



# **Standards and Certification Training**

Module B – Process

**B6. The Basics of Parliamentary  
Procedure**

## Module B Course Outline

- B1. ASME Organizational Structure
- B2. Standards Development: Staff and Volunteer Roles and Responsibilities
- B3. Conformity Assessment: Staff and Volunteer Roles and Responsibilities
- B4. Initiating and Terminating Standards Projects
- B5. Consensus Process for Standards Development
  - B5a. Project Management
-  **B6. The Basics of Parliamentary Procedure**
- B7. The Appeals Process
- B8. International Standards Development
- B9. ASME Conformity Assessment Programs
- B10. Performance Based Standards
- B11. Standards Inquiries, Interpretations and Cases

Module B contains eleven modules. This is Module is B6. The Basics of Parliamentary Procedure

# REVISIONS

DATE	CHANGE
4/22/2016	Reformatted entirely and revised or added notes throughout. Deleted Pop Quizzes.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the end of the modules you will know...

- The basic parliamentary procedures that should be used during the meetings.
- The steps for handling a motion during a meeting.
- The types of motions.

At the end of this module you will understand the steps for handling a motion, be able to describe types of motions and you will know the basic parliamentary procedures. These procedures are generally not covered in Standards Committee Procedures.

# AGENDA

- I. Introduction to Motions and Robert's Rules of Orders
- I. Steps for Handling Motions
- II. The Types of Motions

We will begin with an introduction to motions and Robert's rules of Order, which are the basic rules for conducting meetings. Then we will address the handling of motions and types of motions.

# I. INTRODUCTION

Let's begin.

# MOTION

## Definition

- A formal proposal to take a certain action
- May be brought forward by an individual or group.
- Primary Motion Examples
  - Standards revision
  - Certification actions
  - Membership item
- Secondary Motions assist the committee in addressing the Primary motion.

- A motion is a formal proposal to a committee or other body to take a certain action.
- It may be brought forward by a group or an individual.
- The most common form of primary motions at a committee meeting are to propose a standards revision action, certification actions or to bring a membership item before the committee.
- Secondary motions assist the committee in addressing the primary motion and will be covered in Part III of this module.

## ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER

- Parliamentary procedures for making or considering motions.
- Referenced in our Standards Committee Procedures.
- Robert's Rules used when parliamentary issue not addressed by Standards Committee procedures
- Standards Committee Procedures take precedence

- Robert's Rules of Order are the generally accepted parliamentary procedures followed when motions are made or considered at a meeting. The most recent edition should apply.
- The rules are referenced in our Standards Committee Procedures, and used when parliamentary procedures are not addressed by the Standards Committee Procedures.
- It is important to remember that Standards Committee Procedures take precedence over Robert's Rules of Order in the conduct of committee business.

The basics of how to handle a motion at an ASME meeting, using Robert's Rules of Order and including some specific requirements outlined in the Procedures for ASME Codes and Standards Development Committees, will be discussed in the next 2 parts of this module. Adjustments may need to be made if there are additional requirements outlined in committee supplemental procedures.

## II. STEPS FOR HANDLING MOTIONS

In this next part, we'll review the steps for handling a motion.

## STEPS FOR HANDLING A MOTION

1. Motion brought before committee
2. Motion is seconded.
3. Chair restates the motion to the Committee.
4. Motion discussed, debated and amended if necessary.
5. Vote is taken.
6. Chair announces whether the motion passes or not.

The steps for handling motions may vary slightly depending on the motion but, generally speaking, there are six essential steps in the handling of a motion.

1. Motion is first brought before the committee.
2. The motion is seconded.
3. The motion is restated by the Chair.
4. The motion is discussed and debated.
5. The motion is voted on.
6. The Chair announces whether the motion passes or not.

## STEPS FOR HANDLING A MOTION

1. Motion brought before committee
  - Speaker is recognized by the Chair and makes a motion.
2. Motion is seconded

The process begins when the speaker (the person who wants to make the motion) is recognized by the Chair and allowed to state his or her motion.

A motion must then be seconded. If there is no second, the Chair must note that the item is not to be before the Committee.

Some motions do not require a second. They will be addressed later in this module.

## STEPS FOR HANDLING A MOTION

3. Chair restates the motion to the Committee.
  - Maker may withdraw or modify without consent before restatement.
  - Once restated, the motion is open for debate.

The Chair then restates the motion to the committee to ensure that it is clearly understood by all.

- Until the Chair restates the motion, the maker has a right to withdraw or modify the motion without the Committee's consent.
- After the Chair restates the motion, it is then open for discussion and debate. Any changes to the motion at this time must be with the consent of the Committee.

## STEPS FOR HANDLING A MOTION

4. Motion discussed, debated and amended if necessary.

- Chair must recognize speakers
- Debate confined to the motion subject
- Chair must not take a position
- Chair cannot interrupt without cause

During the debate:

- Individuals must be recognized by the Chair before speaking.
- The debate must be confined to the merits of the motion subject.
- The Chair must not take a position on the subject. If he/she wishes to enter the debate, he/she should leave the chair—by appointment of the Vice Chair—until the pending business is disposed of.
- The Chair cannot interrupt the person who has the floor so long as that person does not violate any rules and no disorder arises.

## STEPS FOR HANDLING A MOTION

4. Motion discussed, debated and amended if necessary (cont'd).

- Modifications to the Motion may occur as a result of discussion.
- Prior to vote, modifications can be made:
  - By originator of motion's request for consent
  - By motion to Amend
  - By motion to Substitute

During discussion of the motion, the motion belongs to the committee as a whole and modifications to motions can be made as follows:

- The originator of the motion may modify the motion, with consent of the committee.
- Before the motion is voted on, any member can make a motion to Amend the motion in a specified way. These proposed changes must be seconded and may be further amended and/or debated. Motions may be amended by inserting new words or paragraphs, striking out words or paragraphs or both.
- Sometimes a motion is so complex that the only way to revise it is to reject it completely and substitute a more appropriate version. Any member may do this by urging that the original motion be rejected and then offering to propose a simpler version. If the complex motion is defeated, then any member may make a motion to substitute.

## STEPS FOR HANDLING A MOTION

### 5. Vote is taken

The Chair asks for votes in the following order

1. Approve (those in favor)
2. Disapprove (objections)
3. Abstentions
4. Not Voting – Reduces the total count

After the debate has concluded, the next step is to take the vote.

The Chair will ask for votes in the following order. Typical voting options include...

1. Approve (those in favor)
2. Disapprove (objections)
3. Abstentions
4. Not Voting – This voting option is defined in the Procedures for ASME Codes and Standards Development Committees. It signifies neither approval nor disapproval and shall be executed only when the standards committee participant believes that he/she has a conflict of interest or potential conflict of interest and, in accordance with Society Policy, is removing himself/herself from the voting process. It will remove the voter from the total count of members eligible to vote.

Other items may require different voting options. For example interpretations only use objection, no objection and not voting.

## STEPS FOR HANDLING A MOTION

6. The Chair announces whether the motion passes or not.

– Administrative Items

» Majority approval (50% +1)

– Standards, Certification and Interpretation Actions

» 2/3 approval

Finally, the Chair announces whether the motion passes or not, in accordance with the procedures for the motion being voted on.

- Administrative items require majority approval (50% +1) to pass.
- A standards, certification and interpretation actions would require 2/3 approval.

Note: Several ASME conformity assessment committees take voted actions on items dealing with issuance of ASME certificates at their meetings.

## STEPS FOR HANDLING A MOTION (Summary)

- Motion brought before committee
  1. Speaker is recognized and makes a motion.
  2. Motion is seconded.
  3. Chair restates the motion to the Committee.
- Motion considered
  4. The committee discuss/debates/amends the motion.
  5. The vote is taken.
  6. The chair announces whether the motion passes/fails.

This completes our review of the six steps for handling a motion.

- These steps can be divided into two groups:
  - The steps by which a motion is brought before and accepted by the committee
  - The steps by which the motion is considered and voted on
- There are cases where some of these steps do not apply, these will be covered in the next slide.

## STEPS FOR HANDLING A MOTION EXCEPTIONS

### **UNANIMOUS CONSENT**

- For approval of minutes, appointments, etc.
- Chair asks if “If there is no objection...” and states proposed action.
- Motion passes if no objection.

If the Chair believes that everyone is in agreement with the proposed motion, the Chair can propose to adopt the motion by unanimous consent. This option is ideal for the approval of minutes of meetings, uncontested appointments, or friendly amendments.

- The Chair would simply ask “If there is no objection...” and states the action.
- If no one objects, the six steps are skipped and the motion is considered adopted by unanimous consent.
- If someone objects, the Chair reverts to the normal six-step process.

## STEPS FOR HANDLING A MOTION EXCEPTIONS

### **OUT-OF-ORDER MOTIONS**

- Motions which conflict with laws, constitution, or rules of the organization.
- Motions which present something already rejected during the same session.
- Motions which propose actions beyond the scope of the organization's bylaws.

The following motions should always be ruled “out of order” and not accepted for further action:

- These include motions which conflict with laws (federal, state, or local), or with bylaws, constitution, or rules of the organization,
- Motions that present something already rejected during the same session, or conflict with a motion already adopted,
- And motions which propose actions beyond the scope of the organization's bylaws, are also considered out-of-order.

### III. TYPES OF MOTIONS

Lets now review some of the common types of motions seen by the Committee.

## TYPES OF MOTIONS

- Primary/Main Motion
- Secondary Motions
  - must be acted upon before consideration of the Main Motion can continue.
  - Secondary Motion types
    - 1) Privileged Motion
    - 2) Incidental Motion
    - 3) Subsidiary Motion

Primary Motions are the Main Motion that are brought before the committee. The most common form of primary motions at a committee meeting are to propose a standards revision action, certification actions or to bring a membership item before the committee.

Secondary Motion directly affect the current Main Motion or assist the committee in addressing the current Main Motion. Whenever a Secondary Motion is made and admitted by the Chair, it must be acted upon or disposed of before direct consideration of the current Main Motion can continue.

There are three types of Secondary Motions; Privileged, Incidental and Subsidiary.

Just as a Secondary Motion must be addressed before the group continues with the Main Motion, certain types of Secondary Motions must be addressed before others. A Privileged Motion takes precedence over an Incidental Motion which takes precedence over a Subsidiary Motion. We will address them in order of precedence, starting with Privileged Motion.

# TYPES OF MOTIONS

## Secondary Motion 1 - Privileged Motion

- Not related to pending business.
- Should be decided immediately without debate.
- Interruption of proceedings permitted.
- Common Privileged Motions
  - Question of Privilege
  - Recess
  - Fixing a Time to Adjourn

**Privileged Motions** do not relate to pending business, but do concern special matters which should be decided immediately and without debate.

Common Privileged Motions include:

- **Questions of Privilege**, which are questions regarding the rights or comforts of the committee or one of its members. For example, issues related to heating, lighting, or sound; or to the conduct of a visitor. No vote is required.
- A motion to **Recess** is a motion to take a break in the proceedings but not close the meeting.
- A motion to **Adjourn** is a motion to close the meeting.

# TYPES OF MOTIONS

## Secondary Motion 2 - Incidental Motion

- Relates to the procedures being followed in the current situation
  - Generally not debatable
- Common Incidental Motions
  - Point of Order
  - Suspend the Rules
  - Appeal
  - Division (by question or by assembly)

**Incidental Motions** have the second highest precedence among Secondary Motions, and are related to the procedures being followed in the current motion. Most Incidental motions may not be debated because the debate would defeat the purpose of the motion. These motions include:

- A **Point of Order**, made when a member believes that the rules of the Committee are being violated. The Chair must rule if there is a point of order and enforce the rules in effect.
- A motion to **Appeal**, made when questioning a ruling by the Chair. This motion must be seconded and voted on by the Committee. That is, the committee must decide whether the Chair has ruled in the appropriate manner.
- A motion to **Suspend the Rules**, made when the committee wishes to do something that it cannot do without violating one or more of its regular rules. When business is pending, this motion takes precedence over any motion if it is for a purpose connected with that motion.
- A motion for **Division of a Question**, made to divide the current question (motion) into parts (topics, paragraphs, etc.) and act on each as separate Main Motions.
- Lastly, a motion for **Division of Assembly**, a motion to take a more detailed recount of a voice vote. No vote required.

# TYPES OF MOTIONS

## Secondary Motion 3 - Subsidiary Motion

- Used in treating and disposing of the Main Motion
- Common Subsidiary Motions
  - 1) Lay on the Table (or "Table")
  - 2) Previous Question (or "Call the Question")
  - 3) Limit or Extend limits of debate
  - 4) Postpone to a Certain Time
  - 5) Refer (to another committee)
  - 6) Amend
  - 7) Postpone indefinitely

Then there are **Subsidiary Motions**, which have the lowest precedence among the Secondary Motions.

- A Subsidiary Motion proposes an action that assists the committee in treating and disposing of the Main Motion.
- The following are some commonly used Subsidiary Motions, listed in order of precedence, high to low.
  - A motion to **Lay on the Table** is a motion to lay the pending question aside temporarily when something else of an immediate urgency has arisen. (NOTE: This motion is often incorrectly used in place of the motion to **Postpone to a Certain Time**, which is used to defer judgment to a certain time when no more pressing issue exists.)
  - A motion to **Previous Question** is a motion to bring the Committee to an immediate vote on one or more pending questions. This motion immediately closes debate and the making of any additional Subsidiary Motions except for the motion to Lay on the Table. The motion is typically requested by a "call for the question".
  - A motion to **Limit or Extend limits of debate** is a motion to reduce or increase the number or length of speeches permitted; or to specify a length of time after which debate shall be closed and the question put to vote. This motion cannot immediately close debate.
  - A motion to **Postpone to a Certain Time** is a motion to put off action on the Main Motion to a definite day, hour, or after a certain event. This motion can be moved regardless of how much debate there has been on the motion it proposes to postpone.
  - A motion to **Refer** is a motion to send the question (motion) to a small group of selected persons, such as a sub-committee, so that the question may be carefully investigated and placed into better condition for the committee to consider.
  - A motion to **Amend** is a motion to modify Main Motion wording before it has been acted

upon.

- A motion to **Postpone indefinitely** is a motion to decline taking a position on the Main Motion. Its approval kills the Main Motion and avoids a direct vote on the question. It is useful in disposing of a badly chosen Main Motion that cannot be either adopted or rejected without possibly undesirable consequences.

## MODULE SUMMARY

- The committee procedures and Robert's Rules of Order are used to handle motions during committee meetings.
- There are 6 steps for handling a motion;
  1. Speaker is recognized and makes a motion
  2. Motion is seconded
  3. Chair restates the motion to the Committee.
  4. The Committee discuss/debates/amends the motion.
  5. The vote is taken.
  6. The chair announces whether the motion passes/fails.

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- A motion is a formal proposal to take a certain action.
- Primary motions include motions for standards revision, certification actions or membership items.
- Secondary motions assist the committee in addressing the Primary Motion.

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## REFERENCES

- Robert's Rules of Order Recent Edition
  - [www.robertsrules.com](http://www.robertsrules.com)
- Standards Committee Procedures, Supervisory Board Procedures and Committee Handbooks
  - <http://cstools.asme.org/csconnect/CommitteePages.cfm?Committee=A01000000&Action=7609>
- Committee Supplemental Procedures are available through the individual committee pages on C&S Connect
  - <https://cstools.asme.org/csconnect/CommitteePages.cfm>

### References