

Decision Tree for Proposed New Definitions for F04 Terms

Revision Date: October 10, 2011

Document Objective

This document presents a decision process intended to assist an ASTM standard developer in determining when a new definition for a term is needed. This decision tree is applicable to all draft and published documents where an addition or modification to the Terminology Section is being considered. This decision process applies to both the Definition of Terms and the Definition of Terms Specific to this Standard subsections.

This decision process is undertaken by addressing the questions listed in each step described below. If the user encounters ambiguities, he/she is encouraged to consult Section E of the ASTM Form & Style Manual (the "Blue Book") &/or seek assistance from the F04.97 Chair so that the situation can be addressed and this document appropriately modified to address the ambiguity.

New Definition Decision Process (Tree)

- **Step 1 – Consider Need (Will providing a definition enhance the function or value of the document?)**
 - Is the term a commonly utilized &/or well understood word that does not need any added clarity to successfully convey its intended meaning within the context of the document?
 - Considerations:
 - A term that is broadly understood and definitions for which are readily available from multiple general and scientific dictionaries do not need redefinition by ASTM.
 - Unless additional clarity is needed to successfully convey the term's intent within the document, generation of a new ASTM definition should be avoided.
 - If the term is adequately defined elsewhere &/or additional clarity is not needed, then no ASTM definition for the term is warranted.
 - If adequate common definitions for the term DO NOT exist, additional clarification of existing non-ASTM definitions is needed, OR if uncertain, proceed to Step 2
 - Is an entry into the document's Terminology section needed?
 - Could the needed clarity be provided by paraphrasing at appropriate sections within the document itself?
 - Example:
 - Unnecessary definition approach: Test Sample - a dogbone sized in accordance with Table XXX that is then placed into the grips of the apparatus
 - Text approach: a dogbone test sample sized in accordance with table XXX is then placed into the apparatus
 - If the term needs clarity that can be addressed by paraphrasing within the text, then no ASTM definition for the term is warranted.
 - If the clarity provided by a formal ASTM definition would be beneficial to document, proceed to Step 2

Step 2 – Consider Currently Existing ASTM or External Definitions (Does an existing definition provide the needed clarity?)

- Will an already existing ASTM definition provide the missing clarity needed to convey the term's intended meaning within the document?
 - Considerations:
 - If a term's usage within the ASTM document indicates a need for clarity beyond the commonly understood meaning, then full consideration of

already existing ASTM definitions should then occur prior to any generation of a new definition

- A listing of already defined F04 terms is compiled within F2809. Other Committee level ballot approved definitions that are not yet listed in F2809 should also be considered.
- An online compilation of already existing ASTM terms can be found within the ASTM Terminology Dictionary, which can be utilized to search for terms across any or all of committees. To access the ASTM Terminology Dictionary, go to "MyCommittees" and then look under "My Tools" for the "Additional Resources" box, which will lead directly to the online Terminology Dictionary link.
- If an existing definition provides the needed clarity, utilize the existing ASTM definition within the Terminology Section.
- If an ASTM definition for the term DOES exist but it is inadequate to meet the needs of the document, then identify why and continue to Step 3.
- If no ASTM definition for this or similar terms exist, go to Step 4
- **Step 3 - Consider Modifying an Existing ASTM Definition (If a definition exists, can a language change address the needs of all involved documents?)**
 - Will an adaptation of the already existing ASTM definition provide the missing clarity needed to convey the term's intended meaning within the document?
 - Considerations:
 - Generate potential alternative definitions - With an understanding of why the current definition is inadequate, explore alternative language that may address the deficiency. Assess each of the generated alternative(s) for their ability to adequately maintain the definitional needs of the document(s) linked to the original definition.
 - Contemplate use of a delimiting phrase to introduce appropriate limitations.
 - If yes,
 - Select the most suitable edited definition and include it in the Terminology section of the draft or revision under consideration.
 - **Consult Subcommittee Chairs of each document(s) linked to the original definition(s)**
 - **Note: more than one definition for a term may already exist if the term has not been harmonized**
 - **If the new definition is deemed acceptable to each affected subcommittee chair, ballot the new definition in the document agreed upon Ballot the new**
 - If the document &/or definition is approved at Committee ballot, initiate harmonization of the other documents to the newly approved definition For each document containing a definition for the term, initiate an additional separate terminology harmonization work item proposing to change the original definition to the proposed harmonized (most suitable edited) definition.
 - If editing of the term's current definition does not result in a harmonization that will potentially fulfill the definitional needs of the document(s) utilizing the original definition, proceed to Step 4
 - **Subcommittee/Committee Ballot – Ballot new or revised definition at Subcommittee level & proceed to Committee ballot upon approval.**
 - Explain why this new or revised definition for the term is needed. If applicable, include a discussion of any perceived deficiencies and conflicts with any already existing ASTM definition(s) for the term.
 - **If modified from existing ASTM definition, initiate harmonization ballot(s) upon approval.**

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Bulleted + Level: 3 +
Aligned at: 90 pt + Tab after: 108
pt + Indent at: 108 pt

Decision Tree for Considering New F04 Definitions

Revision Date: May 13, 2011

This decision tree is for application to proposed new definitions intended to be listed within a document's *Definitions* or *Definition of Terms* subsection, typically found within the *Terminology* section. Listings within this subsection involve definitions that are (or are likely to be) utilized in multiple documents. Such terms are automatically swept into **F2809 - Standard Terminology Relating to Medical and Surgical Materials and Devices**. This decision tree DOES NOT apply to terms listed under the *Definition of Terms Specific to a Standard* subsection, the contents of which uniquely apply to a specific standard, are not swept into the F2809 F04 Terminology document, and can be balloted directly without prior review. Additional information regarding considerations for both existing and new definitions may be found under Part E of the manual *Form and Style for ASTM Standards* (a.k.a. the "Blue" Book), available online at: http://www.astm.org/COMMIT/Blue_Book.pdf

