Report to the Industry Advisory Committee (IAC) on the 18-Month Code Development Cycle

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As a result of a discussion item on the IAC agenda for the meeting held in Washington, D.C. on May 21, 1999, a task group was formed to make recommendations concerning changing the current code development cycle from "three 12-month/3 year cycle" to "two 18-month/3 year cycle". The task group was provided with a first draft of a proposed 18-month schedule prepared by ICC staff entitled "Proposed 18 Month Cycle for the International Codes" as a working document.

The task group reviewed the first draft and submits the following recommendations and a modified calendar for consideration by the IAC members. The attached calendar is to demonstrate feasibility using the task group recommendations and is intended for discussion and illustrative purposes only. These documents and any other revisions made by the IAC will be submitted to the ICC Board of Directors for their review as they consider making changes to the current procedures.

TASK GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS:

It was position of the task group that the present 12-month cycle, as currently implemented, does not permit sufficient preparation time, not only for staff work, printing and distribution, but also for participants. The task group supports the "two 18-month/3 year cycle" as proposed by ICC with the following modifications:

ITEM 1. After consulting with model code organization staff and comparing the experience of the task group members, the task group recommends that, regardless of the length of the code cycle, or the number of months within each development period, there are a minimum number of days needed to accomplish each task of the process. The recommended **minimum** number of days are as follows:

Report on final action until next code change deadline	60 days
Staff processing of code changes	90 days
Printing and distribution of code changes	30 days
Review of code changes by public and committee	90 days

members and First Hearing
Challenge deadline (from date of first hearing)   45 days
Staff processing of code changes   30 days
Printing and distribution of challenges   30 days
Review of challenges by public and Final Action   60 days

Note: The task group entertained the possibility of extending the code cycle from three years to four or five years. There was no objection to that possibility if thoroughly explored. There was agreement, however, that the present 12 months/3 year cycle is not functional unless the IAC and ICC Board are willing to consider significant changes in the current procedure used to submit, review and process of code changes. That topic was beyond the scope of the task group assignment.

ITEM 2. The task group recommends that the 18-month cycle, if accepted by the IAC, be implemented as soon as possible taking into consideration any meeting dates already committed to by the model code organizations or the ICC. The task group determined that there are no impediments to industry, code officials or other participants to implement the 18-month cycle beginning in 2000.

ITEM 3. The task group recommends that, at the end of the Final Hearing, the ICC publish a report on the final actions, which would contain the changes and any modifications made at the first hearing. This report would be made available to the public (e.g. on the internet) and serve two purposes. One, it would greatly assist the participants in the process to understand the changes made during the cycle and, two, it would serve as the trigger date for the 60 day period prior to the next code change deadline. A hard copy could be made available at a later date, allowing for printing and distribution time.

Note: The task group considered the reality that not everyone has Internet access at this time. However, Internet access for everyone is going to be more readily available in the future. The information can be downloaded and faxed or mailed to those without direct Internet access.

ITEM 4. Although the calendar reflects a separate Annual Business Meeting from the code hearings, the task group recommends that the model code organizations when possible, schedule their annual business meeting (whether joint or individual) to coincide with a code hearing. There is serious concern that scheduling three meetings in any year, as proposed in the first draft, would greatly dilute the voting process at the hearings. It is the opinion on the task group that most code officials cannot attend more than two meetings per year.

Note: There was also concern expressed by task group members that the process is already being diluted by the scheduling of educational seminars and other activities during the code hearings. The IAC may choose to express their individual concern to the ICC Board of Directors on this matter, as schedules for future meetings are prepared.

ITEM 5. The task group recommends that the ICC Board of Directors give consideration to the scheduling of other important codes and standards organization meeting dates. (One example given was the ASHRAE meetings conflicting with the IECC and IRC Energy code development activities.)

Note: There was some discussion about the first draft proposing a meeting in December. That month was generally decided to be a very undesirable travel period in this country. Without making specific recommendations, the task group was assured by ICC staff that the ICC Board of Directors and staff will take into consideration inflated travel costs and fewer travel options during religious holiday periods or other secular events as they entertain possible meeting dates.

It is impossible to discuss the timetable for code development without

getting into the fundamentals of the code change process. Since the task group had a specific charge, the recommendations presented in this report are relevant to that assignment. However, some of the task group members and guests presented items that are worthy of discussion at a later date, both by IAC and the ICC Board. It was the decision of the Chair to include these items as attachments, although they are not part of the task group recommendations and should not be considered in the discussion of this report.