The PSS is required for project approval as described in the Project Approval Process. It includes a template only version, and a version including the instructions. The PSS is typically updated annually.
* [SD and Project Facilitator Responsibilities](http://www.hl7.org/Library/Committees/projectservices/Steering%20Division%20and%20Project%20Facilitator%20Responsibilities%20R1%202008-11-05.doc) – describes responsibilities of these two roles, traits desired of individuals filling these roles and the tasks expected.

### Project Insight

[Project Insight](http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?ProjectInsight) is HL7’s Project Management System.

Each WG has been assigned a log-in available from the WG Co-chair, or the HL7 Project Management Office (PMO): [PMO@HL7.org](mailto:PMO@HL7.org).

### Gforge Homebase

In addition to Project Insight, some Work Groups use [GForge Homebase](http://gforge.hl7.org/) to assist with the management of projects. The HL7 Project Homebase site is intended to support HL7 Tool Developers (Toolsmiths) and Work Groups in managing their projects. All of the tools available on this Homebase are designed to support the development and publication of HL7 Version 3 Messaging Standards. These tools carry a [license](http://hl7projects.hl7.nscee.edu/tc_include/hl7_eula.html) that restricts their use to activities that support the development of standards by HL7 and the HL7 International Affiliate Organizations.

### Three-year Planning

Three-year planning should be conducted by each Work Group, and the future work identified should be listed as three-year planning project placeholders in Project Insight. By using this mechanism, visitors and members using the Project Insight Searchable Database can find reference to upcoming project in which they may be interested. As future development is identified, co-chairs can send their planning project descriptions, which do not require a full project scope statement, to the HL7 PMO office for update.

# BALLOTING

Co-chairs are ultimately responsible for ensuring that any material that the WG wishes to ballot is completed as required and in a manner that is consistent with procedures upheld by the TSC following the guidelines of Publishing.

HL7 provides a couple of publications that are very useful for new co-chairs to get a good understanding of the ballot process:

* HL7 Ballots - [Voting Made Easy](http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?VotingMadeEasy) – This document is available for new co-chairs or anyone interested in understanding the HL7 ballot process.
* [Electronic Ballot Charts](http://gforge.hl7.org/gf/project/psc/docman/?subdir=390) - Provides a quick reference to information related to each level of HL7 electronic ballots.

## Participating in Publishing

Each WG is encouraged to select an individual who will function as the WG editor and participate in the Publishing WG. A list of [current publishing facilitators](http://www.hl7.org/documentcenter/public/membership/Facilitators%20Summary%20List.pdf) is available.

Please contact Headquarters ([HQ@HL7.org](mailto:HQ@HL7.org?subject=Change%20WG%20Publishing%20Facilatator)) if your WG publishing facilitator changes so that we can keep this list updated. That individual selected to function at the WG editor should join the editor’s list server and contact the chairs of the [Publishing WG](http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?Publishing) for additional instructions.

## Participating in Harmonization

Each WG is encouraged to select an individual who will represent any material proposed for sponsored or co-sponsored balloting of V3 material on the Harmonization calls. That individual should join the Harmonization list server or refer to the [Harmonization events page](http://www.hl7.org/events/harmonization/index.crm) for additional instructions. Participation in Harmonization is a WG Health metric.

## Managing Suggested Updates and Modifications to the Standards

Keeping track of suggested enhancements and technical corrections/typographical errors was once a time consuming and often overwhelming task. To assist co-chairs with this task, HL7 developed databases that members use to upload suggested enhancements and corrections to the standards. The following databases are available:

* [Version 2 Database](http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?V2Tracker)
* [CDA Database](http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?CDATracker)
* Additional databases for tracking changes to other standards may be created as the need arises.

Complete instructions for using the V2 tracking databases are provided on the website (also available as a link from the database page). The databases can also be exported to an Excel spreadsheet for WG preparation.

Co-chairs are encouraged to review the appropriate database(s) regularly to ensure that you’ve got a list of the suggested enhancements/fixes to discuss with the WG and to update the disposition of the line items that have been dealt with.

## Quick Checklist of Co-chair Responsibilities for Ballots

The current process for conducting Review Ballots is found in [GOM](http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?GOM) §13 while the process for balloting normative documents is provided in the HL7 Essential Requirements ([HL7 ER](http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?EssentialRequirements)) document. It is imperative that co-chairs know how to prepare for and conduct ballots. ANSI auditors select a given number of normative ballots for review every five years. The auditors are very thorough and will check to ensure that every negative balloter/commenter has been advised in writing of the status of their negative vote/comments and that each negative vote has either been withdrawn or sent for recirculation ballot, and that each negative balloter is informed of the appeals process.

An annual HL7 ballot schedule, based on three ballot cycles per year, is produced by Publishing. All ballot types will adhere to the ballot schedule unless granted an exception by the TSC. The ballot schedule is distributed to all co-chairs and identifies all critical path dates regarding preparation and submission of ballot material. All ballots must be approved by the TSC. A [current publishing calendar](http://www.hl7.org/special/committees/publishing/schedules.cfm) is available online.

### The Ballot Desktop

HL7 uses the [Ballot Desktop](http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?BallotDesktop) to store votes, comments and reconciliation packages for each of its ballots.

The Ballot Desktop enables co-chairs to view ballots related to current and past ballot cycles, send email to voters in the consensus groups related to their WG ballots, and post reconciliation spreadsheets that advise the voters of the status of negative votes.

The different types of ballots handled on the Ballot Desktop and the steps for ballot reconciliation are provided in the following sections.

### Review Ballots

There are three types of Review Ballot: Informative Documents ([GOM](http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?GOM) §13.01); Draft Standard for Trial Use (DSTU) ([GOM](http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?GOM) §13.02); and Comment-only ([GOM](http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?GOM) §13.03).

Informative Documents generally are not intended to become normative. They explain or support the structure of HL7 standards, or provide detailed information regarding the interpretation or implementation of an HL7 standard.

DSTU are normally issued as a precursor to a normative ballot. They allow the responsible WG to gather industry input on the completeness and viability of the implementation of a proposed standard. The review ballot allows for validation of the content of the proposed standard prior to release as a DSTU.

A Comment-only review allows the WG to gather input from a broader audience on documents in process; be they requirements documents, possible informative documents, or candidates for normative status.

HQ notifies all current members of the intent to form a review group at least 30 days prior to scheduled ballot open date. Review group signup is allowed until the date that the ballot opens.

Although the TSC may approve multiple iterations of a Comment-only ballot, they are typically conducted once to gather input. An informative document or DSTU review ballot may remain active until the content is either approved or withdrawn.

All comments should be captured via the Ballot Desktop to facilitate later consideration by the WG.

There is no reconciliation of review ballot comments per se. However, WGs are expected to consider all comments with the intent of improving the quality and clarity of the content being reviewed. The results of the WG’s consideration of each comment shall be recorded on the Ballot Desktop. There is no requirement to resolve negative comments.

Substantive change as a result of a review ballot does not cause an arbitrary need to conduct another review ballot. Such changes are the result of identifying obvious shortcomings in the ballot content which is the intent of a review ballot. Having incorporated the change, the WG may move forward with the informative document or DSTU. However, a WG always has the option to conduct another review if felt necessary.

Quorum and approval levels differ by review ballot type. Please consult the [GOM](http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?GOM) for specifics.

Upon approval, and with the concurrence of the TSC, an informative document may be registered with ANSI as a Technical Report ([GOM](http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?GOM) §13.01.06). Registration does not infer any status on the document; it simply ensures notification of its availability to a broader audience.

Where the evaluation and comment period of a DSTU results in a need for substantive changes to the draft standard, the resulting normative ballot material may embody such changes or a revised DSTU may be released for further evaluation without recourse to another review ballot.

The flow involved in the review ballot process is depicted in the graphic below:

### ReviewBallotProcessNormative Ballots

HQ notifies all current members of the intent to form a consensus group for normative ballots at least 30 days prior to scheduled ballot open date. Consensus group signup is allowed up to the date that the ballot opens.

Co-chairs should monitor ballot responses as they are submitted (co-chairs receive copies of all returned ballots related to their WG) and notify the consensus group, especially those who returned negative ballots, when/where their comments will be discussed; e.g., Monday-Wednesday at the WGM in Atlanta, which convenes the week of May 4.

Prepare a preliminary reconciliation package that is distributed at the meeting, via e-mail or posted to the Ballot Desktop that lists each negative vote/comment and a motion for resolving it. HL7 provides an Amalgamation Macro (see section 3.6) to aide this process. Hold open discussions to determine the disposition (by WG vote) on all negative comments received in response to the ballot. This may be accomplished at the WGM, via a conference call, etc., but should be consistent with what was announced above. Record the motions and subsequent votes in the disposition section of the Ballot Comment Spreadsheet and include as a zip file with the meeting minutes. The different dispositions are:

* Persuasive: A majority of the WG agrees without objection that the position expressed by the negative response is persuasive; the changes recommended by the comment shall be incorporated as reasonable and necessary revisions.
* Not Persuasive: A majority of the WG agrees that the comment deals with process or issues not under the control of the WG, or suggests the use of alternate methodologies or solutions which have no advantage over those used, or questions the validity of the approach or the expertise of the developers. Comments declared not persuasive but not withdrawn are reported as unresolved negatives.
* Not Related: A majority of the WG agrees that the comment deals with issues or functions beyond the scope of or is clearly not related to the ballot subject matter. Comments declared not related are reported as “negative without comment” and don’t impact the outcome of the ballot.

Once the WG has voted on the dispositions, send an e-mail through the Ballot Desktop to each negative submitter advising them of the status of their negative vote/comment. HL7 headquarters must be able to produce this communication for the ANSI auditor. Using the ballot desktop ensures that this requirement is fulfilled and that the communications are captured in a central location.

Follow up with each negative voter to ensure that he/she has been informed of the disposition of their negative vote and given an opportunity to either withdraw the negative vote (which becomes a positive vote) or affirm negative. To withdraw a negative vote, the voter must advise the co-chair and the appropriate HL7 staff in writing, which is typically done through the Ballot Desktop.

Following reconciliation, determine if the document passed: a majority of the consensus group returned a ballot representative of a majority of HL7 members and at least 75% of combined affirmative/negative votes are affirmative.)

Make any updates to the document and notify HQ of your intent to re-ballot, if substantive changes merit such, or move forward to ANSI for approval. Unresolved negative comments do not preclude a document from being submitted to ANSI; however, submission with unresolved negative comments must be preceded by a recirculation ballot to allow consideration of such comments by the consensus group.

For a subsequent normative ballot of the same content, the consensus group shall include those who responded to the previous ballot; whether affirmative, negative, or abstain. Although the TSC may re-open the consensus group to registrants, typically the consensus group for subsequent normative ballots of the same content is not open to additional signup.

In the case of a subsequent normative ballot of the same content, a negative vote or comment that has been submitted previously and is submitted again does not require further consideration.

The flows involved in the normative ballot process are depicted in the graphic on the next page:



## Reconciliation Activities

Co-chairs are responsible for tracking, completing and posting Ballot reconciliation items using the Ballot Desktop. It is very important that ALL reconciliation activities be recorded on the Ballot Desktop. If at any time you need support in correctly using the Ballot Desktop or in troubleshooting problems you might have, please contact the Technical Publications Manager ([ballotmanager@HL7.org](mailto:ballotmanager@HL7.org)) and Webmaster ([webmaster@Hl7.org](mailto:webmaster@Hl7.org)) for help. For specific instructions on completing the Excel-based reconciliation spreadsheets, please refer to the instructions in the reconciliation spreadsheet template. In general, co-chairs are responsible for:

* Consolidating all comment spreadsheets submitted on their ballot document during the ballot period before the WGM using the Amalgamation Macro (see Section 3.6)
* Conducting reconciliations during WGMs and conference calls
* Recording and tracking the WG reconciliation decisions and actions in the consolidated spreadsheet
* Posting the completed reconciliation package on the Ballot Desktop
* Notifying all Negative Voters of the status of their Negative Votes

Completion of reconciliation activities is required for all Normative ballots to meet ANSI requirements. While comprehensive reconciliation is not required for Review ballots, consideration of all comments is highly encouraged because it helps readers of those documents track important changes and comments throughout the document's history; review ballot reconciliation documents must be posted to the Ballot Desktop.

### Consolidating Comment Spreadsheets

At the close of the ballot period a co-chair should log in to the [Ballot Desktop](http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?BallotDesktop) and consolidate all the comments received from voters during the ballot period. These actions should be completed prior to the upcoming WGM so that WG members have the consolidated comments spreadsheet available for review during your sessions at the WGM.

1. From the Ballot Desktop, click on the Tally tab. When the screen refreshes, you will see a listing of all the consensus groups with each title linking to an individual Tally page.
2. Click the link for your WG’s ballot document. This will load the Tally page for your ballot document. In the left-hand menu section titled "Participation Summary Download" are links to help you download summary information and create a consolidated comment spreadsheet.
3. To begin, click on the Export this Ballot Participation Summary Information link. You will be prompted to open or save a "CSV" file. Click the Save button and save the file to a convenient location, such as an appropriately-named folder on your desktop. (More information on saving and formatting this "CSV" file as an Excel spreadsheet can be found from the Tally page by clicking on the Instructions for Using the Exported data link.)
4. You should also download the Participant Summary Download Macro spreadsheet from the Tally page to the same location you saved the "CSV" file. When you open this spreadsheet it will prompt you to select the "CSV" file. Macros in the spreadsheet will then format it and allow you to save it as an Excel file.
5. Continue to download all the comment spreadsheets submitted by voters to the same download directory. The Tally page will display a link to each of these files in the "Upld?" column.
6. Once you have collected all the Comment spreadsheets, you will need to consolidate them into a single spreadsheet. This is done with the Ballot Amalgamation Macro Spreadsheet. A link to this spreadsheet is available from the main Tally page that lists all the consensus groups. Full directions on performing the consolidation are included in the spreadsheet. Please note that not all voters will provide their comments in a Comment spreadsheet; some may use a Word file or provide comments with their votes. You will need to manually add such comments to your consolidated comment spreadsheet.

### Tracking Reconciliation Activities in the Reconciliation Spreadsheet

During your WG sessions or calls, use the consolidated comments spreadsheet to record decisions for each of the comments listed. Information should be as complete as possible because the reconciliation spreadsheets provide the primary means of recording WG decisions, of communicating those decisions and the supporting rationale to negative voters, and of tracking any activities by individuals to resolve those negative comments.

Individual columns in the spreadsheet are provided to, among other things, allow WGs to record their responses to comments, to provide a rationale for a decision, to assign a person responsible for completing a reconciliation action, and to record the completion of that action. Please refer to the instructions in the comment spreadsheet for more help on completing the reconciliation spreadsheets and correctly and completely filling in column information.

When your reconciliation actions are complete, compress the reconciliation spreadsheet into a zip file along with any other documentation needed to support the reconciliation actions and decisions. This zip file and its contents are now referred to as the Reconciliation Package and will be posted on the ballot document Tally page on the Ballot Desktop.

### Posting a Completed Reconciliation Package

Once a WG has completed all the necessary reconciliation actions to address all negative comments, the completed spreadsheet needs to be uploaded to the Ballot Desktop.

1. From the Ballot Desktop, click on the Tally tab. When the screen refreshes, you will see a listing of all the consensus groups with each title linking to an individual Tally page.
2. Click the link for your ballot document to view the Tally page for your consensus group.
3. In the left-hand menu, expand the Resolving Negatives header and click on the Upload the Reconciliation Package for the Document Pool link.
4. The Upload page includes a button to allow you to browse to and select your completed Reconciliation Package.
5. Once you have selected the appropriate file click the Upload this Reconciliation Package button. Please note that the web site system will automatically rename your file based on file naming conventions for the ballot pool and the current ballot cycle. You will receive notification when the file upload is complete.

### Notifying Negative Voters of the Status of the Negative Comments

Once a completed Reconciliation Package has been posted to the Ballot Desktop, co-chairs are responsible for notifying submitters of the status of their negative comments. The Tally page on the Ballot Desktop provides functionality to help you complete these actions.

1. From the Ballot Desktop, click on the Tally tab. When the screen refreshes, you will see a listing of all the consensus groups with each title linking to an individual Tally page.
2. Click the link for your ballot document to view the Tally page for your document pool.
3. In the left-hand menu, expand the Resolving Negatives header and click on the Request Withdrawal by Emailing All Negative Voters link. This page allows you to email all or select negative voters in the consensus group. Please note that you either need to select the Send to All Names checkbox or check individual names. If you don't check any box, the message has no recipients. This page also allows you to customize the notification email and to include a link to the reconciliation package in the email. Co-chairs can use this page to send out several notification emails at different points in the process of completing a ballot. Such notification might include an initial notification that a reconciliation package is available, follow-up notices if the information in a reconciliation package changes, or requests for additional information from voters who fail to withdraw their negatives.

The completion and posting of reconciliation actions and the recording of reconciliation   
activities is a very important part of a co-chair's responsibilities and helps us to comply with the requirements of an ANSI-accredited standards development organization.

## Escalating and Resolving Requests to Withdraw Negative Votes

As noted above, normative documents can progress to ANSI as long as 75% of the affirmative and negative votes cast on the document are affirmative. However, unresolved negative votes must be subject to a re-circulation ballot, which presents the members of the consensus group an opportunity to change their vote if desired. If the recirculation ballot concludes with at least 75% affirmative votes, the document can be submitted to ANSI for approval.

Many times, negative voters do not respond to repeated requests to withdraw negative votes or engage with the committee on resolving negative votes. The following steps are recommended to keep the ballot process moving forward:

* Provide each negative voter with two (2) requests, sent through the Ballot Desktop, to withdraw their negative votes, providing a week or two for a response.
* If the negative voter fails to respond to those requests, call the HL7 Associate Executive Director (734-677-7777 x104), who will phone the key contact at the appropriate organization and ask the key member to resolve the issue.
* If the key member fails to respond within a week or two, co-chairs should reassess how many affirmative votes have been received. If less than 75% of the combined affirmative and negative votes are affirmative, the document may need to be re-balloted. If at least 75% of the combined affirmative and negative votes are affirmative, the co-chair shall advise the Director of Technical Publications that a recirculation ballot is necessary.
* If at least 75% of the combined affirmative and negative votes returned for the recirculation ballot are affirmative, the document will be submitted to ANSI for approval. If the document failed to pass the recirculation ballot with at least 75% affirmative vote, it is a candidate for re-ballot or withdrawal.

## Substantive Changes

What is a substantive change? According to ANSI a Substantive Change is one that directly and materially affects the use of the standard. The ANSI definition includes changes that would break solutions that were implemented using the specification as it existed before the change. As an ANSI-accredited Standards Development Organization (SDO), HL7 must be guided by the ANSI definition provided in *ANSI Essential Requirements* and reiterated in the HL7 ER.

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The Architectural Review Board (ARB) believes that substantive changes are those which modify the standard by adding or removing capabilities. Any change that damages the integrity of semantics as well as the validity of syntax is a substantive change. A change that materially affects the contents of exchanged messages is Substantive. For example, the addition of a new trigger event is substantive; adding fields to an existing message type is substantive. On the other hand, the correction of a typographical error, or the addition of an example message is not considered substantive.

The ARB considers a change to the standard to be substantive if an interface would fail when a message composed with the change is built, sent or received. This is similar to, but more expansive than, the definition of backwards compatibility. A change that creates a backwards compatibility problem is substantive by definition.

### Role of Substantiveness in balloting

The goals of the HL7 ballot process are to:

* Meet its members' needs for specifications that are responsive to conditions. Timeliness is important.
* Develop specifications that permit any interested HL7 member to participate and make their views known.
* Encourage early implementation of specifications to ensure that final specifications are used and useful.
* Publish high quality specifications that are accurate, clear, coherent, and consistent across the full set of specifications.
* Adhere to *ANSI Essential Requirements* that are focused on ensuring that a consensus is achieved within the entire industry without any "special interests" skewing the results.
* Abide by the HL7 Bylaws, HL7 Essential Requirements (HL7 ER) and Governance and Operations Manual (GOM) to achieve these goals.

The definition of "substantive" changes must be interpreted within this context.

In a perfect world, every specification submitted for ballot would be complete, coherent, clearly expressed, consistent with all related specifications and delivered "just in time" for its intended use. Normative ballot reviewers would represent the full spectrum of affected parties and would vote in the affirmative with the only comments being small suggestions to add "polish" before publication. Additionally, many people would implement the specifications and actively provide feedback to continue to extend and enhance the specifications.

We realize that we do not live in a perfect world. Each of us juggles many objectives. The tradeoffs are tough and it is the Architecture Review Board's responsibility to provide guidance to the WGs so that the overall set of Version 3 specifications approaches this ideal. The ARB has been approached by WGs for interpretation when they cannot clearly delineate changes as either "substantive" or "non-substantive". The 2.x concept of substantive change is based on the premise that changes that would "break" solutions implemented using the specifications are substantive. The ARB will apply this principle to Version 3.

Since the goal of Version 3 Standards is semantic interoperability, the overriding principle for determining substantiveness will be whether a change damages the integrity of semantics or the validity of syntax. A primary Version 3 principle is the use of constraints as the delineation of correctness. The Version 3 specifications are model driven, so changes to any of the structural properties that would alter the constraints contained in the source models must be substantive changes.

### Effect of Substantive Change

HL7 ER §02.09.04 stipulates that substantive change introduced as a result of comments received on a normative ballot will result in a subsequent normative ballot of the same content.

### The Importance of Substantive Change

Why is the distinction between substantive and non-substantive important? ANSI rules and HL7 process require that all substantive changes to normative material be balloted.

The identification and designation of changes as substantive or non-substantive plays an important role in the balloting process. When a WG creates a ballot package, the package should include a list of all changes from the previous version of the document. This list should indicate which changes are considered to be substantive, and which are not. When a chapter or other section of a standard goes through successive ballots, this list should indicate changes from the prior ballot, not from the beginning of the balloting process.

### V2 Substantive Changes

The following items constitute substantive changes:

* Addition or deletion of a trigger event - This implies the definition of an abstract message corresponding to the trigger event.
* Addition or deletion of an abstract message or change to an existing one - This includes addition or deletion of segments or segment groups, changes in segment or segment group repetition and changes to segment or segment group optionality.
* Addition of a segment - This implies the use of the segment in an abstract message.
* Addition of a data element within a segment.
* Changes to an existing data element - This includes changes to element repetition or optionality. It also includes changing the code table assigned to a coded value. When an element is used differently in different segments, e.g. different lengths, this can be addressed as a non-substantive technical correction if the segments are newly conceived. However, if this is a situation of long standing, fixing it should be considered as substantive. In this case, the proper tack is to choose a standard length, deprecate the element uses that do not fit, and add the needed elements to the end of affected segments.
* Addition of a data type - This implies its assignment to a data element.
* Change to an existing data type - This includes addition or deletion of components, and changes to component order, optionality, or repetition. It includes changes to the data type assigned to a component, and/or changes in the maximum length of a component.
* Changes to an HL7 defined table - This implies that the code table is assigned to at least one data element. Substantive changes include the addition or subtraction of code values.
* Change to a definition that changes how a receiving system has to manage the received message.
* Changes to chapter text that change the rules for when a trigger event is used.

### Non- Substantive V2 Changes

The following items constitute non-substantive changes:

* Changes to the codes in user defined and externally defined tables.
* Changes to definitions (segment, element, trigger event, data type, etc.) that clarify the WG’s intent rather than changing subsequent processing.
* Technical corrections that implement the original intent of the WG. For example, if a WG meant to add an attribute to one segment, and it was mistakenly added to another; this can be corrected without an additional ballot.
* Changes to the HL7 assigned ID for an element when it is realized that what appears to be a new element is an existing one.

### V3 Substantive Changes

The objective is the same as for V2 – anyone materially affected by a change in the normative specification should have an opportunity to make their opinion of the change known, and have that opinion taken into consideration, before a change is adopted.

Those potentially materially affected are not just senders and receivers of messages – but consumers of ANY HL7 specification. Operationally, if implementing against the specification as previously communicated does not accomplish the same objective as implementing against the current specification, the introduced change is substantive.

Substantive differs between Version 2 and Version 3 in the increased emphasis on the “semantics” of the interaction, not just the syntax. Therefore, if any system participating in an interoperable function cannot meet its contractual obligations, the introduced change is substantive.

Because V3 has more artifacts and is more explicit, there is more probability that ANY introduced change will be substantive, unless it was just a change to definition to improve clarity. The following are examples of substantive changes:

* Changing constraints on data.
* Changing the properties of an existing data type - For example, Add a property to AD to indicate the parts are unordered.
* Changing the value set assigned to a structural table - For example, Use of an HL7 defined vocabulary instead of xml:lang for coding languages. This is non-controversial, but Substantive.
* Changing definitions that change receiving system behavior.

### Non Substantive V3 Changes

Changes to descriptive text that clarify, but do not change meaning:

* Typographical corrections.
* Formatting corrections.
* Changes made to graphics.

### Technical Corrections

A technical correction is a type of non-substantive change. A technical correction is a non-controversial change that alters a document so that it says what the WG intended to say. Technical corrections typically involve correcting changes to normative content that were not made, were incorrectly made, or were inconsistently made during the editing process.

When there is doubt, a WG may ask the TSC to rule whether a change is a technical correction. In this case, the TSC will ask for documentation that the WG intended to make the change and evidence that the change is non-controversial, such as:

* A reconciliation package or meeting minutes that document the WG’s intent to make a change.
* Meeting minutes that document a discussion of the change and record a unanimous vote to make the correction. This would be evidence of the non-controversial nature of the change.

Here are some examples of technical corrections:

* The CDA document refers and links to RFC 2557 "MIME Encapsulation of Aggregate Documents, such as HTML (MHTML)" If the RFC moves, the hyperlink would break. Fixing a broken hyperlink is a Technical Correction and a Non-Substantive change.
* The RMIM Design tool never correctly named the associations to or from a role clone when that clone is a CMET. The tool was corrected. A process was run on existing material to correct the naming error. This is a Technical Correction and a Non-Substantive Change.
* In ebXML, the WG neglected to add the type attribute used in the OASIS original. The type element could be ISO OID, DUNS Number, etc. Making this change, which makes ebXML consistent with the underlying OASIS standard, is a Technical Correction and a Non-Substantive Change.

### Version 3 Elements and Substantiveness

This section lists elements of a Version 3 Standard along with substantiveness rules and examples. See the Version 3 Guide in the HL7 Ballot document for more information on each element. As a general rule, changes that are made to non-normative elements are not substantive. changes to normative elements may be Substantive.

##### Storyboards

A storyboard consists of a short description of its purpose and an interaction diagram that shows the progression of interactions between application roles. A storyboard narrative is a description of a real-life event that provides the necessary context for the development of a specific interaction described in the storyboard. The process of storyboarding lays the foundation for describing HL7 messages and their content. Storyboards are not normative. Therefore, changes to Storyboards are not Substantive.

##### Application Roles

Application Roles represent a set of communication responsibilities that might be implemented by an application. They describe system components or sub-components that send or receive interactions.

Application Roles are not normative. Therefore, changes to Application Roles are not Substantive.

##### Trigger Events

A Trigger Event is an explicit set of conditions that initiate the transfer of information between system components (application roles).

Trigger Events are normative. Changes to normative elements may be substantive.

Here are some examples of changes to Trigger Events:

* Adding or deleting a Trigger Event is a substantive change.
* Changing descriptive text that alters Trigger Event rules is a substantive change.

##### Domain Message Information Models

The Domain Message Information Model (D-MIM) is a subset of the Reference Information Model (RIM) that includes a fully expanded set of class clones, attributes and relationships that are used to create messages for a particular domain. D-MIMs are not Normative. Therefore, changes to D-MIMs are not substantive. However, a change to an R-MIM not supported in the D-MIM is Substantive, because messages will fail.

##### Common Message Element Types

Common Message Element Types (CMETs) are a work product produced by a WG for expressing a common, useful and reusable concept. They are generally "consumed", or used by both the producing WG and other WGs. CMETs are Normative. Changes to normative elements may be substantive. A CMET is a special kind of R-MIM. The same rules that apply to R-MIMs apply to CMETs. See below for further information.

##### Refined Message Information Models

Each Refined Message Information Model (R-MIM) is a subset of the D-MIM and contains only those classes, attributes and associations required to compose the set of messages derived from the Hierarchical Message Descriptions (HMD) that originate from the R-MIM root class. R-MIMs are normative. Changes to normative elements may be substantive. A change to an R-MIM not supported in the D-MIM is substantive, because messages will fail.

Here are some examples of changes to R-MIMs:

* Addition/deletion/change of an R-MIM is a substantive change.

Changes to an R-MIM that constitute addition or removal of a class clone, association to a class clone, attributes of a class clone.

* Changes to the characteristics of an attribute within an RMIM, HMD or Message Type are Substantive.

For example, InM made changes that remove three Message Types and replaces them with one. The three Message Types were very similar and were combined into a single message that has all the features of the previous three. This is a Substantive change.

* A change to an R-MIM not supported in the D-MIM will cause messages to fail, and is, therefore, Substantive.
* A change to an item's cardinality – from mandatory to required is not Substantive.
* Correcting a change of destination CMET.

For example, the framers of the ballot had intended to point to a particular CMET, but there was an incorrect entry in the cmetinfo.txt file which pointed to a different CMET. Correcting the reference is an example of a Technical Correction.

##### Hierarchical Message Descriptions and Message Types

Hierarchical Message Descriptions (HMD) and their resulting Message Types define the message payload. An HMD is a tabular representation of the sequence of elements (i.e., classes, attributes and associations) represented in an R-MIM that define the message without reference to the implementation technology. The HMD defines a single base message structure - the "common" message type. A Message Type represents a unique set of constraints applied against the common message. HMDs and Message Types are Normative. Changes to normative elements may be Substantive.

Here are some examples of changes to HMDs and Message Types:

* Adding or Deleting Message Types is a substantive change.
* Changing constraints is a substantive change.
* Changing the properties of an existing data type. For example, Add a property to indicate the parts are unordered is a substantive change.
* Changing the value set assigned to a structural table is a substantive change. For example, the use of an HL7 defined vocabulary instead of xml:lang for coding languages is non-controversial, but Substantive.

##### Interactions

An Interaction is a unique one-way transfer of information consisting of:

* Trigger Event
* Transmission Wrapper
* Control Act Wrapper
* Message Type
* Sending and Receiving Roles
* Interactions are Normative. Changes to Normative elements may be substantive.

The same rules that apply to the components of an Interaction (i.e., Trigger Events, Message Types, etc.) apply to the Interaction. Therefore, a Substantive Change to a Message Type is also a substantive change to all Interactions that use the Message Type.

##### Version 3 Message Wrappers and Infrastructure

HL7 Version 3 provides a substantial level of functionality in the provision of envelopes to support the transport of HL7 messages from sender to receiver. HL7 calls these wrappers. Inside the wrapper is Domain Content. Wrappers are defined in the same way as message content; by defining object classes and relationships. These specifications can then be used to generate an XML schema, or other ITS-defined syntax to go on the wire.

The HL7 Infrastructure addresses the following aspects of the communications environment that is considered common to all HL7 Version 3 messaging implementations:

1. A specification for the composite HL7 Version 3 message.

2. A protocol for reliable message delivery.

3. Generic "Communication Roles" that support the modes of HL7 messaging.

4. Message control events that describe a framework for generic HL7 messaging.

Version 3 Message Wrappers and Infrastructure are Normative. Changes to Normative elements can be substantive.

For example:

Change cardinality of Message to Receiver from 0..\* to 1..\*. This was already mandatory with no default so changing the minimum cardinality from 0 to 1 was a technical correction.

##### Examples

Examples are not normative. Therefore, changes to Examples are not substantive.

##### Vocabulary

The HL7-defined vocabulary domain tables are stored in the HL7 repository from which a number of views have been extracted to produce the HL7 Vocabulary Domain Listings for the [HL7 Reference Information Model](http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?RIM) (RIM). The HL7 Vocabulary is normative. Changes to normative elements may be substantive.

##### Definitions

Backwards Compatibility: A change that would create a backward compatibility problem is a substantive change. For backwards compatibility, a message recipient is expected to process a new message and ignore added material. If there is new material that needs to be parsed in order to process the message given its new definition, the change is substantive.

Some general rules for a Backwards Compatibility are:

* From the V3 perspective, the focus is on message types. As long as there is a set of message types that do what was done before, the contents of a ballot are backwards compatible.
* Neither attributes nor associations can be removed from a message type.
* Association cardinality cannot be tightened.
* You can change attribute conformance from Mandatory to Required, and from Required to Optional, but not the reverse.
* You cannot remove values from the HL7 defined value sets for structural codes. This includes all attributes with CS data types.
* If a particular coding system is associated with a domain within the ballot, it may not be removed.
* If a particular value set is associated with a domain within a ballot, the value set reference may not be removed, nor may any code be removed from the value set.
* No interaction may be removed that existed in the prior ballot. This precludes removal or redefinition of a trigger event.
* Receiver responsibilities may not be removed from interactions.

Definitions:

**Non-Substantive**: A change is considered to be non-substantive if it would not cause an interface to fail when a message was sent or received. All technical corrections are non-substantive changes. Changes made to non-Normative material are not substantive.

**Substantive**: Substantive changes modify the standard by adding or removing capabilities. A change is considered to be substantive if it would cause an interface to fail when a message was sent or received. This is similar to, but more expansive than, the definition of backwards compatibility. A change that creates a backwards compatibility problem is substantive by definition.

### Managing Substantive Change

The TSC will play the following role in the management of substantive change:

Definition of the criteria for substantive changes.

Upon request review proposed changes to determine whether they are substantive.

As a general matter, the TSC acts in the role of an auditor. It is important to recognize that the TSC may need to discuss changes with the WG, because the application of the rules needs to consider the context.

## Submitting HL7's ANSI-approved Standards for ISO Approval:

Once an HL7 standard is ANSI-approved or is published as a Draft Standard for Trial Use (DSTU), it can be submitted for approval by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) under a special agreement. Please review [information and complete instructions](http://www.hl7.org/participate/isojic.cfm) to follow this process.

# HL7 WORK GROUP DECISION MAKING PRACTICES

The generic HL7 [Decision Making Practices](http://hl7.org/permalink/?DMP) (DMP) is available for download. Each WG should review this document and make those changes that are appropriate for their particular processes. The WG should then vote to adopt the edited document. Once adopted, it should be sent to the co-chairs of the [Process Improvement WG](http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?PICLeadership) and posted to the WG web page under Documents and Presentations. That way, as new people come into the organization, they can familiarize themselves with the rules and processes that each particular WG uses to make decisions.

The generic DMP contain sections on many areas that affect the operation of WGs, including:

* Work Group Meetings
* Venues of Notification
* Meeting Notifications and Agendas
* Decisions at Working Group Meetings
* Decision as non-Working Group Meetings
* Quorum at Working Group Meetings
* Voting
* Proxy

The generic DMP is updated every few years. Please check the most recent version of the DMP for up-to-date information on the areas noted above.

## Robert’s Rules of Order

The WG shall rely upon [Roberts Rules of Order](http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?RobertsRules) in the event that formal guidance is needed or requested.

The WG intends to ensure the effective and active engagement of all participants. To ensure fair and just participation, the WG shall follow its documented DMP, falling-back to Roberts Rules of Order in the event of a question or concern. Since Robert’s Rules of Order provides formality for addressing almost all matters of process, this provides a “backup mechanism” of formality in the event that it is required.

It is the responsibility of the presiding chair to guide the WG to an efficient and effective outcome. The WG shall follow, in this order of precedence, the WG DMP (which cannot conflict with the Bylaws, GOM, or HL7 ER), the GOM, the Bylaws, the HL7 ER, and Roberts Rules of Order. WG-established DMP can refine HL7 processes so long as they remain in accordance with the basic tenets of the Bylaws, GOM, and HL7 ER.

In the event that an issue arises where formality is required and no other guidance exists, Robert’s Rules of Order shall take precedence. This provides a “common denominator” to keep in-check the power of the presiding chair and to confirm the rights of all WG participants and members.