

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF ACCOUNTANTS**

### **The Organization**

The International Federation of Accountants (IFAC) is the worldwide organization for the accountancy profession. Founded in 1977, its mission is to serve the public interest by continuing to strengthen the worldwide accountancy profession and contributing to the development of strong international economies by establishing and promoting adherence to high-quality professional standards, furthering the international convergence of such standards, and speaking out on public interest issues where the profession's expertise is most relevant.

IFAC is comprised of 159 members and associates in 124 countries worldwide, representing approximately 2.5 million accountants in public practice, industry and commerce, the public sector, and education. No other accountancy body in the world and few other professional organizations have the broad-based international support that characterizes IFAC.

IFAC's governing bodies, staff and volunteers are committed to the values of integrity, transparency and expertise. IFAC also seeks to reinforce professional accountants' adherence to these values through the International Ethics Standards Board for Accountants' *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* (IESBA Code).

Visit the IFAC website at <http://www.ifac.org> for further information.

### **Standard-Setting Initiatives**

IFAC has long recognized that a fundamental way to protect the public interest is to develop, promote, and enforce internationally recognized standards as a means of ensuring the credibility of information upon which investors and other stakeholders depend.

The International Auditing and Assurance Standards Board (IAASB), the International Accounting Education Standards Board (IAESB), the International Ethics Standards Board for Accountants (IESBA), and the International Public Sector Accounting Standards Board (IPSASB) follow a rigorous due process that supports the development of high-quality standards in the public interest in a transparent, efficient, and effective manner. These independent standard-setting boards all have Consultative Advisory Groups, which provide public interest perspectives, and include public members. These boards issue the following pronouncements:

- Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants
- International Standards on Auditing, Review, Other Assurance, and Related Services
- International Standard on Quality Control
- International Education Standards
- International Public Sector Accounting Standards

The IAASB, IAESB, IESBA and IPSASB are collectively referred to as the Public Interest Activity Committees. The IAASB, IAESB and IESBA are also subject to oversight by the Public Interest Oversight Board. See <http://www.ipiob.org/> for more information.

The Compliance Advisory Panel (CAP) oversees IFAC's member body compliance program which requires IFAC members and associates to demonstrate how they have used best endeavors to implement the standards issued by IFAC and the International Accounting Standards Board. Member bodies' obligations are set out the IFAC's Statements of Membership Obligations. See <http://www.ifac.org/complianceprogram> for more information.

## Other Initiatives

IFAC develops benchmark guidance and promotes the sharing of resources to serve professional accountants in business. It has also established groups to address issues pertaining to small and medium practices (SMPs) and entities (SMEs) and developing nations, all of which play a critical role in the global economy.

- Professional Accountants in Business Committee

The committee develops good practice guidance and other resources, and facilitates the exchange of knowledge among its member bodies. These address a wide range of professional issues, encourage high-quality performance by professional accountants in business, and build public awareness and understanding of the roles these individuals play in their organizations. See <http://www.ifac.org/paib> for more information.

- Small and Medium Practices Committee

The committee provides direct input from an SMP/SME perspective into the work of international standard setters to shape their work agenda and ensuring standards produced are applicable to SMPs and SMEs. The committee also issues practical support for SMPs such as implementation guides and web-based resources on topics such as efficient implementation of international standards and proficient practice management. The committee engages in outreach activities such as the annual SMP forum, to keep abreast of emerging issues and to facilitate timely respond to its constituents' needs. See <http://www.ifac.org/smp> for more information.

- Developing Nations Committee

The committee supports the development of the accountancy profession internationally by representing and addressing the interests of developing nations and by providing guidance in relevant areas. The committee also seeks resources and development assistance from the donor community and IFAC members on behalf of developing nations. Further, the committee engages in outreach activities such as its annual forums. See <http://www.ifac.org/developingnations> or more information.

- Transnational Auditors Committee

The committee is dedicated to representing and meeting the needs of the members of the Forum of Firms (FoF). The membership of the FoF is made up of international firms that perform audits of financial statements that are or may be used across national borders are represented in IFAC through the Forum of Firms. The firms' commitment to the membership obligations of the FoF contributes to raising the standards of the international practice of auditing, thus serving the public interest. See [http://www.ifac.org/Forum\\_of\\_Firms/](http://www.ifac.org/Forum_of_Firms/) for more information.

## Other Resources

IFAC has a wide range of publications and resource materials. Other available handbooks are as follows:

- *Handbook of International Quality Control, Auditing, Review, Other Assurance, and Related Services Pronouncements*
- *Handbook of International Education Pronouncements*
- *Handbook of the Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants*
- *Handbook of International Public Sector Accounting Pronouncements*

IFAC also publishes adoption and implementation support materials, exposure drafts, consultation papers, newsletters, and eNews. The majority of these publications are made available in electronic format on the IFAC website for download free-of-charge. Printed copies of the handbooks are also available for purchase. See <http://web.ifac.org/publications> for more information.

## Copyright and Translation

IFAC's policy with regard to copyright of its publications is outlined in its Policy Statement, *Policy for Reproducing, or Translating and Reproducing, Publications Issued by the International Federation of Accountants*.

IFAC recognizes that it is important that preparers and users of financial statements, auditors, regulators, lawyers, academia, students, and other interested groups in non-English speaking countries have access to its standards in their native language. IFAC's policy with regard to translation and reproduction of its international standards (in final form) is outlined in its Policy Statement, *Policy for Translating and Reproducing Standards Issued by the International Federation of Accountants*. See <http://www.ifac.org/translations> for more information.