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STANDARD

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**Document management — Electronic
document file format for long-term
preservation —**

**Part 3:
Use of ISO 32000-1 with support for
embedded files (PDF/A-3)**

*Gestion de documents — Format de fichier des documents
électroniques pour une conservation à long terme —*

*Partie 3: Utilisation de l'ISO 32000-1 avec support de fichiers
incorporés (PDF/A-3)*



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Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

International Standards are drafted in accordance with the rules given in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2.

The main task of technical committees is to prepare International Standards. Draft International Standards adopted by the technical committees are circulated to the member bodies for voting. Publication as an International Standard requires approval by at least 75 % of the member bodies casting a vote.

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

ISO 19005-3 was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 171, *Document management applications*, Subcommittee SC 2, *Application issues*, in cooperation with ISO/TC 130, *Graphic technology*, ISO/TC 42, *Photography*, and ISO/TC 46, *Information and documentation*, Subcommittee SC11, *Archives/records management*.

ISO 19005 consists of the following parts, under the general title *Document management — Electronic document file format for long-term preservation*:

- *Part 1: Use of PDF 1.4 (PDF/A-1)*
- *Part 2: Use of ISO 32000-1 (PDF/A-2)*
- *Part 3: Use of ISO 32000-1 with support for embedded files (PDF/A-3)*

Introduction

PDF is a digital format for representing page-based documents. PDF files can be created natively in PDF form, converted from other electronic formats or digitized from paper, microform, or other hard copy format. Businesses, governments, libraries, archives and other institutions and individuals around the world use PDF to represent considerable bodies of important information. Much of this information needs to be kept for substantial lengths of time; some needs to be kept permanently. These PDF files need to remain useable and accessible across multiple generations of technology. However, the inclusive, feature-rich nature of the format requires that constraints be placed on its use to make it suitable for the long-term preservation of electronic documents. The future use of, and access to, these objects depends upon maintaining their visual appearance as well as their higher-order properties, such as the logical organization of pages, sections, and paragraphs, machine recoverable text stream in natural reading order, and a variety of administrative, preservation and descriptive metadata.

This International Standard is created as a multi-part document, of which this is part 3. This allows future parts to be created without rendering this document or applications based on this document obsolete.

The primary purpose of ISO 19005 is to define a file format based on PDF, known as PDF/A, which provides a mechanism for representing electronic documents in a manner that preserves their static visual appearance over time, independent of the tools and systems used for creating, storing or rendering the files.

A secondary purpose of ISO 19005 is to define a framework for representing the logical structure and other semantic information of electronic documents within conforming files.

Another purpose of ISO 19005 is to provide a framework for recording the context and history of electronic documents in metadata within conforming files.

This part of ISO 19005 adds a new goal (beyond that of ISO 19005-2) which is to enable PDF documents to serve as containers for other file formats, so that a single physical file can contain not only the visual representation but also other representations including the original authored version, richer semantic formats, and others. This part of ISO 19005 does not address the long-term suitability of formats, that may be embedded, other than those compliant with any part of this International Standard.

These goals are accomplished by identifying the set of PDF components that can be used, and restrictions on the form of their use, within conforming PDF/A files.

By itself, PDF/A does not necessarily ensure that the visual appearance of the content accurately reflects any original source material used to create the conforming file, e.g. the process used to create a conforming file might substitute fonts, reflow text, downsample images or use lossy compression. Organizations that need to ensure that a conforming file is an accurate representation of original source material might need to impose additional requirements on the processes that generate the conforming file beyond those imposed by this part of ISO 19005, such as those best practices in Annex C. In addition, it is important for those organizations to implement policies and practices regarding the inspection of conforming files for correct visual appearance.

PDF/A does not directly address the topic of authenticity either for the underlying content to be visually represented or the PDF/A file itself. Such authenticity is generally considered to be important for legal, regulatory and governance purposes and is beyond the scope of this part of ISO 19005.

This part of ISO 19005 is one component of an organization's electronic archival environment for long-term retention of documents. Successful implementation of this part of ISO 19005 for archival purposes depends upon:

- the retention requirements of an organization's archival environment, records management policies and procedures as specified in ISO 15489-1^[6];
- any additional conditions necessary to ensure the persistence of electronic documents and their characteristics over time, including, but not limited to, those defined by ISO 14721^[5], ISO/TR 15801^[7], and ISO/TR 18492^[8];

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- quality assurance processes necessary to verify conformance with applicable requirements and conditions, e.g. an inspection regime to verify the quality and integrity of converted source data.

This part of ISO 19005 is intended to lead to the development of various applications that read, render, write and validate conforming files. Different applications will incorporate various capabilities to prepare, interpret and process conforming files based on needs as perceived by the suppliers of those applications. However, it is important to note that a conforming application needs to be able to read and process appropriately all files complying with a specified conformance level.

This part of ISO 19005 extends the capabilities of ISO 19005-2. Just as with ISO 19005-2, it is based on PDF version 1.7 (as defined in ISO 32000-1).

This part of ISO 19005 (in conjunction with its normative references) provides sufficient information to interpret any conforming PDF/A-3 file.

NPES and AIIM (accredited standards developing organizations) maintain an ongoing series of application notes for guiding developers and users of this part of ISO 19005. These application notes are available at <http://www.npes.org/standards/toolspdfa.html> and <http://www.aiim.org/Research-and-Publications/Standards/Articles/PDFA-Application-Notes>. Both NPES and AIIM will also retain copies of the specific non-ISO normative references of this part of ISO 19005 which are publicly available electronic documents.