

Publication and Change Management Policy



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CHANGE HISTORY

DATE	VERSION	STATUS
14 th October 2015	0.1	Initial draft.
30 th September 2016	1.0	Updated following Pilot phase.
3 rd July 2017	1.1 Final	Clarification of the status of Provisional Builds of Standards.
18 th January 2019	1.2 Final	Updated to include the process for expiring CRs raised more than five years ago.
25 th January 2022	1.3 Final	Updated following Criterion review. Changes include various cosmetic changes, updating outdated Governance Groups and organisations and clarification of a number of points in the document.
28 th November 2023	1.4 Final	Updated to remove Provisional Build versions being produced in all cases, and replacement of 'Needs Attention Criteria' with ongoing monitoring of outstanding CRs.

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1 INTRODUCTION

This document sets out the policy governing the publication and change management of Criterion Standards.

2 CRITERION STANDARDS

Criterion develops and maintains a set of Standards that have supported the operation of e-business integration between more than 200 different organisations in the UK Financial Services industry since 1994.

2.1 STANDARDS ARTEFACTS

The great majority of Criterion Standards are data integration specifications for message services connecting over https. The normative documents are Message Implementation Guidelines (MIGs), documents that set out structure, data type and business rule information in a human-friendly form. These are typically based on XML and JSON Schemas, which set out the same information in machine-readable form, to the extent that this is possible within the chosen technology.

Other Criterion Standards, which address different needs – such as the Criterion Legal Framework, which is a set of form contracts for use in managing responsibilities and obligations in undertaking e-business integration; and the HTTP Message Transmission Guidelines, which sets out Criterion's approach to RESTful integration – may have normative documents of different types.

2.2 SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Criterion Standards are often published with a range of supporting documentation. This may include sample messages; implementation overviews; guidance notes; plus other materials such as design documents, analysis models, requirements reports etc. produced in the course of the Standard's development.

Whilst these documents are not normative, they should correspond directly to the Standard alongside which they are published; and are provided with the intention of clarifying usage, explaining design, and facilitating implementation. In cases where the non-normative documents remain at an earlier version and have not been updated in line with the new version, information on the changes applied between versions will always be provided with the updated version.

3 STANDARDS VERSIONING

Criterion supports a number of versions of each of its published Standards. This section explains how to interpret version numbers, and sets out how new versions are instigated.

3.1 UNDERSTANDING VERSION NUMBERS

Criterion Standards are typically published with a version number in the format **x.y**, where **x** indicates the major version of the Standard, and **y** is the minor version. In cases where Provisional Standard artefacts are developed, (see Section 4.4) the format can be extended to **x.y Provisional Build n** where **n** represents the build level of those Standards artefacts.

Incremental minor versions are backwardly compatible: that is, messages conforming to any particular minor version will also pass validation against any subsequent minor version of the same Standard. For example, a Quotes Protection Request message that conforms to version 3.7 will also validate against version 3.8.

Note that Provisional Build levels are not necessarily backwardly compatible with one another due to the nature of the provisional change process. For example, a Quotes Protection Request message that conforms to version 3.8 Provisional Build 2 may not validate against version 3.8 Provisional Build 1.

Major versions are not expected to be compatible with previous or subsequent major versions. For example, none of the Contract Enquiry version 1.2 messages pass validation against their Contract Enquiry version 2.0 counterparts.

The concept of backward compatibility is less relevant to non-message based Standards, such as the Criterion Legal Framework. However, for consistency, these Standards still use the x.y format for versioning.

3.1.1 MINOR POINT VERSIONS

Occasionally, legislative requirements means that it is not possible to produce a backwardly-compatible minor version of a Standard; but there may be no Industry appetite for the wholesale redevelopment usually implied by a new major version.

In such circumstances, Criterion may produce a minor point version of a Standard, with a version number in the format **x.y.z**. Here, **x.y** indicates the minor version on which the update is based, with **z** indicating the minor point number.

The minor point version will not – by definition – be backwardly compatible with the minor version on which they are based; but will be backwardly compatible with any minor version that follows them.

For example, a Quotes Protection Request message conforming to version 3.8.2 is backwardly compatible with the same Standard at version 3.9; but is not backwardly compatible with version 3.8.

Previous experience has highlighted the cost and complexity for both Criterion and the Standards Community in managing Minor Point Versions; so Criterion will endeavour to avoid this scenario where possible.

3.2 SUPPORTING DIFFERENT VERSIONS

Criterion will support the most recent version of a Standard, plus the two previous published versions. For example, Quotes Protection version 3.8 would remain supported along with version 3.7 and version 3.6 until version 3.9 was finalised, at which time version 3.6 would drop from support.

This support includes publication of Standards materials on the Criterion website; answering queries; and, where no other workable options exist for meeting the Community's needs, producing minor point versions as described above.

Criterion may assist and facilitate the development of common Industry solutions for Legislative Change for unsupported Standards, but this will only be done via a request from the Process & Standards Group which is approved by the Standards and Governance Executive.

Additionally, Criterion will provide at least limited support for the most recent Provisional Build of new Standards versions. This support will include publishing a perhaps more limited subset of supporting materials, and answering queries.

3.3 CREATING NEW VERSIONS

The creation and timing of new versions is driven by the agreement of the relevant Standards Governance Group, rather than by any fixed release cycle.

If the Process & Standards Group agrees that sufficient business drivers exist (in terms of outstanding "complex" Change Requests, medium term stability of a Provisional Build, unmet emerging requirements, etc.), it may ask Criterion to bring forward a new minor version of a Standard.

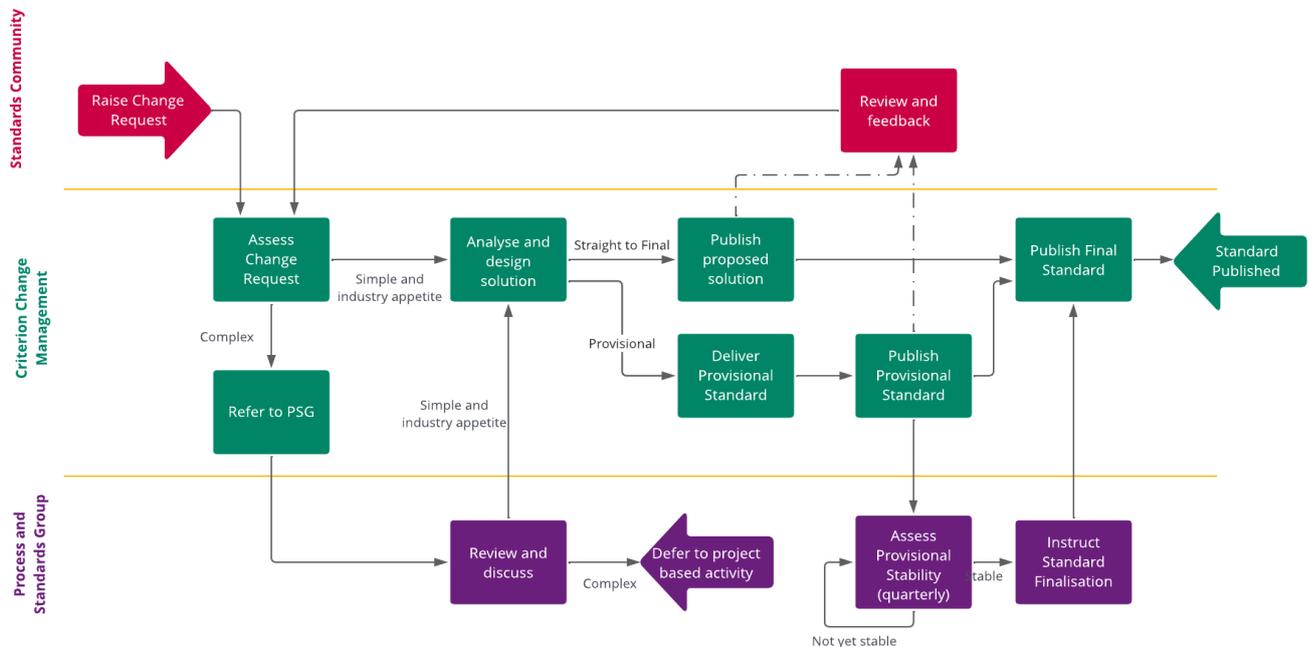
If the Process & Standards Group agrees that a new major version of a Standard is required to meet industry needs, it may recommend to the Standards and Governance Executive that work be brought forward to deliver that version; but agreement from the Standards and Governance Executive is required before any new major version is developed or published.

4 CHANGE MANAGEMENT

Criterion Standards evolve over time to adapt to changing market requirements. This section sets out how change is instigated, governed and delivered.

4.1 SUMMARY

This diagram summarises Criterion’s approach to managing change in Standards.



4.2 RAISING CHANGE REQUESTS

Change Requests (CRs) can be raised against the most recent version of any Standard by any organisation that subscribes to the Standards. CRs may also be raised by Criterion on behalf of the Standards Community, in response to newly-identified requirements, research project outcomes, or Errata identified in Standards post-publication etc.

In general where a change impacts on multiple Standards, CRs should be raised against each individual Standard affected. For changes to FIT where multiple Data Patterns are impacted, a single CR is sufficient to cover all Patterns to be changed.

Change Requests are raised on the Criterion website at:

<https://www.criterion.org.uk/standardschangerequests>

4.3 CHANGE REQUEST ASSESSMENT

Upon receipt, Criterion will assess whether CRs are to be considered simple or complex.

Simple CRs are those which:

- are straightforward to understand;
- are unlikely to be controversial within the Standards Community;
- are backwardly compatible; and
- will require 10 days effort or less to be implemented in provisional Standards Artefacts.

Complex CRs are all CRs which are not simple.

4.4 CHANGE DELIVERY

Complex CRs will be referred to the Process & Standards Group for review at its quarterly meetings. The Process & Standards Group may ask Criterion to investigate the CR further; defer it to be addressed by a suitable Standards Development Project; instruct Criterion to take it forward using the process for simple CRs; or indeed reject the CR as unsuitable for incorporation into Standards.

Criterion will complete any analysis required for each simple CR, and carry out an assessment of whether the CR should be implemented

- a) as a **Final** version of the Standard or
- b) as a solution in **Provisional** Standards artefacts which it will publish against the relevant Standard on the Criterion website in line with industry demand.

This assessment will take into account a number of factors including:

- Nature of change (complexity, contentiousness, regulatory, timing constraints);
- Nature of Standard (established / settled, number of adopters, number and timing of previous versions);
- Volume and nature of other CRs against Standard
- Business / product area

If the assessment recommends the CR is implemented as a Final version of a Standard, then the solution will be documented and made available on the Criterion website for review prior to the CR being implemented and published in a Final Standards version.

It should be noted that provisional Standards Artefacts:

- represent a 'running total' of all CR solutions developed since the last published Standards version;
- are subject to change until consolidated into a new Standards version at the direction of the Process & Standards Group.

As such, organisations looking to use Provisional Standards Artefacts as the basis of pre-Standard development should be aware of the risks involved in doing so.

At each quarterly meeting, the Process & Standards Group will assess the stability of Provisional Standards against criteria including outstanding change requirements; length of time since previous delivery; and prospects for further change being required in the medium term. If the Process & Standards Group determines that the Provisional Standard is sufficiently stable, it will instruct Criterion to crystallise it into a new Final Standard. Any subsequently-identified change will then be delivered in the next iteration of the Standard.

4.5 ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF OUTSTANDING CHANGE

At each quarterly meeting, the Process & Standards Group will be asked to review the Criterion recommendation for taking forward outstanding CRs, including: a) whether CRs be published as Final or Provisional and b) in the case of non-backwardly compatible changes, if a recommendation be made to the Standards and Governance Executive that a new major version of a Standard should be produced. If no such action is deemed necessary, the CRs will be carried forward for further review at the next meeting.

4.6 EXPIRATION OF CHANGE REQUESTS

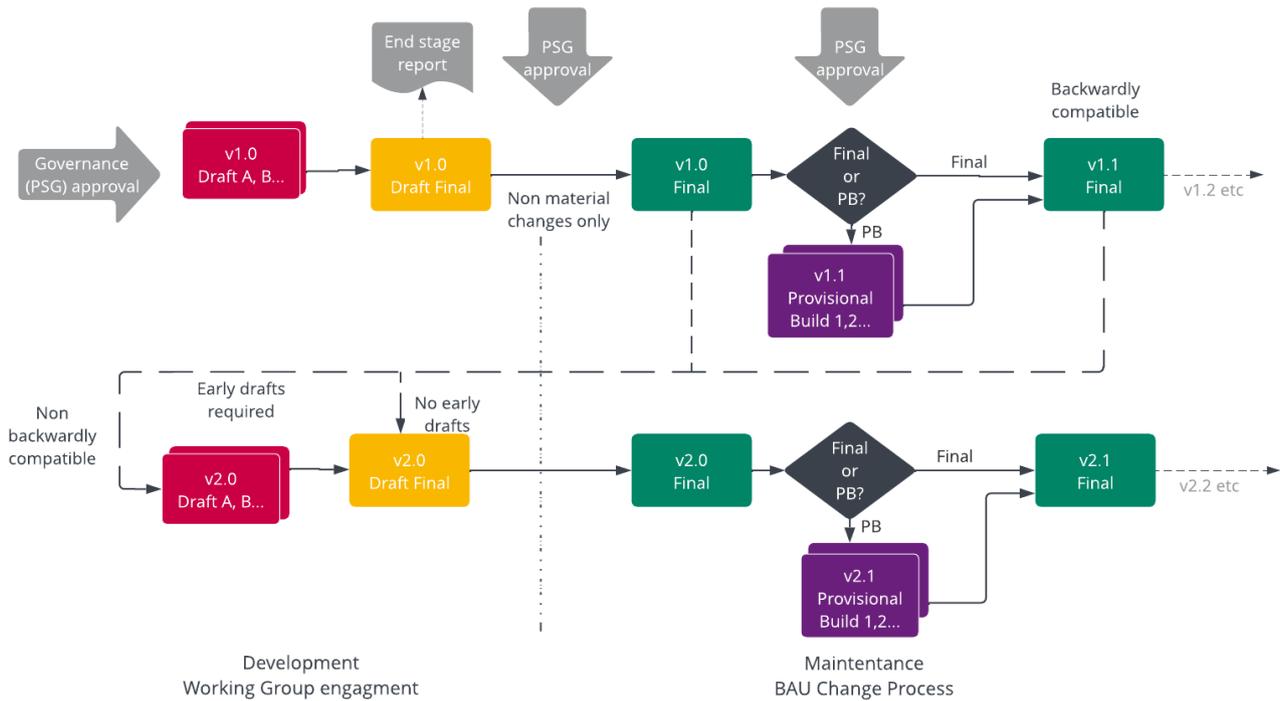
At the Process & Standards Group Meeting held on 7 November 2018, it was agreed that Criterion should periodically review CRs raised five or more years ago, and where appropriate, archive any relevant CRs by changing their status to "Expired".

5 STANDARDS PUBLICATION

Criterion works diligently with the Standards Community to ensure that published Standards are accurate and meet the needs of the Industry. This section sets out the process Standards Artefacts follow during their publication.

5.1 OVERVIEW

This diagram summarises the Standards Publication process and how it relates to Standards Versions.



5.2 DEVELOPMENT WITH WORKING GROUP

For the creation of any Standard version, whether as the result of direction to consolidate outstanding change into a new, stable version, or to meet emerging Industry requirements, if deemed appropriate, Criterion may form a Working Group of interested parties from the Standards Community.

In these cases, the role of the Working Group is to:

- agree requirements;
- provide any subject matter expertise to Criterion in order to support the creation of solutions that meet the requirements;
- review the project deliverables and any early Standards drafts required as part of BAU Standards development activity;
- assess when those deliverables are of sufficient quality to be published as **Draft Final** Standards.

5.3 DRAFT FINAL STANDARDS

The use of “Draft Final” signifies that the Working Group believes that:

- it has identified all business requirements for the Standard; and
- Criterion has developed and documented a technical solution that is appropriate and ready to be implemented by the wider Standards Community.

It effectively signals that substantive development of the Standard, as set out in the development’s Terms of Reference, is complete.

Note: Standards at a Provisional Build level do not use the “Draft Final” version.

5.4 FINAL STANDARDS

Once the Draft Final Standard has been agreed, Criterion will begin the process of publishing it as “Final”:

- Criterion will prepare an End Stage Report and submit it to the Process & Standards Group with the Draft Final Standard. This report will also outline what is expected as part of the review process;
- This will then be followed by a minimum 4 week Industry consultation period (more time may be required if it is a large Standard with many components to review). Notification of the review period will be issued to the Working Group (where applicable) and the Process & Standards Group. The wider Community will also be informed and invited to participate in the Standard review through notification on the Criterion website;
- At the end of this consultation period, Criterion will incorporate any small and non-material revisions (e.g. improvements to documentation; correction of typos) and publish the Standard at **Final**.

In the event that a major change is identified during the review period (e.g. any unmet requirements; material changes to data definitions; any change in message structure), this will be referred back to the Working Group in the first instance for their further consideration.