



International Code Council
Chicago District Office
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Report of the ICC Task Force on Hearings February 2008

Committee Purpose

Created in 2005, in response to member comments regarding the growth in the number of proposed code changes submitted every cycle and the time required to process them, President Henry Green, appointed an ICC Board committee in conjunction with members of the Industry Advisory Committee to study this issue and make recommendations for improvement. This committee has been subsequently maintained by Presidents Wally Bailey and Steve Shapiro.

The current Task Force on Hearings members are:

Jimmy Brothers
Terry Cobb
Bill Dupler
Dave Frable
Greg Johnson
Steve Jones
John LaTorra, Chair
Ron Lynn
Julie Ruth

2007 Committee Recommendations

In 2006, the Task Force on Hearings developed a series of definitive recommendations which were approved by the Board of Directors and are currently being implemented. The Task Force on Hearings continues to examine current practices and analyze alternatives. The 2007 Task Force on Hearings has reported the following recommendations and conclusions to the Board to date. In order to reduce the length and duration of the code change hearings the following proposals were studied and eliminated as potentially viable options for the reasons given:

- Will not recommend combining codes or eliminating floor motions in an attempt to reduce hearing time, as it was felt this would be ineffective.
- Will not recommend limiting floor amendments as it was felt this would increase the number of code change proposals.
- Will not recommend placing limitations on the number of code change proposals in any given cycle or for any single proponent as this would be impossible to enforce fairly and would likely compromise the integrity of the code development process.
- Will not recommend providing formal venues for pre-hearing comments or coordination as the current informal process works well.



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Background

The Task Force on Hearings has heard numerous suggestions (many conflicting), studied proposals and data, made recommendations, and desires more focused membership feedback prior to issuing a consensus report.

Some members feel that the increase in code proposal activity is a sign of success and that no change is warranted to the present method of conducting ICC code development hearings. It is clear that as the level of adoption of the I-Codes increases, there is a corresponding increase in participation in the code development process. Others feel that changes are warranted in order for more meaningful participation by governmental members.

Regardless of an individual’s feelings, the number of code change items has grown as follows:

Year	# Considered At CDH	# Considered at FAH
2000	1172	169
2001	1009	133
2002	1735	357
2003/2004	1623	380
2004/2005	2124	560
2006/2007	2261	634
2007/2008	2251	630*

*estimated

The Code Development Hearings in Palm Springs are scheduled for 13 days, the Annual Business Meeting and Final Action Hearings in Minneapolis 10 days, and the 2009 Annual Business Meeting and Code Development Hearings 18 days reflecting the CDH being placed on both sides of the ABM.

New Proposals:

- The committee has studied a proposal for a 4-year code development cycle which divides the codes into two groups and processes changes to each group through an annual process every other year. The envisioned goal is to reduce code development hearings to a time frame of approximately one week versus the current two weeks by increasing the frequency of the hearings from 18 months to 12. Additionally this would result in a final action hearing at every ABM and is intended to reduce the number of changes heard at each meeting which may or may not occur. There are impacts to the members and the organization, many which are not quantified. For example, moving to a 12 month cycle will greatly reduce the time available to all participants to review past actions, submit needed changes, review the monograph and the Final Action agenda. Very likely, code change deadlines would occur prior to the availability of the new code editions.
- The committee is considering the suggestion from the last Member’s Forum in Reno to go to 3-tracks in the Code Development Hearings instead of the traditional 2-tracks. If implemented, this would reduce overall hearing duration from 13 days to 8 days, but would increase the potential for scheduling conflicts depending on the individual code changes being heard at the same time in the three tracks. The committee will recommend, subject to member feedback, that a 3-track system be implemented for the 2011 code development hearings.



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The Task Force is looking forward to receiving member input on these issues, including continuing growth in the number of proposals as well as any other issues with the Code Development process related to ICC's continuing growth. Attached, please find descriptive information on the 4 year cycle proposal, as well as two alternatives in how 3 tracks could be scheduled.

Finally, it should be emphasized that **maintaining the current process**, with the expectation that most members will attend only those portions in which they have an interest, **remains an option**.