



# AMERICAN NATIONAL STANDARD

*ANSI/ASSE Z590.2 – 2003 (R2012)  
Criteria for Establishing the Scope  
and Functions of the Professional  
Safety Position*

*ANSI/ASSE Z590.2 – 2003 (R2012)*



AMERICAN SOCIETY OF  
SAFETY ENGINEERS

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**ANSI/ASSE Z590.2 – 2003 (R2012)**

**American National Standard**

**Criteria for Establishing  
the Scope and Functions of the  
Professional Safety Position**

Secretariat

**American Society of Safety Engineers**  
1800 East Oakton Street  
Des Plaines, Illinois 60018-2187

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## Foreword

(This Foreword is not part of American National Standard Z590.2-2003 (R2012))

The American National Standard Institute (ANSI) Z590 standard projects were initiated by the American Society of Safety Engineers (ASSE) in response to requests from its membership. After a careful evaluation of commentary from its membership in its various venues, consensus was reached for the American Society of Safety Engineers (ASSE) to initiate this standards project, including use of the canvass method approach. This methodology was chosen as the subject area of the standards, developed within the scope of the project, are primarily, but not exclusively, issues of ASSE's mission and purpose. ASSE currently has over 30,000 members representing a diverse range of safety professionals from industry, business, government and academia. This diverse membership, in conjunction with ANSI procedure, allows for development of such standards in a manner which encourages participation from a wide range of interested stakeholders.

Using the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) model for the development of these standards, ASSE created the Operating Procedures (OPs) governing its role as secretariat. Concurrently, and integral to establishing the OPs, was registration of the standards project via the Project Initiation Notification System, which sought public comment of all interested and affected parties. While this notice was published in the ANSI Standards Action of November 7, 1997, the 30 day notice expired on December 8, 1997 without any comment from the general public or affected/interested parties.

Accordingly, and based upon this record and its procedural criteria, ANSI's Executive Standards Council approved establishment of the standards project, its operating procedures and ASSE as secretariat on February 12, 1998. Under the alphanumerical designation, Z590.1, and its title, *Criteria for Establishing Levels of Competence in the Safety Profession*, various aspects related to the safety profession are addressed. This second standard in the series is Z590.2, *Criteria for Establishing the Scope and Function of the Professional Safety Position*.

To perform their professional functions, individuals practicing in the safety profession generally have education, training and experience from a common body of knowledge. They need to have a fundamental knowledge of physics, chemistry, biology, physiology, statistics, mathematics, computer science, engineering mechanics, industrial processes, business, communication and psychology. Professional safety studies include industrial hygiene and toxicology, design of engineering hazard controls, fire protection, ergonomics, system and process safety, safety and health program management, accident investigation and analysis, product safety, construction safety, education and training methods, measurement of safety performance, human behavior, environmental safety and health, and safety, health and environmental laws, regulations and standards. Many have backgrounds or advanced study in other disciplines such as management and business administration, engineering, education, physical and social sciences and other fields. Others have advanced study in safety, and this additional background extends their expertise beyond the basics of the safety profession.

Because safety is an element in all human endeavors, the performance of these functions, in a variety of contexts in both public and private sectors, often employ specialized knowledge and skills. Typical settings are manufacturing, insurance, risk management, government, education, consulting, construction, healthcare, engineering and design, waste management, petroleum, facilities management, retail, transportation and utilities. Within these contexts, they must adapt their functions to fit the mission, operations and climate of their employer. Not only must individuals practicing in the safety profession acquire the knowledge and skills to perform these functions effectively in their employment context, through continuing education and training they stay current with new technologies, changes in laws and regulations, and changes in the workforce, workplace and world business, political and social climate.

As part of their positions, these individuals must plan for and manage resources and funds related to their functions. They may be responsible for supervising a diverse staff of professionals. By acquiring the knowledge and skills of the profession, developing the mind set and wisdom to act responsibly in the employment context, and keeping up with changes that affect the safety profession, the required safety professional functions are able to be performed with confidence, competence and respected authority.

The Z590.2 standard sets forth common and reasonable parameters of the professional safety position. The standard will help businesses and industry in identifying areas of responsibility for their in-house practitioners of safety and outside safety consultants. In recent years legislation and regulation at the national, state and local levels has attempted to codify the professional areas of responsibility for those practicing in the safety profession. The most compelling reason why such an initiative should be undertaken is that ASSE identified hundreds of state and national legislation/regulation in a single calendar year which would have established these levels of responsibility. Having one American National Standard offers a wide range of different options to private sector organizations and public agencies in creating their own benchmark.

This standard uses a two-column format to provide both basic requirements and explanatory information. The left column (Standard Requirements) addresses the central principles. The right column (Explanatory Information) offers various criteria or approaches whereby the basic requirement is carried out in whole or part by the methodology set forth and described in the E-Column.

Recognized job analysis methods are often used to derive the description of a practice in a field. Late in 2000, the Board of Certified Safety Professionals (BCSP) completed a comprehensive job analysis study that involved about 1,500 safety professionals, most of who are members of ASSE. The study identified and then validated through a survey twenty-four responsibility statements that describe professional safety practice. Periodically, BCSP will conduct job analysis studies to ensure that the examinations leading to the Certified Safety Professional (CSP) designation accurately reflect what safety professionals do in practice. When one maps the responsibility statements from the BCSP study to the statements in this standard that describe the professional safety position, there is a strong correlation between the two sets of descriptions. As a result, most would conclude that results of BCSP's comprehensive job analysis study of professional safety practice validate the descriptions of the professional safety position that appear in this standard. The BCSP study is cited in the standard's reference list.

At the time this standard was published, the Z590.2 Committee had the following Canvass members:

ABB Inc.	Darryl Hill
Accident Prevention Corp.	Frank Burg
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BNSF Railway	James Weber
BP Oil	Maribeth Anderson
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NESTI  
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Safety Oilfield Services LLC  
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## AMERICAN NATIONAL STANDARD Z590.2 CRITERIA FOR ESTABLISHING THE SCOPE AND FUNCTIONS OF THE PROFESSIONAL SAFETY POSITION

### STANDARD REQUIREMENTS

### EXPLANATORY INFORMATION

(Not part of American National Standard Z590.2)

#### 1. PREFACE

Individuals practicing in the safety profession endorse a proactive approach to the issue of professional responsibility. Numerous national/state agencies, private sector organizations and standards development bodies are attempting to establish limitations, parameters and baseline competence including standardization, regulations and legislation. This standard sets forth the paradigm for those entities that establish competencies for the practice of safety and for reciprocity agreements between national/state regulatory agencies, legislative bodies, private sector organizations and national consensus standards development bodies.

#### 2. SCOPE, PURPOSE AND APPLICATION

**2.1 Scope.** This standard establishes the scope and functions of the professional safety position.

**2.2 Purpose.** The purpose of this standard is to define the scope and functions of the professional safety position.

**2.3 Application.** The intent of this standard is to consolidate in a clear and consistent manner an objective assessment of the professional safety position.

**2.3.1 Severability.** If any of the provisions of this standard are deemed to be not applicable, the other requirements or recommendations of the standard shall still apply.

**2.3.2** The intent of the standard is to establish criteria of the professional safety position for use by employers, legislative