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Foreword

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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 2709 was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 46, *Information and documentation*, Subcommittee SC 4, *Technical interoperability*.

This fourth edition cancels and replaces the third edition (ISO 2709:1996), which has been technically revised to incorporate specification of the use of ISO/IEC 10646 using 8-bit Unicode Transformation Format (UTF-8) encoding. Consequently, lengths are specified in terms of octets instead of characters.