

RTRS Procedure for the Development of New Documents

Version 1.0

Date: 7th of December, 2021.

Produced by This document was developed by the Technical Unit of the RTRS in collaboration with E4tech in 2019.

The document was formally endorsed and approved by the Executive Board Members on 6th of November 2019 and approved by Written Resolution No. 2-2021 on 7th of December, 2021.



This is a public document of the Round Table on Responsible Soy Association (RTRS), for any comments regarding the content of this document or the RTRS Standard please contact the:

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The RTRS official languages are English, Spanish and Portuguese, however in case of any inconsistency between different versions of the same document, please refer to the English version as the official one.

1. Scope

This document describes the procedure to be followed by the RTRS for the development and continuous improvement of the RTRS standards, and related technical documents, such as procedures and guidelines. It includes the governance and decision-making process for approval of new and revised documents. This procedure does not apply to minor revisions. A revision is considered minor if it does not substantially modify the scope and content of a document. Minor revisions include formatting, clarifications and corrections of misspellings or typos.

All aspects of this procedure are considered to be normative, including the scope, effective date, references, unless otherwise stated.

The purpose of this procedure is to ensure that all relevant RTRS documents are developed through a consistent, transparent and participatory process, in line with ISEAL Standard SettingCode.

2. Procedure Effective date

The specified procedures will become formal requirements with effect from December 7th 2021.

This procedure will be reviewed at least once in 3 years, or earlier upon decision by the Executive Board or as required by ISEAL membership requirements.

3. Definitions

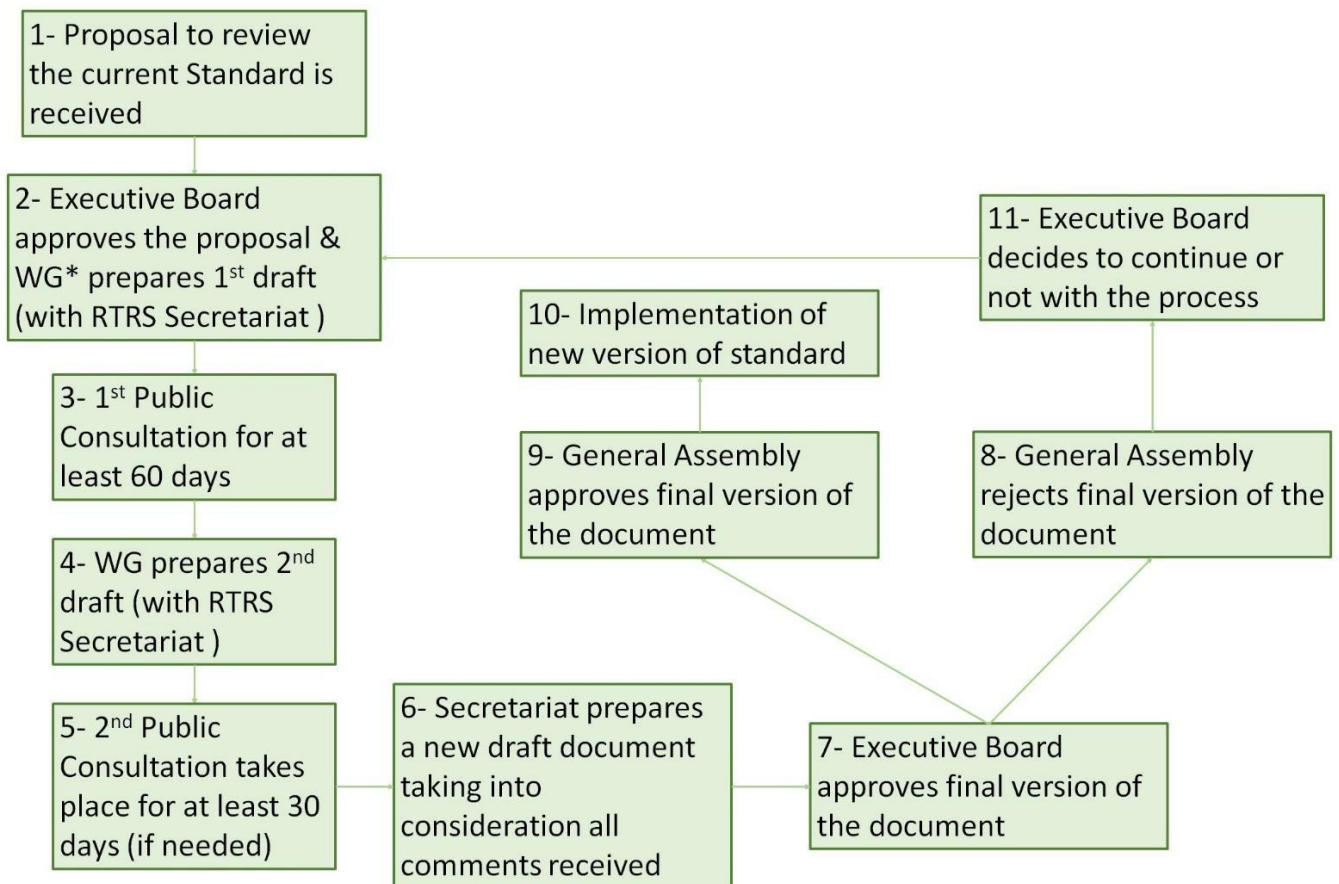
<u>Consensus:</u>	General agreement, absence of sustained opposition on substantial issues
<u>Constituencies:</u>	Categories of stakeholders identified by the RTRS: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Producers;• Industry, Trade and Finance; or• Civil Society Organizations.
<u>General Assembly:</u>	Maximum decision Body in the RTRS Association, formed by all RTRSmembers.
<u>Proxy Votes:</u>	Delegated votes, in the case of a voting when one member of the RTWG is absence and wants to delegate the vote.
<u>RTRS Social and Environmental International Standards:</u>	Any RTRS standard that covers and provides specifications or precise criteria regarding social and environmental aspects.

Standard: RTRS standards include the compulsory requirements that economic operators must comply with to receive RTRS certification, including sustainability, traceability and management requirements.

Procedures: RTRS procedures include compulsory requirements that the RTRS Secretariat, RTRS members, RTRS Certification Bodies and RTRS Accreditation Bodies must comply with in the context of RTRS governance, standard development, assurance, trademark and claims, monitoring and evaluation.

Guidelines: RTRS Guidelines are non-normative documents supporting economic operators, certification bodies, accreditation bodies and RTRS members through the implementation of the RTRS standard and certification scheme.

4. Process for the development/revision of standards



* WG (Working Group) requirements in "RTRS Procedure for the Development of New Documents V1.0"

4.1. Proposal for the development/revision process

- 4.1.1. Proposals for the development or revision of RTRS standards may be submitted at any time by any RTRS member, the RTRS Secretariat or interested party.
- 4.1.2. Proposals may be submitted to the RTRS Secretariat via post, email or the RTRS website.
- 4.1.3. Such proposals shall clearly identify the standard(s) to be created/revise, describe the scope and content/revision of the standard and define the needs for a new standard or for the revision of existing standards.
- 4.1.4. At minimum, any RTRS standards will be automatically reviewed not less than once every five years and not more than once every three years to comply with ISEAL's Code of Good Practice for Setting Social and Environmental Standards. Automatic reviews shall follow the consultation and approval procedures described in this procedure. The official review cycle should be included in the standards at the time of their publication.

4.2. Approval/rejection of the development/revision process

- 4.2.1. Upon verification of the completeness of the proposal, the RTRS Secretariat shall submit the proposal to the RTRS Executive Board for approval.
- 4.2.2. The Executive Board may approve or reject the proposal for the development/revision of standards.
- 4.2.3. The verification of the proposal and decision to approve/reject the proposal shall take no longer than one month.
- 4.2.4. In case of rejection, the decision of the Executive Board shall be justified and documented.
- 4.2.5. The applicant may file an appeal within two weeks following the communication of the Executive Board's decision. The Executive Board shall re-examine the proposal for development/revision, in light of any additional information provided by the applicant and may decide to approve or reject the proposal. The re-examination shall not take more than two weeks. In case of rejection, the decision of the Executive Board shall be justified and documented.

4.3. Terms of Reference

- 4.3.1. At the onset of any standard development/revision, the RTRS Secretariat shall write and publish Terms of Reference, which shall include:
 - The objectives that the standard seeks to achieve and its scope;
 - The stakeholders affected by the standard;
 - A justification of need to create or review the standard;
 - An evaluation of other standards and the assurance that no other existing standard meets the expressed need;

- Identification of factors that could prevent the standard from achieving its objectives;
 - A working plan, including objectives, benefits, and explaining how the new/revised standard will contribute to the Mission and Vision of the RTRS;
 - The desired outcomes;
 - Annex documentation and papers to support the need of this new Standard.
 - Timeline (incl. process steps, expected date of completion and publication) and budget expected;
- 4.3.2. The Terms of Reference shall be reviewed and approved by the Executive Board.

4.4. Communication of the development/revision process and stakeholder outreach

- 4.4.1. The terms of Reference shall be published on the RTRS website and announced formally by email to all RTRS members, certified operators, certification bodies and partners. The publication and announcement shall be conducted at minimum two weeks prior to the beginning of the revision.
- 4.4.2. The publication and announcement shall also include a detailed work plan, the RTRS contact point and the process for RTRS members and external stakeholders to participate.

4.5. Stakeholder identification and engagement

The RTRS develops and maintains a stakeholder mapping, which shall be reviewed and updated as necessary prior to any development or modification of standards. The mapping identifies sectors that have an interest in the RTRS standard and key stakeholder groups within those sectors based on the standard's scope and its social, environmental and economic outcomes.

4.6. Development/Revision Process

- 4.6.1 Based on the proposal for standard development/revision, the RTRS Secretariat and/or the facilitator shall prepare a first draft of the standard, which follows the agreed scope and objectives of the development/revision. If a TWG was constituted, inputs may be collected from the TWG members to prepare the draft.
- 4.6.2 The first draft shall be submitted to the Executive Board for review and approval. Approval may be granted during an in-person meeting, a teleconference or by email and shall be primarily sought through consensus.
- 4.6.3 Upon approval by the Executive Board, the second draft shall undergo a first round of public consultation for, at minimum 60 days. The RTRS Secretariat and/or the facilitator shall ensure that the public consultation is made public and widely communicated among RTRS members, certified operators, CBs and other partners. The RTRS

Secretariat will attempt to provide support to under-represented groups to be able to participate in public consultation periods. The RTRS Secretariat and/or the facilitator shall implement measures to facilitate access to all stakeholders to the consultation, especially for stakeholders with limited access to technologies. Inputs to the public consultation may be received by email, by phone or in paper form. Whenever necessary, the RTRS Secretariat and/or the facilitator may organise a teleconference or a webinar to allow for more interactions and inputs from stakeholders. Upon completion of the public consultation, the RTRS Secretariat and/or the facilitator shall publish a synopsis of the consultation, including the inputs/comments received and how these have been addressed (fully or partly accepted, rejected, considered not relevant, etc.), along with a justification.

- 4.6.4 Following the first round of public consultation, the RTRS Secretariat and/or the facilitator shall prepare a second draft of the standard. If a TWG was constituted, inputs may be collected from the TWG members to prepare the draft.
- 4.6.5 The second draft shall be submitted to the Executive Board for review and approval. Approval may be granted during an in-person meeting, a teleconference or by email and shall be primarily sought through consensus.
- 4.6.6 Upon approval by the Executive Board, the second draft may undergo a second round of public consultation for, at minimum 30 days, in the following conditions:
- The process aims to develop a new standard (vs revision of an existing standard); or
 - Substantive, unresolved issues persist after the first consultation round, or insufficient feedback was received.
- 4.6.7 If a second round of public consultation is organised, the RTRS Secretariat and/or the facilitator shall ensure that the public consultation is made public and widely communicated among RTRS members, certified operators, CBs and other partners. The RTRS Secretariat and/or the facilitator shall implement measures to facilitate access to all stakeholders to the consultation, especially for stakeholders with limited access to technologies. Inputs to the public consultation may be received by email, by phone or in paper form. Whenever necessary, the RTRS Secretariat and/or the facilitator may organise a teleconference or a webinar to allow for more interactions and inputs from stakeholders. Upon completion of the public consultation, the RTRS Secretariat and/or the facilitator shall publish a synopsis of the consultation,

- including the inputs/comments received and how these have been addressed (fully or partly accepted, rejected, considered not relevant, etc.), along with a justification.
- 4.6.8 Following the second round of public consultation, the RTRS Secretariat and/or the facilitator shall prepare the final draft of the standard. If a TWG was constituted, inputs may be collected from the TWG members to prepare the draft.
- 4.6.9 The final draft shall be submitted to the Executive Board for review and approval. Approval may be granted during an in-person meeting, a teleconference or by email and shall be primarily sought through consensus.
- 4.6.10 Additional rounds of public consultation may be organised whenever substantive, unresolved issues persist after the consultation round(s), or where insufficient feedback was received. If the case, these additional rounds shall follow the process described above.
- 4.6.11 Upon approval by the Executive Board, the final draft shall be reviewed by the General Assembly for approval. The General Assembly may approve the final draft as submitted, approve the final draft with modifications or reject the final draft. The General Assembly may approve/reject the final draft during one of its ordinary meeting or during an extraordinary meeting (either in person or via teleconference), in accordance with the RTRS statutes.

- 4.6.12 If the final draft is rejected by the General Assembly, the Executive Board may decide to pursue or terminate the standard development/revision process. If the process is being pursued, the above-described steps shall be conducted until the final draft is approved by the General Assembly. If the process is being terminated, the RTRS Secretariat shall publish a notification justifying such decision and inform involved stakeholders accordingly.

Additional details about public consultations are provided in Annex.

5 Development of Procedures

5.1 Proposal for the development/revision process

- 5.1.1 Proposals for the development or revision of RTRS procedures may be submitted at any time by any RTRS member, the RTRS Secretariat or interested party.
- 5.1.2 Proposals may be submitted to the RTRS Secretariat via post, email or the RTRS website.
- 5.1.3 Such proposals shall clearly identify the procedure(s) to be created/revise, describe the scope and content/revision of the procedure and define the needs for a new procedure or for the revision of existing procedures.
- 5.1.4 Upon verification of the completeness of the proposal, the RTRS Secretariat might submit the proposal to the RTRS Executive Board for approval if it is considered necessary.

5.2 Development/Revision Process

- 5.2.1 Based on the proposal for procedure development/revision, the RTRS Secretariat and/or the facilitator shall prepare a first draft of the procedure, which follows the agreed scope and objectives of the development/revision. If a TWG was constituted, inputs may be collected from the TWG members to prepare the draft.
- 5.2.2 The first draft shall be submitted to the Executive Board for review and approval. Approval may be subject to modifications, which shall be integrated by the RTRS Secretariat.
- 5.2.3 Upon approval by the Executive Board, the final draft shall be reviewed by the General Assembly for approval. The General Assembly may approve the final draft as submitted, approve the final draft with modifications or reject the final draft. The General Assembly may approve/reject the final draft during one of its ordinary meeting or during an extraordinary meeting (either in person or via teleconference), in accordance with the RTRS statutes.
- 5.2.4 If the final draft is rejected by the General Assembly, the Executive Board may decide to pursue or terminate the procedure development/revision process. If the process is being pursued, the above-described steps shall be conducted until the final draft is approved by the General

Assembly. If the process is being terminated, the RTRS Secretariat shall publish a notification justifying such decision and inform involved stakeholders accordingly.

6 Development of Guidelines

- 6.1 Proposals for the development of guidelines can be suggested by any RTRS member, the Secretariat or any interested party.
- 6.2 Guidelines shall be drafted by the RTRS Secretariat and possibly an external consultant.
- 6.3 The RTRS Secretariat shall present the final document to the Executive Board for its approval.

7 Facilitator and Technical Working Group (TWG)

- 7.1 At the onset of the development or revision of a standard, procedure or guideline, the Executive Board may decide to hire an external facilitator and/or constitute an *ad hoc* Technical Working Group (TWG) to participate in the process. The decision shall be based on the nature of the standard, procedure or guideline to be created/ revised, the potential challenges in the process and the capacity/availability of the RTRS Secretariat, especially if:
- The development/revision requires advanced technical, environmental and/or socio-economic knowledge;
 - Difficult negotiations are expected among stakeholders.
- 7.2 The main responsibility of the facilitator will be to ensure that the development/revision follows this procedure and other RTRS governance rules (e.g. membership statutes, terms of reference).
- 7.3 The main responsibility of the TWG will be to provide the RTRS Secretariat with technical inputs and support the drafting and finalisation of the standard, procedure or guideline.
- 7.4 The TWG shall be open to both RTRS members and non-members. Members may be nominated by the Executive Board. The participation in the TWG shall be based on the competence and experience of individuals in relation to the nature of the development/revision. The Executive Board shall validate the composition of the TWG. Additional details about the TWG are included in Annex.

8 Publication

- 8.1 The approved final document shall be published in the RTRS website and circulated to all RTRS Members, certified operators, certification bodies and accreditation bodies immediately after approval. If the new/ revised standard has an implication on the RTRS EU RED certification, the European Commission shall be informed about the publication.
- 8.2 The RTRS Secretariat shall also publish the full

synopsis of the standard development/revision process.

9 Entry into force

The new versions of the standards will come into effect one year after its approval for all operators (12 months after the approval of the General Assembly). This period may be extended upon decision by the Executive Board upon exceptional cases, e.g. if the standard comes into effect shortly before or during an audit process. Following the entry into effect of a standard, compliance will be assessed at the next planned regular audit of the certified operator, unless the certification body considers that earlier meeting is necessary.

10 Record Keeping

All the documents generated during the standard development/revision process shall be kept for at least 5 years.

Annex 1:
Valid versions of existing standards

Document	Actual Version	Last Review
RTRS Standard for Responsible Soy Production	V 4.0	November 2021
RTRS Chain of Custody Standard	V 2.3	November 2021
RTRS Group and Multi-site Certification Standard	V 3.2	November 2021
RTRS Non-GMO Standard Module for Producers	V 1.0	May 2018
RTRS Country Material Balance Standard for Chain of Custody	V 1.1	November 2021
RTRS Standard for Responsible Corn Production	V1.0	November 2021
RTRS EU RED Chain of Custody Standard	V 2.5	November 2017
RTRS EU RED Group and Multi-site Certification Standard	V 3.2	November 2017
Argentinian National Interpretation of the RTRS Standard for Responsible Soy Production	V 3.1	June 2017
Brazilian National Interpretation of RTRS Standard for Responsible Soy Production	V 3.1	June 2017
Uruguayan National Interpretation of the RTRS Standard for Responsible Soy Production	V 2.0	October 2011
Indian National Interpretation of the RTRS Standard for responsible Soy Production	V 2.0	October 2011
Chinese National Interpretation of the RTRS Standard for responsible Soy Production	V 1.0	January 2014
Bolivian National Interpretation of the RTRS Standard for responsible Soy Production	V 1.0	August 2014

Canadian National Interpretation of the RTRS Standard for responsible Soy Production	V 1.0	August 2014
Paraguayan National Interpretation of the RTRS Standard for Responsible Soy Production Version	V 1.1	November 2016

Valid versions of existing Procedures

Docu ment	Actual Version	Last Review
RTRS Accreditation and Certification Procedure for Responsible Soy Production	V 4.3	November 2021
RTRS Chain of Custody Accreditation and Certification Procedure for Certification Bodies	V 3.3	November 2021
RTRS Group and Multi-site Certification Procedure for Certification Bodies	V 3.2	November 2021
RTRS EU RED Compliance Procedure for Producers	V 3.3	November 2017
RTRS EU RED Compliance Procedure for the Supply Chain	V 3.4	November 2017
RTRS EU RED Accreditation and Certification Procedure for Responsible Soy Production	V 4.2	November 2017
RTRS EU RED Chain of Custody Accreditation and Certification Procedure for Certification Bodies	V 3.3	November 2017
RTRS EU RED Group and Multi-site Certification Procedure for Certification Bodies	V 3.2	November 2017
RTRS EU RED System Procedure	V 2.4	November 2017
RTRS Use of the Logo & Claims Policy	V 4.2	November 2021
RTRS EU RED Communication and Claims Procedure	V 1.2	November 2017
Progressive Entry Level for the RTRS Standard for Responsible Soy Production	V 4.0	November 2021
Progressive Entry Level for the RTRS Standard for Responsible Corn Production	V1.0	November 2021
RTRS Grievances Procedure	V1.0	November 2021

RTRS Procedure for the Development of New Documents	V1.0	November 2021
RTRS Monitoring and Evaluation System Procedure	V1.0	November 2021

Valid versions of existing guidelines

Docu ment	Actual Version	Last Review
Methodology for Estimating and Calculating Real Soy Amounts for RTRS Certification	V 2.0	May 2021
Guideline for FEMAS & RTRS Module For RTRS Certified Products	V 1.0	January 2012
Guideline for the use of the institutional Logo for Certification Bodies	V 2.1	April 2014
Laboratory Accreditation Guideline to Carry out Tests Requested by the RTRS Production Standard	V 1.0	March 2011
Application Guideline for recognition of Certification Bodies Under RTRS standards	V 2.0	June 2011
Guide for Public Consultation Process and Identification of Stakeholders in an Audit Process	V 1.0	March 2011
Using the RTRS Guides for responsible expansion	V 1.0	December 2017

Annex 2 - The Technical Working Group (TWG)

1. Group Composition:

The group will be formed by the relevant RTRS stakeholders previously identified by the RTRS.

Members of the TWG shall be selected on the basis on their:

- Expert knowledge and/or experience in the issue of consideration
- Representation of the views from the corresponding RTRS constituency
- Understanding of the potential impact of a standard on affected stakeholders,
- Understanding and support of the RTRS objectives
- Ability to review and comment the documents in the working language (see point5).

The number of members of the TWG will be determined by the RTRS, but shall not exceed fifteen individuals. To the extent possible, the TWG composition shall reflect the diversity of RTRS membership and include representatives from the private sector, the public sector, academics and the civil society.

2. Invitation to participate

Upon decision by the Executive Board to form a TWG and approval of the terms of reference of the standard development/revision, the RTRS Secretariat will publish/circulate an invitation to participate in the TWG.

3. Selection of TWG Members

The RTRS Executive Board shall approve the members of the TWG, based on recommendations from the RTRS Secretariat. , representing a wide range of stakeholders from the existing RTRS constituencies, of Producers, Industry/Trade/Finance and Civil Society, any other stakeholder identified by the Secretariat, and invited observers and resources to participate in the development process of the RTRS. It will be encouraged that the selected members show diversity of countries, to ensure a representative and balanced group.

A list with the name of all the participants of the TWG shall be published in the RTRS website and incorporated as an annex in the developed Standard.

4. Timeframe

The number and nature (in-person vs teleconferences) of meetings of the TWG, the length of the development process and the possibility to include field trials will be decided by the TWG according to the scope and

complexity of the standard to be developed and the standing issues after the meetings and consultation periods.

5. Cost compensation

The RTRS is a non-profit Association, therefore it is expected that DTWG members participate on a voluntary basis.

6. Working Modality

The members of the TWG commit to work constructively with other group members in order to achieve the objectives of the process and develop commonly acceptable solutions to all issues presented and addressed. TWG members also commit to respect the views of other TWG members, the right of each member to share their expertise and opinions with the group, and the authority of the facilitator(s) chairing the meetings.

Annex 3 – Public Consultations

1. Each public consultation will be communicated at least through the RTRS website, an e-mail to invite all stakeholders to participate shall be sent through the RTRS mailing list, and when it is possible it also will be communicated through the RTRS Newsletters. The RTRS website also has a form which all interested stakeholders can complete so they can send the Secretariat their comments and opinions on the documents.
2. The RTRS Secretariat and/or the facilitator shall proactively seek contribution from all stakeholders, using various means, including but not limited to face- to-face meetings, emails, workshops or asking support from facilitators who have direct contact with stakeholders.
3. Public consultations are not limited to members of RTRS but look to include the biggest number of stakeholders as possible. RTRS aims to achieve a balance of interests in the subject matter and in the geographic scope to our standard.
4. To ensure maximum participation when it is possible the draft documents for consultation will be provided in the 3 RTRS official languages, English, Spanish and Portuguese, when possible.
5. The RTRS distinguishes between formal comments and informal comments, the formal comments are the ones that are sent to the RTRS in the template provided by the RTRS, in English, not anonymous and during the period prepare to receive this information.
6. All comments that do not fulfil these requirements will be considered informal and will be responded to in so far as the capacity of the RTRS allows.
7. The RTRS Secretariat and/or facilitator shall compile all the formal comments received during the consultation stage and prepare a synopsis. Inputs from the TWG may be sought to help addressing some of the comments received.
8. Also the facilitator will develop a report (synopsis) with all the formal comments received and how they were addressed, this report shall include:
 - A summary of the issues raised, an analysis of the range of stakeholders groups who have submitted comments
 - General and brief response to the comments
 - An indication of how they have been taken into account in the subsequent public draft standard and a copy of the comments received as an annex of the report.
9. The report will be sent to the TWG members (if a TWG was

formed), the parties that submitted comments, and also will be published in the RTRS website with the subsequent public draft of the RTRS Standard under development.



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