



Board Meeting Summary Paper

Subject: AccountAbility Sustainability Standards Summary

Date: 16 November 2010

AUASB AGENDA ITEM NO. 15(a)(ii)
Meeting Date: 29 November 2010

Action Required

For Information Purposes Only

Agenda Item Objectives

To inform the AUASB about the international not for profit think tank AccountAbility and the work they are currently performing on the AA1000 suite of sustainability standards which have linkages to the ISO 26000 standard.

We attach the media release that was issued by AccountAbility on 1st November, 2010 announcing “AccountAbility to Develop Bridging Document between ISO26000 and the AA1000 Suite of Standards”.

Background

AccountAbility is a leading international organisation providing innovative solutions to the most critical challenges in corporate responsibility and sustainable development. Since 1995 we have been helping corporations, non-profits and governments embed ethical, environmental, social, and governance accountability into their organisational DNA. Our unique value proposition brings together leading-edge research, widely-recognised standards and strategic advisory services to deliver practical solutions for our clients.

1. Quick Facts:

- Offices in London, New York, Washington, D.C., Sao Paulo and Beijing
- Industry sectors: Financial Services, Pharmaceuticals, Energy and Extractives, Telecommunications, and Consumer Goods
- Geographic regions: North America, European Union, Latin America, Middle East, Southern Africa, and Developing world
- Focus areas: Research, Standards and Advisory Services

This document contains preliminary views and/or staff recommendations to be considered at a meeting of the AUASB, and does not necessarily reflect the final decisions of the AUASB. No responsibility is taken for the results of actions or omissions to act on the basis of reliance on any information contained in this document (including any attachments), or for any errors or omissions in it.

2. AccountAbility works to:

- Enable open, fair and effective approaches to stakeholder engagement;
- Develop and recognise responsible competitiveness in companies, sectors, countries and regions;
- Create effective collaborative governance strategies for partnerships and multilateral organisations that are delivering innovation and value, and
- Set and influence sustainability standards.

Our vision is of a world where people have a say in the decisions that have an impact on them, and where organisations act on and are transparent about the issues that matter.

3. At the core of our work is the AA1000 Series of Standards based on the principles of:

- **Inclusivity** - people should have a say in the decisions that impact on them
- **Materiality** - decision makers should identify and be clear about the issues that matter
- **Responsiveness** - organisations should be transparent about their actions

AccountAbility's AA1000 series are principles-based standards to help organisations become more accountable, responsible and sustainable. They address issues affecting governance, business models and organizational strategy, as well as providing operational guidance on sustainability assurance and stakeholder engagement. The AA1000 standards are designed for the integrated thinking required by the low carbon and green economy, and support integrated reporting and assurance.

The standards are developed through a multi-stakeholder consultation process which ensures they are written for those they impact, not just those who may gain from them. They are used by a broad spectrum of organisations -- multinational businesses, small and medium enterprises, governments and civil societies.

4. The AA1000 Series of Standards:

The AA1000 AccountAbility Principles Standard (AA1000APS) provides a framework for an organisation to identify, prioritise and respond to its sustainability challenges.

The AA1000 Assurance Standard (AA1000AS) provides a methodology for assurance practitioners to evaluate the nature and extent to which an organisation adheres to the AccountAbility Principles.

The AA1000 Stakeholder Engagement Standard (AA1000SES) provides a framework to help organisations ensure stakeholder engagement processes are purpose driven, robust and deliver results.

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Material Presented

Agenda Item 15(a)(ii) Board Meeting Summary Paper

Agenda Item 15(a)(ii).1 Media release issued on 1st November, 2010: AccountAbility to Develop Bridging Document between ISO26000 and the AA1000 Suite of Standards

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