

## Are there guidelines for Social Responsibility?

**Social Responsibility (SR) standardisation by the International Organisation for Standardization (ISO).**

ISO established a Working Group in 2004 to work on the development of standards providing guidelines for social responsibility. The standards will be published in the year 2009 and will be known as ISO 26000.

**ISO is an international organisation involved in international standards development with more than 156 member countries.**

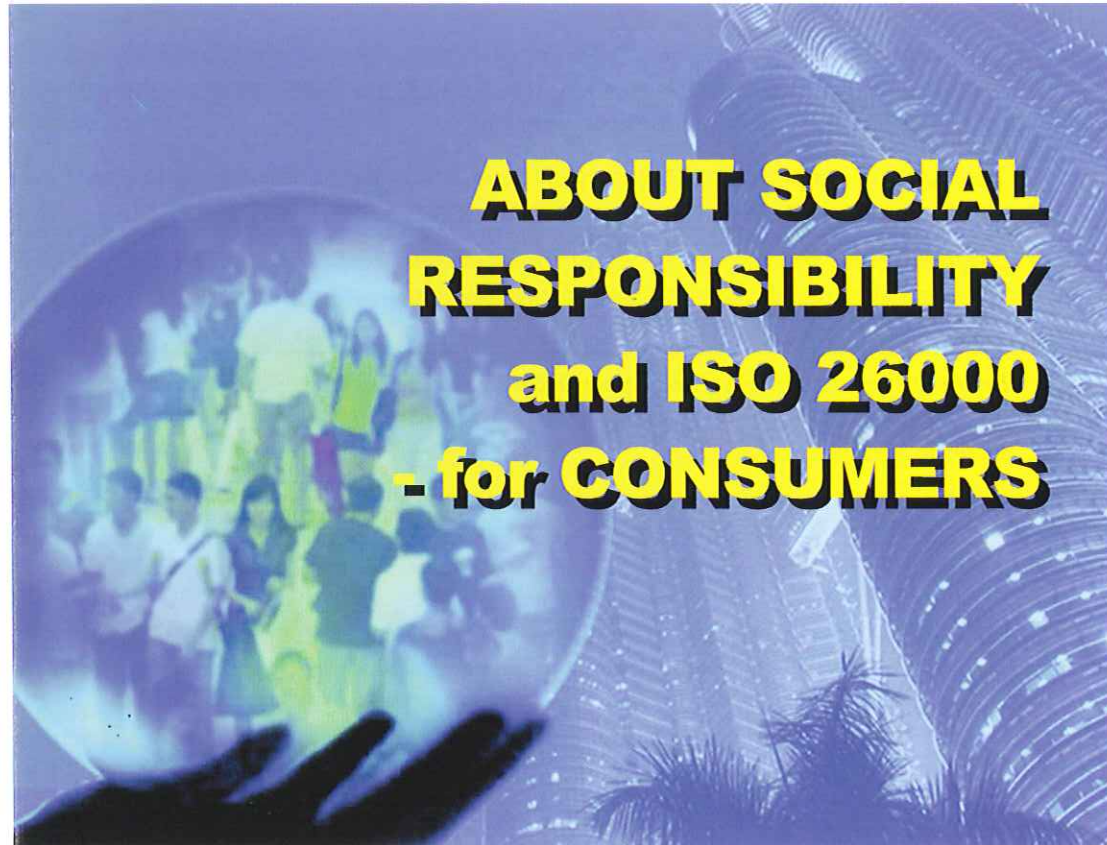
**The guidance standards will ensure that companies cannot just solve SR-problems by saying that they are unable to take action because the problems exist outside of their own sites.**

ISO 26000 guidance standards will cover among others, the following:

- The SR context in which all organisations operate
- SR principles relevant to organisations
- Guidance on core SR subjects / issues
- Guidance for organisations on implementing SR
- and many more

The ISO 26000 guidance standard is intended to supplement (and not replace) international agreements related to social responsibility such as:

- the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
- those adopted by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and;
- other UN conventions.



**Social Responsibility aims to :**

- **Generate respect for consumer rights through responsible organisation behaviour**
- **Help promote fair trade and accessibility to safe and quality products**
- **Weed out unethical and promote ethical practices in an organisation.**
- **Support other intergovernmental agreements with relevance to social responsibility**



STANDARDS MALAYSIA has appointed Standards Users to promote SR to consumers in Malaysia. For more information on Social Responsibility (SR) please visit [www.standardsusers.org/mysr.html](http://www.standardsusers.org/mysr.html) or contact the Malaysian Association of Standards Users (Standards Users) at 03 7874 1622, fax 03 7873 0636 or e-mail your enquiries to [info@standardsusers.org](mailto:info@standardsusers.org)



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## What is Social Responsibility?

- Consumers are becoming increasingly aware of the need for organisations to be more responsible in their operations.
- Consumers expect organisations to care for the environment, their workforce and abide by the laws of the country where they operate.
- Organisations are expected to contribute to the well being of the society beyond bringing about economic growth and providing job opportunities.

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*From the consumer viewpoint, Social Responsibility or SR refers to respect for consumer rights through responsible organisation behaviour, and not through philanthropy alone.*

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## Why is there need for social responsibility?

Organisations must be responsible towards the environment and the society where they operate even though there are few laws for the protection of environment and society.

Which of the acts below would you consider to be socially responsible?

- \* Sales of cosmetics and toiletries not tested on animals;
- \* Advertisements influencing consumers to consume more and lead to unhealthy lifestyles (like smoking) etc and;
- \* Companies moving their operations to countries where environment protection laws are weak.

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*Therefore, SR is important to protect the well being of the society, the environment and the economic well being of a country and its people.*

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## Who is involved in Social Responsibility?

- All persons or entities concerned with an organisation (also known as stakeholders) become involved in social responsibility or SR.
- Stakeholders include shareholders, suppliers, government agencies, consumers, businesses and their customers, society around the organisation and business branches worldwide and non-government organisations.
  - Government agencies need to be fair and transparent in their governance;
  - Industries must comply with laws of the state, moral and social obligations in addition to economic obligations and;
  - Non government organisations must also be transparent and serve the interest of the target group or the cause for which they wish to serve.

## How can we know if organisations are Socially Responsible?

- Organisations normally prepare annual reports for their shareholders, members or employees, regarding their SR activities
- Organisations intending to promote their SR to the public do so mostly by engaging in public or consumer education, public consultation, labelling of products and advertising the SR aspects of their services
- The media plays an important role in SR promotion and public or consumer education and information dissemination
- Guidelines, standards, code of practices and even laws have been developed and implemented to facilitate social responsibility. This can be seen in our Environment Protection Act 1974, OSHA 1999 and Consumer Protection Act 1999 and
- We also have various voluntary Malaysian Standards or MS on environmental labelling, waste management, safety of products and services for consumers and environment protection.