



International Accounting
Education
Standards Board

529 Fifth Avenue, 6th Floor, New York, NY 10017
T + 1 (212) 286-9344 F +1 (212) 286-9570
www.iaesb.org

Committee: International Accounting Education Standards Board (IAESB)
Meeting Location: IFAC Headquarters, New York, USA
Meeting Date: July 11 – 12, 2018
SUBJECT: **An Approach to IAESB Stakeholder Engagement & Communications Prioritization (7/18)**

A Potential Model for Prioritization of Stakeholder Engagement & Communications (SE&C) Activities

In order to help identify key areas of planned SE&C activities, the Stakeholder Engagement & Communications Working Group (SECWG) has developed a heat map model which can be used to:

- Help prioritize SE&C resources
- Identify where future investment in new platforms, products or deliverables may be necessary
- Ascertain when SE&C support will be most needed
- Reflect ongoing, upcoming and planned Work Plan or project activities.

The intention is for the model to be reviewed/updated by the SECWG on a biannual following consultation with: (i) Task Force/Working Group Chairs (ii) IAESB Staff (iii) Communications Team (based out of IFAC) and (iv) IAESB Steering Committee. Significant changes to the priorities would be communicated to the Board during formal updates at IAESB meetings with ultimate approval for SE&C prioritization being made by the Steering Committee.

Some items included in the heat maps may require ongoing activity over a significant period of time, although the nature of the specific activity may change (for example, when there are longer-term outreach efforts to gather information versus later stages that may involve multiple planned launch activities). The ‘hotter’ the heat map color, the higher the intensity of the SE&C activity – reflecting the level of involvement of the IAESB, Task Forces/Working Groups and Communications Team. Task Force Chairs and Secretaries will be encouraged to outline their SE&C requirements and to share these with the SECWG on a biannual basis so that the heat map can be updated and shared with the Steering Committee ahead of formal Board meetings.

The SECWG discussed a number of potential criteria that could be used to influence prioritization decisions and settled on those that focused primarily on ‘impact’ and ‘urgency’:

- **Impact** includes factors such as impact on: IAESB stakeholders, the wider accountancy profession/education, perceptions about the IAESB or our body of IESs, level of resources deployment;
- **Urgency** reflects positioning of a particular activity within the IAESB’s Strategy and/or Work Plan, a point of specific activity within a project life-cycle, relative sequencing/interplay of other IAESB activities, timeliness/nature of messages, etc.

Applying these criteria could result in a heat map model (see Figure 1: Potential SE&C Heat Map Model) which highlights those areas of IAESB activity which demand differing levels of SE&C involvement at a point in time.

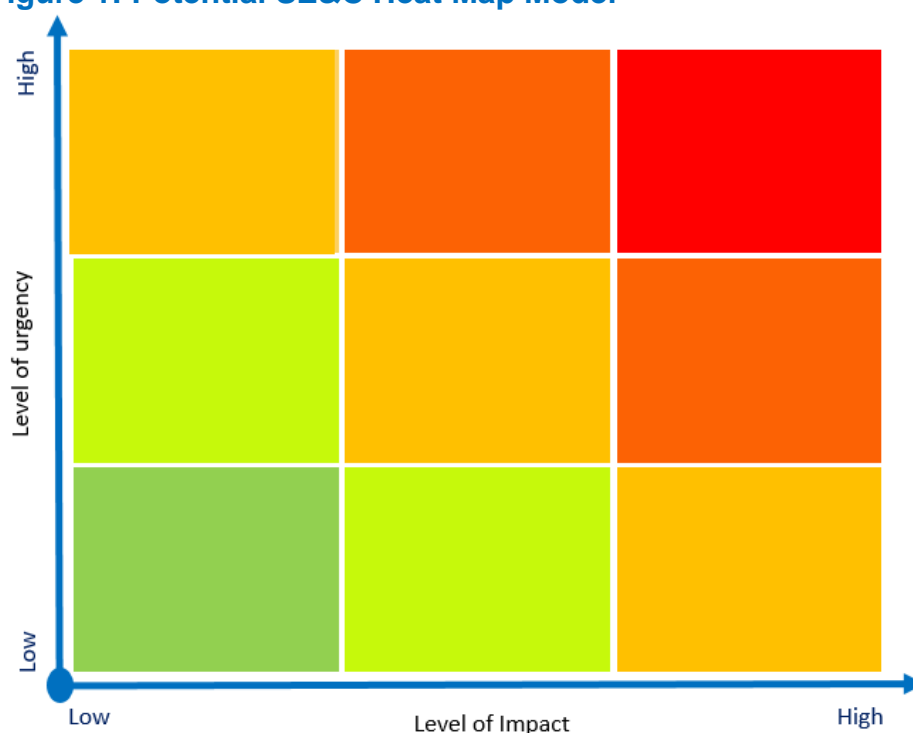
The tables below list the detailed criteria to be used in determining the impact and urgency of an SE&C activity to inform the heat mapping process:

Impact	Criteria / Description
High	<p>There is high SE&C activity because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple IAESB stakeholders are likely to be affected • There is a need to target specific countries or geographical areas • Considerable resources are likely to be needed • The subject necessitates a high profile response or may be part of a 'big bang' launch • There is a requirement to design new SE&C tools/platforms • The subject represents a major IAESB project, controversial subject or has a definite impact on the suite of IESs and related implementation support materials.
Medium	<p>There is medium SE&C activity when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One or two key stakeholders are likely to be affected • The subject potentially affects the current suite or a future suite of IESs and related materials or implementation support. • The subject represents a follow-up or ongoing support to earlier 'big bang' SE&C activities or initial engagement to sound-out stakeholders • Existing SE&C tools are likely to require reconfiguration or redesign or minor or additional development of new content.
Low	<p>There is low SE&C activity when the subject:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is at a very early stage of consideration by the IAESB with no immediate SE&C requirements • Is a relatively minor IAESB activity (i.e. one or that has minimal impact on the body of IESs).

Urgency	Criteria / Description
High	<p>SE&C activity is required to help support major rollout of IAESB activities or planned deliverables, examples could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A scheduled plan to obtain immediate input to task force activity (i.e. targeted survey, one-to-one interviews) • Announcement of a new IES or key changes to an existing IES.
Medium	<p>SE&C activity is scheduled to support ongoing activities of the IAESB and to continue to raise the profile of the IAESB. Examples could include topical personal perspectives on subjects which could be delayed in terms of timing or more investment in planning for upcoming SE&C activities.</p>
Low	<p>SE&C activity is scheduled to maintain awareness of IAESB's activities as part of regular messaging (eNews activities, maintenance of online content). The</p>

	subject is not part of the IAESB's Strategy and Work Plan and could be issued at any time.
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Figure 1: Potential SE&C Heat Map Model



In the example below, the SECWG took the existing Strategy and Work Plan, as well as factoring in recent IAESB meeting updates, and mapped out what a 'current priorities' heat map could¹ look like based on the impact/urgency criteria.

It is worth noting:

- The model is not designed to assess the relative importance of each project/activity but to assess, at a point in time, the SE&C needs of each project/activity relative to each other.
- As noted earlier, 'urgency' could include those items which are longer-term in nature and which have a need for ongoing IAESB staff involvement.
- The SE&C WG also considered various iterations of the model, including several 2 x 2 models but decided that on balance the 3 x 3 model provided greater gradation for the Board given the different stages of development of the Work Plan projects and other tasks.

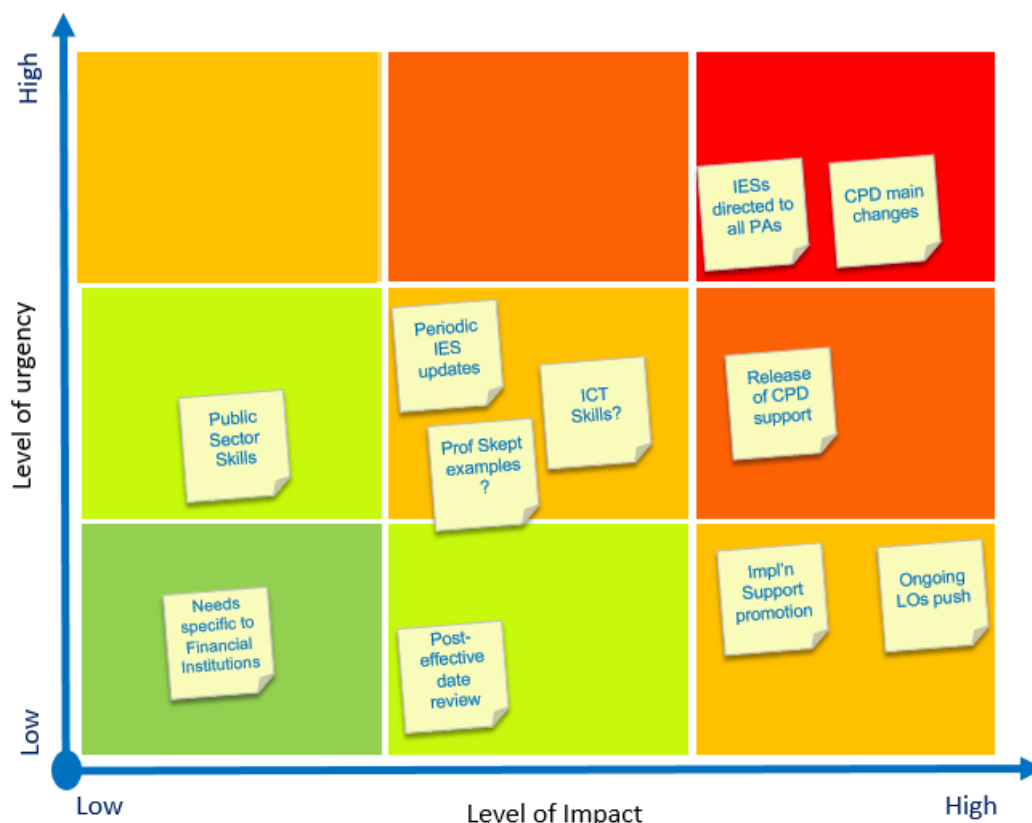
The intensity of the colors represent the heightened level of SE&C activity. Those items appearing in the red / orange section of the model are likely to require multiple SE&C

¹ Note that this assessment is purely on the basis of SECWG members' judgement and is subject to IAESB confirmation or amendment (July meeting) and Steering Committee input (June).

activities or are those that require the highest level of IAESB/Communications Team resources. Items appearing in the cooler areas of heat-map may require minimal SE&C activity or ongoing maintenance.

As of May/June, the SE&C WG performed an initial exercise (shown in **Figure 2: Current SE&C Priorities Map**, below) in order to review the current activities list of the Board and to make an initial assessment about potential SE&C prioritization.

Figure 2: Current SE&C Priorities Map (at June 2018)



SE&C’s Priorities Rationale

<p>CPD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main changes • Release of implementation support 	<p>The likely approval and release of IES 7 – CPD reflects a specific part of the Board’s work that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the potential to affect almost all professional accountants as well as key individuals within stakeholders (member organizations’ learning & development contacts, training providers, accreditation bodies, etc.); • Involves a change in the body of our IESs so has a significance to one of the core principles of the IAESB; • May require key stakeholders (member organizations, regulators) to reflect on and develop a change to their approach to measurement, promotion of a potential CPD framework, consideration of other types of CPD, etc.;
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is likely to be accompanied by ongoing implementation support - which was a key item requested during the earlier engagement activities.
<p>Impact HIGH Urgency HIGH</p>	<p>Taken together, all of these factors lead to a conclusion that the impact of the revised IES 7 is likely to be extensive and involve a significant number of our stakeholder groups (i.e. focused on specific target audiences within those stakeholder groups) as well as having a wider impact on the accounting profession and reputation of the IAESB and its body of IESs.</p> <p>Given the need for stakeholders to potentially update policies and procedures as well as to communicate the impact of any changes, the urgency was assessed as HIGH.</p>

<p>IESs directed to all professional accountants</p>	<p>This particular project would have major impact on the nature of the IESs and who they were directed to. As a result this would not be without controversy and would likely require extensive SE&C activities to explain the rationale, purpose and impact of making such a change.</p> <p>The likely impact on individual professional accountants, as well as efforts to engage or communicate directly or indirectly with this group, would also require a high level of activity by the IAESB and investment in a range of SE&C techniques.</p>
<p>Impact HIGH Urgency HIGH</p>	<p>There is likely to be a potential impact across all IESs; while the focus of the change would be towards professional accountants, the impact could be felt more widely across stakeholders such as PAOs, regulators, etc. As a result the impact was assessed as HIGH.</p> <p>Given the current development of a consultation paper on this particular subject, building on feedback received as part of other engagement activities, as well as the need to plan for potential consultation/engagement activity with multiple stakeholders and others who may be unaware of the IAESB's IESs, the urgency was assessed as HIGH.</p>

As a consequence of the above assessment, the ECP would contain Key Messages designed to describe what we want to achieve from SE&C investment in these particular areas of IAESB activities. Key Topics could then be developed to help support the Key Messages, an **example** of this approach for CPD/IES 7 could include:

<p>Key Messages</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CPD is critically important as it supports professional accountants' skills development and maintenance, and therefore protection of the public interest.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional accountants need to be responsible for their own professional development.

Further potential Key Messages that are likely to be considered HIGH impact and HIGH urgency and probable events in the next 6-12 months could include:

- Elevation of consideration of the IESs being looked at through a 'digital lens', particularly with reference to the expected completion of the gap analysis work being performed by the ICT Skills Task Force.
- Messaging on the 'pace of change' (due to evolution of business, accounting profession, digitization and importance of the link to professional accountants' CPD to enable them to be response and adaptable).

Additional Key Messages would be identified after consultation post-July with the Task Force Working Group and Steering Committee. These Key Messages are external only, for example, we have not included other priority SE&C activities with respect to development of our internal resources (such as the IAESB website redesign or the launch of the Accounting Education Resources area).

As was noted earlier, the focus on HIGH impact and HIGH urgency activities does not preclude the IAESB from investing resources into other projects. In [Figure 2: Current SE&C Priorities Map](#) we saw how some additional activities were mapped to the moderate level of SE&C parts of the model either because they had:

- **Medium Impact, Medium Urgency** – for example, minor confirming changes to IESs may not be as impactful as 'new' or revised IESs and would likely only affect a relatively small number of targeted individuals within IFAC member organizations or regulatory bodies. As such, the level of activity would be less than a full-blown launch of a new IES. At the same time, communications with key audience(s) as soon as the changes are made (and approved) would require a more urgent approach.
- **High Impact, Low Urgency** – examples of this could be ongoing Board activities that still require some level of promotion or engagement (for example, identifying areas of implementation support needs by key stakeholders which could have a significant impact on whether the Board's IESs are successfully implemented). Other activities may be themes of the IAESB that are ongoing (for example the push towards a Learning Outcomes approach – there may be little 'urgency' at this point in time due to there being no 'big bang' project or announcement, but ongoing activities could be designed to reinforce this drive for change). Another category could be where plans are being made in the next 12 months because of anticipated heavy investment in future SE&C activities.

Items that are likely to receive lower levels of SE&C resources may still be at an earlier stage in their development or in their infancy (such as post-effective date review, financial institutions skills project) or simply be in an ongoing state of maintenance (e.g., just 'ticking over' such as the potential pipeline of personal perspectives on more non-specific IAESB projects). Other projects as they move to a more inward looking state of development may also fall into this Low urgency, Low impact category.

During each period of review of the ECP (performed biannually by the SECWG), the prioritization criteria is reviewed based on the intended upcoming activities of the IAESB which will likely lead to a change in the heat map of SE&C activities.

We can also anticipate how SE&C priorities may shift over time as a result of future re-assessment of the applied criteria and changes in IAESB projects, activities or themes. As we can see in the heat map below, a number of areas have shown an anticipated increase, decrease or maintenance of levels of SE&C investment.

There are of course several unknowns inherent in making a prediction some 2 years out, such as:

- Impact of having a new Chair with their own ‘vision’ for the IAESB; recently appointed IAESB CAG Chair who may have new advice;
- Consideration and future development of the 2019-2021 Work Plan activities
- Progress, sequencing, changes and completion of life-cycle of current and anticipated future projects.

These unknown factors would likely have an impact on the progression and change in SE&C priority level for many of these IAESB activities.

In **Figure 3: Potential Changes in Priorities** (see below), the SE&C WG considered how the priorities might shift in a year’s time (this is an estimate at this point in time) as project impact and urgency changes over the course of a year. **Figure 4: Future Priorities Map** (see next page) is an illustration of where potential activities could land with respect to SE&C investment / resourcing.

Figure 3: Potential Changes in Priorities (2019 and beyond)

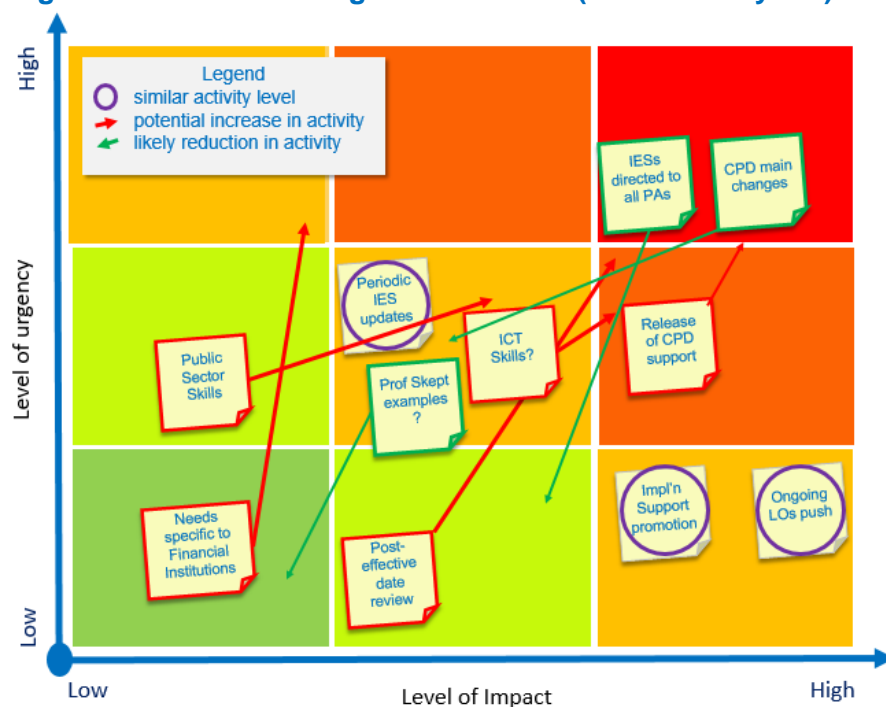


Figure 4: Future Priorities Map (2019 illustration)

Using the same prioritization criteria (and assuming no major changes in planned activities of the IAESB other than natural transition of existing projects), the diagram below indicates what a future heat map could look like:

