

**MoU/MG/08 N 340**

Status: For review

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## Proposal from SABS

South Africa would like to propose that ISO develop a suite of International Standards for addresses, which are used for many purposes, including postal delivery. Various countries and international organizations have developed, or are developing, address standards of various forms and we feel the time is right to consolidate various aspects of addresses into one or more International Standards.

An address should be considered more broadly than just a set of directions for delivering post. An address is also used for a wide range of public and private service delivery, including goods delivery, connecting utilities, billing, emergency dispatch and household surveys. Addresses are also needed for opening bank accounts, buying on credit, securing an identity document, voting, obtaining employment, etc. An address can also give people a status. A possible definition of an address is: "A structured, unique, complete, common reference for actual or potential service delivery to a location".

The possible initial suite of address standards could be:

Part 1: Reference model for address data

Part 2: Terminology for addresses

Part 3: Dictionary of postal address elements and country specific templates with precise descriptions of postal address formats (ie: UPU's S42)

Part 4: Standard on electronic exchange of name and address data (ie: UPU's P14)

Part 5: Whatever comes up next!

Parts 3 and 4 could commence whenever UPU chooses, and do not have to wait for parts 1 and 2. There might be other 'meta-address' standards that could be added to the list (eg: address ontology, and geo-referencing of addresses).

Addresses are at the interface between geographical information (ISO/TC 211) and electronic business (ISO/TC 154). However, they are primarily of concern to the geographical information community, because of issues such as the maintenance of address reference data (address registers); geocoding of addresses (assigning geographical coordinates to them); integrating addresses with the cadastre (legal demarcation of properties) and deeds registry (property ownership); street naming and numbering conventions; and service delivery.

The European Union's INSPIRE Directive has recognized addresses as being one of the nine priority spatial data themes for establishing an Infrastructure for Spatial Information in the European Community (INSPIRE). For details, please see: <http://www.ec-gis.org/inspire/>

On 25 May 2008 in Copenhagen, attached to the ISO/TC 211 Plenary, we held a very successful "ISO Workshop on address standards: Considering the issues related to an international address standard". Unfortunately, ISO/TC 154 and OASIS were not able to participate, though. For more details of the workshop, please see:

[http://www.isotc211.org/address/Copenhagen\\_Address\\_Workshop/workshop.htm](http://www.isotc211.org/address/Copenhagen_Address_Workshop/workshop.htm)

For more on addresses, please see:

<http://www.isotc211.org/address/address.htm>

If address standards are of interest to the MoUMG, we look forward to collaborating with you on their development.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely  
Antony Cooper