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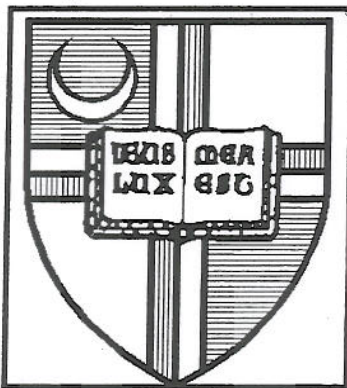
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LAUNCHING A "CENTER FOR GLOBAL STANDARDS ANALYSIS" AT CUA

By Donald E. Purcell



Crest of the
Catholic University of America

Introduction

The Center for Global Standards Analysis ("Center") has been created to serve the following purposes: to evaluate, inform, and educate the public on standards issues, the benefits of standards, and the potential impact of standardization on global commerce.

The Center was conceived in the fall of 1998 when it became clear that there was a profound lack of educational

programs on standards and standardization at universities and colleges in the United States, and that most professionals involved in standardization activities received their initial training in "on-the-job" and "sink or swim" situations. Over the years, several government and private sector reports have urged a much greater effort to inform and educate the public on the need for, and benefits of, standardization.

The Center will be located at The Catholic University of America for three reasons: (1) the three co-founders, Don Purcell, Bill Fox, and John Kenny are all graduates of the Columbus School of Law located at Catholic University; (2) creation of a course on "Strategic Standardization" – the first interdisciplinary course in the U.S. to be offered to graduate engineering, business, and law students, has received the strong support of Catholic University's Law and Engineering Schools; and (3) William Kelly, Dean of the Engineering School, strongly supports standardization programs as part of engineering curriculums. *Indeed, within a few years all*

engineering programs will be required to incorporate engineering standards in the major design experience that is the culminating experience in all engineering programs.

The Founders

John Kenny is President of Infotech Strategies, a management consulting firm based in Washington, D.C. that specializes in providing strategic planning assistance to corporations, universities, private firms, and the government on matters such as electronic and digital commerce in the global marketplace. Kenny will serve as Chairman of the Center.

William Fox is a Professor of Law and former Associate Dean of the Columbus School of Law. He teaches in several fields such as International Business Transactions and Commerce, Energy, Government Regulatory Policies, and Practices. He is a former Acting Director of the Communications Law Institute, a founding Co-Director of the Comparative and International Law Institute, and a Member of the program faculty on the Fundamentals of International Trade at the American Bar Association American Law Institute. He is also an advisor and guest lecturer to universities, corporations, private firms, and government agencies around the world. Fox will serve as General Counsel to the Center.

Donald Purcell has served as President and Chief Operating Officer of three international manufacturing trade associations during the past 22 years. These associations represented companies from the United States, Canada, Germany, Japan, and Sweden. The primary mission of these associations was Strategic Standards Management of United States, North American, and International

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standards for the Portable Power Equipment Industry in the fields of health, safety, and the environment. Purcell will serve as President and Chief Operating Officer of the Center.

The Catholic University of America

Catholic University was founded in 1879. CUA is a member of the Consortium of Universities of the Washington Metropolitan Area, and has 10 schools: architecture and planning, arts and sciences, engineering, law, philosophy, social service, nursing, music, library and information science, and religious studies. More than half of the University's 6,200 students are enrolled in master's, doctoral, or professional programs. Students come from all 50 states and more than 100 foreign countries.

Engineering programs have been offered at the University since 1896. Engineering became a separate School in 1930. The Engineering School offers programs in Biomedical Engineering, Computer Science in Engineering, Civil Engineering with an emphasis on the Environment and Construction, Electrical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, and Engineering Management.

The Law School was established in 1897, and accredited in 1921 by the Association of American Law Schools and by the American Bar Association in 1925. The School's name dates from the 1954 merger of the Catholic University School of Law with the Columbus School of Law in Washington, D.C. The Law School moved to a state-of-the-art new building in 1994 to accommodate a growing student population, and place all components of the Law School under one roof.

The Center's Strategic Plan

The first order of business is to develop a comprehensive Strategic Plan for the Center. One of the significant challenges, however, is not to reinvent the wheel. Literally hundreds of organizations exist in the United States and around the world that deal with standardization and conformity assessment. Thousands of people are involved in the process of standardization. A considerable amount of excellent work has been accomplished over a considerable amount of time – so where is the need for such a Center?

The initial answer to that question is in the field of education. One of the interesting contradictions in the field of standardization is how a subject that is so important can receive so little attention in the field of education. For example, a review of educational programs at universities and colleges throughout the United States indicates that there are very few programs on standards, standardization, and conformity assessment. We did not find any university or college that has created an interdisciplinary graduate course to consider a broad range of engineering, business, and legal issues as a whole.

Although the course on "Strategic Standardization" to be offered this fall at Catholic University will cover a wide range

of issues related to standards, standardization, and conformity assessment, the primary focus will be in the areas of health, safety, the environment, ethics, competition, trade barriers, telecommunications, and electronic and digital commerce.

The reason for including such a broad range of issues is that the course is intended to represent "real life" problems. When students join the workforce, regardless of their major fields of study, they will be expected to deliver results and be problem solvers. They will be required to have good communications and negotiation skills, make excellent presentations, and be strategic thinkers. In the increasingly complex world of standardization, they will need a course on the fundamentals of standardization and the possible challenges they will face. The course will focus on case histories, and all research papers will be published and made available to interested parties at the end of each semester.

Another significant part of the Center's Strategic Plan includes the concept of creating a forum for scholars and interested parties to discuss, on a regular basis, significant standards, standardization, and conformity assessment issues. It is expected, for example, that the Center will host at least one major conference each year at which speakers will be invited from around the world to share their views.

Current Issues In The Invisible World of Standards

The world of standards and standardization is virtually invisible, and yet standards govern the design, manufacture, operation, and use of virtually every product and service in commerce. "Nevertheless, standards are mostly quiet, unseen forces that ensure that things work properly, interactively, and responsibly. How standards come about is a mystery to most people should they even ponder the question." [Global Standards: building blocks for the future, Office of Technology Assessment, U.S. Congress (1993)] Is this invisible world about to change? Consider, for example, the potential implications of several current issues that might have far reaching consequences for the world of standards and standardization, and how future decisions are made.

The global marketplace is creating significant pressures for increased international harmonization. This trend raises the question of what changes will occur in the relationships between national, regional, and international standards bodies. For example, what is the current balance and mix between United States, North American, and international standards? What will the balance and mix be in the future? Does the balance and mix of such standards matter? Given the fact that standards are expensive to develop, will a significant trend develop that favors development of international standards in lieu of national or regional standards? Can the United States keep its competitive edge in such a changing environment?

Some organizations that develop global standards are bypassing the more traditional national and regional standards organizations all together, and they are opting for a more

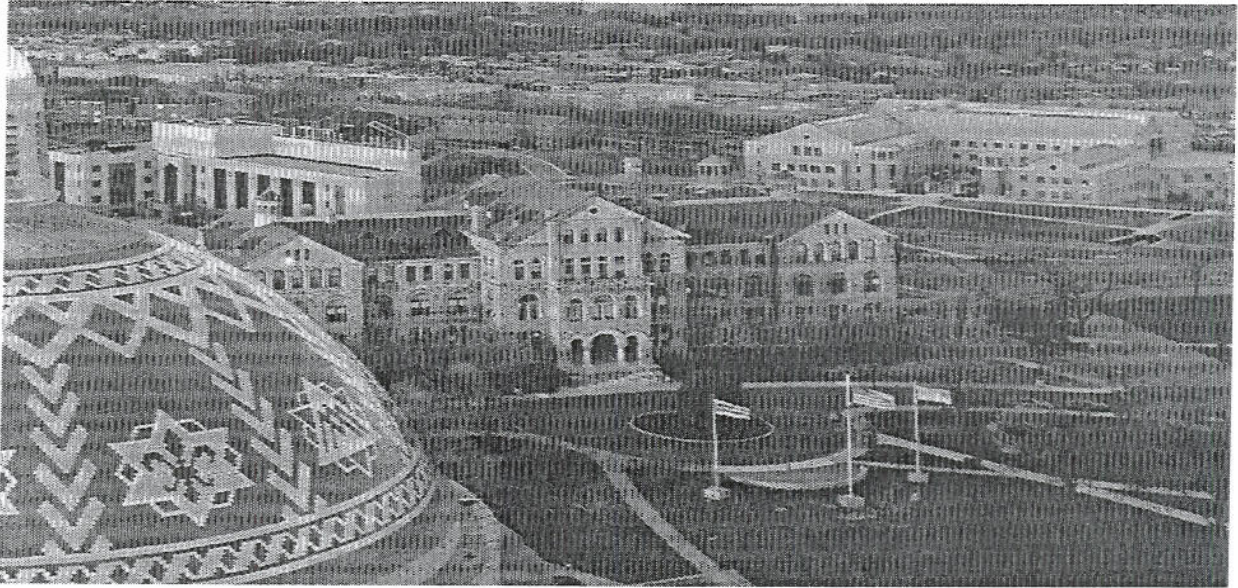
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expedient ad hoc approach that brings stakeholders and interested parties together for a speedy resolution of standards issues. If such short-cut methods work so well, do we still need a standards system in the United States that has taken more than 100 years to develop and provided a life style that is the envy of the world?

Conclusion

Every public and private organization in the world dedicated to standardization and conformity assessment is faced with the same challenge – either lead, follow, or get out of the way. No standards organization will survive unless it provides value and performance in critical areas directly related to the development of global commerce. The challenge for the



An Aerial View of the Catholic University Campus
Where "Global Standards Analysis" Center Will Be Housed

Are the conditions for development of safety standards about to change? In the fall of 1998, the National Spa and Pool Institute (NSPI) was held liable by a Washington State jury for the failure to develop an adequate pool safety standard. Damages were assessed in the amount of \$7 million. That case is on appeal. If approved on appeal, however, what does that mean for private sector organizations that develop safety standards? Note that NSPI had to declare bankruptcy to continue its operations.

More than two dozen countries now have competition and antitrust laws as part of their legal framework. Is there an international Hydrolevel or Allied Tube case (two judgements against standards developers) waiting to be brought by some aggrieved party?

The United States has the most diversified and decentralized standards system in the world. It has always been private sector led and government supported. But what about the future? On August 4, 1998, Robert Hebner, then Acting Deputy Director, National Institute of Standards and Technology, reported that the number of federal participants in voluntary standards committees had declined by almost 1,500 to less than 3,300. Will budget cuts limit the ability of the government to participate in private sector standards programs? Can government support be effectively maintained?

Center is the same. If the Center can develop an exceptional course on standardization, create a forum for scholars and interested parties, and establish research programs in standardization areas that need further research, then it will not only survive but flourish. If not, the Center will disappear and an excellent opportunity to improve information and education programs on the significance and benefits of standardization will be lost. It is the intention of the founders and those supporting the establishment of the Center that the Center will make a meaningful contribution to the increasingly challenging and complex world of standards, to public awareness and education.

The Center's Effective Date for Operations

The Center is expected to begin operations in July 1999. Prior to that time, questions about the Center or its operations should be directed to Don Purcell at +1 301 299 18 69, donpurcell@yahoo.com, 10801 Rock Run Drive, Potomac, Maryland 20854.

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