

Department of State (State) Fiscal Year 2025 Agency Report

1. Please provide a summary of your agency's activities undertaken to carry out the provisions of OMB Circular A-119, "Federal Participation in the Development and Use of Voluntary Consensus Standards and in Conformity Assessment Activities" and the National Technology Transfer and Advance Act (NTTAA). The summary should contain a link to the agency's standards-specific website(s) where information about your agency's standards and conformity assessment-related activities are available.

The Department of State leads U.S. foreign policy to advance the interests and security of the American people to make America stronger, safer, and more prosperous. The Department recognizes that technical standards play an important part in achieving these objectives. Our standards policy, engagement with standards development organizations, and use of standards within the agency supports the U.S. government's standards policy, which recognizes the importance of voluntary consensus standards and gives weight to a flexible "bottom-up approach," in which the needs of private industry and government agencies drive the choice in standards, rather than a "top-down" approach that may be unnecessarily restrictive.

The Bureau of Economic, Energy, and Business Affairs

The Bureau of Economic, Energy, and Business Affairs (EEB) promotes a strong American economy by leveling the playing field for American companies doing business in global markets, attracting foreign investors to create jobs in America, and deploying economic tools to deny financing to terrorists, human rights abusers, and corrupt officials. Everything we do is to ensure that the United States remains the world's strongest and most dynamic economy.

EEB houses the Department's Standards Executive. The Standards Executive represents the Department on the Interagency Committee on Standards Policy (ICSP) and works with the interagency to evaluate and address international standards and technical regulations that may impact U.S. commitments or harm U.S. commercial interests.

Web site: [Bureau of Economic, Energy, and Business Affairs - United States Department of State](#)

The Bureau of Cyberspace and Digital Policy

The Bureau of Cyberspace and Digital Policy (CDP) advances U.S. leadership abroad in critical and emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence, autonomy, quantum, biotechnology, telecommunications, next generation communications, related critical infrastructure, and export diplomacy related to these topics. The bureau promotes U.S. technology internationally and partners with U.S. allies to secure the digital backbone of the global economy and drive innovation and economic growth on behalf of the American people. CDP leads the U.S. government's international efforts to shape technology policy, regulation, and standards so that the digital future advances American interests, strengthens U.S. national security, and supports American prosperity.

The decentralized nature of the U.S. standardization system impacts how U.S. private and public sector stakeholders participate in international standards bodies, which vary in their composition. CDP leads U.S. delegations comprising private sector and interagency participants to the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), a specialized UN agency comprising the Development sector (ITU-D), Radiocommunication sector (ITU-R), and Standardization sector (ITU-T).

CDP coordinates U.S. foreign policy positions related to emerging technology standards development activities within international standards bodies such as the 3rd Generation Partnership Project (3GPP), European Telecommunications Standards Institute (ETSI), International Organization for Standardization (ISO), International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC), Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE), Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF), and others, specifically focusing on mitigating malign influence and increasing likeminded capability and capacity. CDP also leads and participates in economic fora where non-binding governance approaches are discussed, including the G7, G20, Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

Web site: [Bureau of Cyberspace and Digital Policy - United States Department of State](#)

The Bureau of Overseas Building Operations

The Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations (OBO) directs the Department's worldwide overseas building program. Coordinating both internally and externally with other Federal agencies and industry groups, OBO delivers safe, secure, functional, and resilient facilities that represent the U.S. government to host nations worldwide and support the achievement of U.S. foreign policy objectives abroad.

In developing and maintaining the governing standards for design and construction, OBO adheres to the same strategy as many other Federal, State, and local agencies, which is to adopt model codes developed by industry organizations, and supplement or modify them only as required to reconcile unique needs and circumstances applicable to our remote projects overseas (e.g., enhanced security, logistical and maintainability limitations). The Department of State has adopted the International Code Council (ICC) model building codes and the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) model codes and standards, including the National Electrical Code (NEC), as the basis for its codes, incorporating them into its contract standards by reference.

Likewise, functional design requirements and specifications defer to industry standards whenever possible. When OBO has specific requirements to suit OBO's unique mission, we follow Construction Specification Institute standards and utilize templates common in the industry, such as MasterSpec by the American Institute of Architects, and the Unified Facilities Guide Specifications by the Department of Defense, both of which incorporate standards by reference, developed by common industry groups. Using industry standards saves time for our private sector partners (e.g., architects, engineers, and contractors), because they are familiar and consistent with industry norms. At overseas locations, OBO strives to meet a variety of

standards and attempts to identify local equivalents to provide a high degree of reliability and safety.

These codes and specifications are updated periodically. The Foreign Affairs Manual in provision 15 FAM 900 incorporates consensus standards into the overseas safety, health, and environmental management program. OBO also applies the Secure Embassy Construction and Counterterrorism Act (SECCA) statutory requirements and participates on the Overseas Security Policy Board (OSPB) as all agencies under Chief of Mission authority must comply with OSPB standards set forth in the classified section of the Foreign Affairs Handbook, 12 FAH-6.

Web site: [Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations - United States Department of State](#)

2. Please record any government-unique standards (GUS) your agency began using in lieu of voluntary consensus standards (VCS) during FY 2025. Please note, GUS which are still in effect from previous years should continue to be listed, and you do not need to report your agency's use of a GUS where no similar VCS exists.

Start by reviewing Table 1 (below): Current Government Unique Standards FY2025.

To add a new GUS, please include:

1. The name of the GUS;
2. The name(s) and version(s) of the VCS(s) that might have been used, but after review, found to be inappropriate;
3. A brief rationale on why the VCS(s) was not chosen.

To rescind a GUS, (if they are no longer in use or have been replaced by a voluntary consensus standard) please:

1. Cross out the standard from Table 1.
2. Add a 'Rationale for Rescinding' explaining why the standard was rescinded.

Please record below the total number of GUS currently in use. This number should include the previous total plus any new GUS added, and minus any GUS rescinded:

Current total GUS: 1

Table 1: Current Government Unique Standards FY2025

(1) Government Unique Standard

2023 OBO Design Standards (annual update, retitled OBO Project Standard Requirements going forward)

Rationale: The majority of the OBO Design Standards incorporate industry codes and standards (which are VCS) by reference to the degree they support OBO's mission. When it is necessary to amend, modify, or focus industry codes and standards to address unique considerations relevant to Department of State overseas facilities, the strategy of using "code supplements" is used to modify VCS model building codes is consistent with the practice of domestic state and local jurisdictions. It is also practical for the Department of State to further transform and standardize some VCS U.S. industry provisions into contractual requirements, which at the national level in the United States are addressed only as guidance for local jurisdictions; this is the case for some considerations related to zoning and utilities. Of the ten OBO Codes, all but one are supplements to VCS model codes. The OBO Telecommunications Code is considered a GUS because there are no available VCS suitable to reference for the broad requirements and contexts applicable to Department of State overseas facilities.

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