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Facility Management - Part 7: Guidelines for Performance Benchmarking

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Facility Management - Teil 7: Leitlinien für das Leistungs-Benchmarking

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Foreword

This document (EN 15221-7:2012) has been prepared by Technical Committee CEN/TC 348 "Facility Management", the secretariat of which is held by NEN.

This European Standard shall be given the status of a national standard, either by publication of an identical text or by endorsement, at the latest by April 2013, and conflicting national standards shall be withdrawn at the latest by April 2013.

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. CEN [and/or CENELEC] shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights.

The present standard is divided into the following parts:

- *Part 1: Terms and definitions;*
- *Part 2: Guidance on how to prepare Facility Management agreements;*
- *Part 3: Guidance on quality in Facility Management;*
- *Part 4: Taxonomy, Classification and Structures in Facility Management;*
- *Part 5: Guidance on Facility Management processes;*
- *Part 6: Area and Space Measurement in Facility Management;*
- *Part 7: Guidelines for Performance Benchmarking (the present document).*

According to the CEN/CENELEC Internal Regulations, the national standards organisations of the following countries are bound to implement this European Standard: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and the United Kingdom.

Introduction

Effective delivery of Facility Management support is a critical component in the working of most organisations. It impacts on the organisations' own ability to deliver consistent products and services, supports the core business and can be a component in achieving competitive advantage. However, effectiveness and efficiency in Facility Management have been notoriously difficult to assess because there have been no common methodology and no standard data collection methods. This standard on Performance Benchmarking, along with others in the EN 15221 series, is a major step forward in addressing those gaps.

Benchmarking is part of a process which aims to establish the scope for, and benefits of, potential improvements in an organisation through systematic comparison of its performance with that of one or more other organisations. It is a tool in common use across industries worldwide, but has often been misused and misunderstood within Facility Management.

Benchmarking is often associated with the term 'best practice'. Comparison with the best company or process within an industry is one of the most intelligent ways to improve one's own performance. Best practice can refer to adequate outcomes at the lowest cost, but this is not always the case. It can also refer to the best possible outcome, or the speediest process, or the one with the least environmental impact. What is common to all these is that no judgement on where one's organisation stands can be made without a valid comparison.

Before starting an FM Benchmarking operation, it is highly recommended to clearly position it regarding to the four main aspects presented just below and then use the content of this standard to prepare and perform the benchmarking operation.

This standard takes as a starting point the idea that Benchmarking can take very different forms depending on four aspects:

- a) **The perspective of the initiator** performing the benchmarking process:
 - 1) customer or consumer of FM services;
 - 2) internal or provider of FM services;
- b) **The objectives of the benchmarking process** set by the initiator. These objectives are usually linked. They might include the following broad categories of objectives, which are set out in more detail in the standard:
 - 1) find new ideas;
 - 2) get data to prepare a main decision or to resolve disputes;
 - 3) to reduce costs while maintaining a similar service level received or provided;
 - 4) improve the service level received or provided while maintaining similar costs;
 - 5) improve the use of resources;
- c) **The point in time** at which the organisation is considering performing an FM benchmarking operation;
- d) **The benchmarking sample** used for comparison, mostly:
 - 1) Similar sector of primary activities, where comparisons are easier;
 - 2) Other sectors of primary activities where the interest is mainly to find possible improvements.

Financial comparisons can be an appropriate basis for a benchmarking process as quantitative data are often more easy to reach and more easy to relate to than qualitative data. Historically most benchmarking in Facility Management has focused on this kind of “hard” data. However, what one can learn from quantitative data may be limited. This standard therefore tries to establish Performance Benchmarking as a data comparison method to support development and learning processes through some types of qualitative knowledge sharing.

This standard seeks to simplify a notoriously complex process. Until now, benchmarking projects have often been confused, over-ambitious, and lacking in effective data analysis. By establishing a coherent and comprehensive process for benchmarking, along with useable and logical comparators, and by clarifying the many pitfalls in the comparison process, this standard provides practising facility managers with a range of key indicators to identify areas in which there might be a need to improve the performance of their own team, their supply chain, or the entire organisation in which they work. It is this coherent approach within the EN 15221 series which supports the basis of the Benchmarking standard.

It is hoped that this platform will, in a short time, lead to a demand for more commonality in reporting of a range of comparators – financial, quality, and so on – which will make the work of facility managers more easy, and more easily understood by the organisation for which they work.

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