

The following information provides useful guidance on drafting all ES1 standards documents.

Basic guidelines

- Consider the practicality of the standard's requirements.
- Don't be afraid to raise the bar on the reasonable standard for care, when you think it's necessary. Don't be afraid to set the reasonable standard for care where none exists.
- Reference applicable existing standards where possible.
- Carefully consider how to use the terms "should" or "shall". "Should" implies a suggestion or recommendation. "Shall" implies a mandatory action. Either are okay, as long as a user can provide a reason why they did or did not do something they were told they should do.
- When writing for an international user, write things for a reasonable person to consider, not what they should do.
- Consider reasonably foreseeable circumstances; don't write about the highly unlikely and improbable occurrences (i.e., "black swans"). In terms of predictable circumstances, one should not necessarily avoid the consideration of terrorist acts, but should not be chasing solutions to unlikely and improbable events. Maintain focus on that which is most likely, or that which can be reasonably expected.

Minimum expectations for document deliverables

- These documents should be minimum performance standards, which can always evolve at a later date. Standards are meant to be living documents that change over time to accommodate changes in practices or advancements in technologies.
- Basic documents should include the minimum considerations that a reasonable person should be making, and should include checklists for key points, requirements or concepts.
- The next level of document content should point the reader to a place where they can be educated to go beyond the minimum considerations.
- The highest level of documentation should provide instructions or guidance on identifying instances where a professional should be hired to help achieve the highest standard.
- An annex is a good place to add commentary and advice to supplement the basic document information, and to increase the document's informational value.

Accessibility to the reader

- Use words that are understandable by a majority of the population
- Avoid technical jargon unless absolutely necessary to identify a special concept. In this case, the term should always be defined.
- Asking for a review of your document language by someone unfamiliar with the subject matter is a good way to get feedback on whether the intended language is understandable.

Broad limitations on scope

There was discussion on whether or not events on boats or in international waters should be excluded from ES1 standards. The consensus of the working group is not to exclude maritime events, an event is an event. The events will always initially need to heed the local applicable laws, whether they be maritime or on land. The ES1 draft template document contains a placeholder section for Special Circumstances. This is a good place to address special considerations for these events.