ANSI/NISO Z39.23-1997 (S2015) ISSN: 1041-5653

Standard Technical Report Number Format and Creation

Abstract: In order to improve access to technical reports and assist in bringing order and uniformity to that form of technical literature, this standard specifies the format for a Standard Technical Report Number (STRN). It describes how and where the number should be assigned and used, and calls for a central authority to coordinate and monitor such assignments. The STRN consists of two groups of characters: the first indicates the issuing organization and includes the optional subdivisions or series, and the second provides a sequential number. Provision has been made for the year of publication as a recommended part of the sequential number.

An American National Standard
Developed by the
National Information Standards Organization

Approved October 8, 1996 by the
American National Standards Institute
Converted to stabilized maintenance May 24, 2015

Published by the National Information Standards Organization
Baltimore, Maryland, U.S.A.

About NISO Standards

NISO standards are developed by Working Groups and Standing Committees of the National Information Standards Organization. The development process is a strenuous one that includes a rigorous peer review of proposed standards open to each NISO Voting Member and any other interested party. Final approval of the standard involves verification by the American National Standards Institute that its requirements for due process, consensus, and other approval criteria have been met by NISO. Once verified and approved, NISO Standards also become American National Standards.

This standard may be revised or withdrawn at any time. For current information on the status of this standard contact the NISO office or visit the NISO website at: www.niso.org

Published by
NISO
3600 Clipper Mill Road
Suite 302
Baltimore, MD 21211-1948

ISSN: 1041-5653 National Information Standards series
ISBN: 978-1-937522-45-2

Contents

Foreword

(This foreword is not part of the American National Standard for *Standard Technical Report Number Format and Creation*, ANSI/NISO Z39.23-1997 (S2015). It is included for information only.)

About This Standard

This standard, ANSI/NISO 239.23-1997, is intended for use with both publicly distributed and in-house technical reports. Its numbering format is flexible so that it can meet the diversified needs of different groups in either computer or manual operations. The standard should be used in conjunction with ANSI/NISO Z39.18-1995, *Scientific and Technical Reports – Elements, Organization, and Design*.

ANSI/NISO Z39.23-1997 was originally developed in 1974. It was first revised in 1983 by Subcommittee 32 on Technical Report Numbering of American National Standards Committee Z39, which in 1983 became the National information Standards Organization. The standard was further revised in 1990 to provide more latitude in constructing the report number by allowing for more characters, greater variability of separators, and coordination of volume and set numbers. This most recent revision expands the sequential group to 16 characters to accommodate a four-digit year identifier.

This standard was processed and approved for submittal to ANSI by the National Information Standards Organization. It was balloted by the NISO Voting Members March 23,1996 - June 28, 1996.

Reaffirmation

This standard underwent periodic reviews and was reaffirmed in 2002 and 2009. The NISO Members approved the latest reaffirmation on May 28, 2009. NISO was undergoing an ANSI audit at the time, followed by a special audit, and ANSI would not accept any requests for approvals until the audit was completed. The ANSI approval was, therefore, delayed until January 4, 2010; since the NISO approval was in 2009, that year was accepted as the reaffirmation date in the designation.

Stabilized Maintenance

At the time of its periodic review in 2014, the NISO Content and Collection Management Topic Committee evaluated the standard and recommended that it be converted to stabilized maintenance. Stabilized maintenance removes a standard from the requirement for five-year periodic reviews. It is used for standards that address mature technology or practices and are not likely to require a revision. The ANSI/NISO Z39.23-1997 (S201x) Review Voting Pool approved the conversion on January 3, 2015. ANSI approved the conversion on March 24, 2015.

Suggestions for improving this standard are welcome. They should be sent to the National Information Standards Organization, 3600 Clipper Mill Road, Suite 302, Baltimore, MD 21211.

NISO Voting Members

Approval of this standard does not necessarily imply that all Voting Members voted for its approval. At the time it approved this standard (1997), NISO had the following Voting Members:

3M
Richard W. Lindahl, Robert L. Dreger (Alt), Gerald G. Marsolek (Alt)

American Association of Law Libraries
Andrew Laurence

American Chemical Society
Robert S. Tannehill, Jr., Leon R. Blauvelt (Alt)

American Library Association
Carlen Ruschoff

American Society for Information Science
Mark H. Needleman

American Society of Indexers
Patricia S. Kuhr, Marie Kascus (Alt)

American Theological Library Association
Myron B. Chace

Ameritech Library Services, Academic Division
John Kolman

NISO Voting Members (cont.)

Amoco Corporation
Randy R. Reddemann

Apple Computer, Inc.
Janet Vratny, Rita Brennan (Alt)

Armed Forces Medical Library
Diane Zehnpfennig, Beth Knapke (Alt)

Art Libraries Society of North America
Thomas E. Young, Penney DePas (Alt)

Association of Information and Dissemination Centers
Bruce H. Kiesel

Association for Information and Image Management
Judy Kilpatrick

Association of Jewish Libraries
Pearl Berger, David Gilner (Alt)

Association of Research Libraries
Duane E. Webster

Bell Labs
M.E. Brennan

CASPR, Inc.
Norman Kline, Brian Lomeli (Alt)

CARL Corporation
Ward Shaw

College Center for Library Automation
J. Richard Madaus, Ann Armbrister (All)

Data Research Associates, Inc.
Michael J. Mellinger, James Michael (Alt)

Data Research Users Group, Inc.
Beth F. Anderson

EBSCO Information Services
Sandra H. Hurd, Mary Beth Vanderpoorten (Alt)

Elsevier Science Incorporated
John Mancia, Norman Paskin (Alt)

The Faxon Company
Alan Nordman

Follett
D. Jeffrey Blumenthal, Michael Marchuck (Alt)

Gaylord Information Systems
James English, William Schickling (Alt)

GCA Research Institute
Christopher Ziener, Norman Scharpf (Alt)

Geac Computers, Inc.
Simon Kendall, B.J. Mitchell (Alt)

IBM
Tryg Ager

IEEE
Anthony J. Ferraro

Indiana Cooperative Library Services Authority
Millard Johnson, Janice Cox (Alt)

Information Access Company
Delores Meglio, Victoria Gray (Alt)

Innovative Interfaces, Inc.
Gerald M. Kline, Sandra Westall (Alt)

Knight-Ridder Information, Inc.
Richard Boulderstone, David Loy (Alt)

Lexis-Nexis
Peter Ryall

Library Binding Institute
Sally Grauer

Library of Congress
Winston Tabb, Sally H. McCallum (Alt)

Medical Library Association
Katherine Hughes, Carla J. Funk (Alt)

MINITEX
Anita Anker Branin, William DeJohn (Alt)

Music Library Association
Lenore Coral, Geraldine Ostrove (All)

National Agricultural Library
Pamela Q. J. Andre, Gary K. McCone (Alt)

National Archives and Records Administration
Alan Calmes

National Federation of Abstracting and Information Services
John Schnepp

National Library of Medicine
Lois Ann Colaianni

OCLC, Inc.
Donald J. Muccino

OHIONET
Michael P. Butler, Greg Pronevitz (Alt)

OhioLINK
David Barber

PALINET
James E. Rush

Readmore Academic Services
Sandra J. Gurshman, Amira Aaron (Alt)

The Research Libraries Group, Inc.
Wayne Davison, Kathy Bales (Alt)

R. R. Bowker
Emery Koltay

R. R. Donnelley & Sons, Co.
Sidney P. Marland III

SilverPlatter Information, Inc.
Peter Ciuffetti, Barbara Bishop (Alt)

Society of American Archivists
Lynn Lady Bellardo

Society for Technical Communication
Connie Bibus, Kevin Burns (Alt)

Special Libraries Association
Marjorie Hlava

SUNY /OCLC
Liz Lane

UMI
Blake Ratcliffe, Jim Tumolo (Alt)

U.S. Department of the Army, Headquarters
Paula E. Vincent

NISO Voting Members (cont.)

U.S. Department of Commerce, National Institute of Standards and Technology, Office of Information Services
Paul Vassallo, Jeff Harrison (Alt)

U.S. Department of Defense, Defense Technical Information Center
Gretchen A. Schlag, Claire Tozier (Alt)

U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Scientific and Technical Information
Mary Hall, Nancy Hardin (Alt)

U.S. National Commission on Libraries and Information Science
Peter R. Young

VTLS, Inc.
Vinod Chachra

West Publishing Company
Andy Desmond, Forrest Rhoads (Alt)

Winnebago Software
Bob Engen, Carol Blagsvedt (Alt)

The H.W. Wilson Company
George I. Lewicky, Ann Case (Alt)

ANSI/NISO Z39.23-1997 (S201x) Review Voting Pool

At the time this standard was converted to stabilized maintenance (2016), the following were members of the ANSI/NISO Z39.23-1997 (S201x) Review Voting Pool. NISO approval of this standard does not necessarily imply that all Voting Members voted for its approval.

American Society for Information Science & Technology (ASIS&T)
Mark Needleman

American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE)
Bruce Gossett

Cengage Learning
Marti Heyman

Ex Libris
Mike Dicus

IEEE
Gerry Grenier

International DOI Foundation (IDF)
Norman Paskin

Library of Congress
John Zagas

Mulberry Technologies, Inc.
B. Tommie Usdin

Music Library Association
Nara Newcomer

National Archives and Records Administration
Marilyn Redman

National Federation of Advanced Information Services (NFAIS)
Margie Hlava

National Geospatial Intelligence Agency
Trent Palmer

National Library of Medicine
Barbara Rapp

OCLC
Tim Dalrymple

Public Library of Science (PLOS)
Cameron Neylon

The LIbrary Corporation (TLC)
Juli Marsh

Recording Industry Association of America
Paul Jessop

Standards Committee AN

The following individuals served on Standards Committee AN at the time this standard was developed (1997):

Mary Hall, Chair
U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Scientific and Technical Information

Ione Auston
National Library of Medicine

Suzanne Feindt
National Technical Information Service

John Wilson
National Aeronautics and Space Administration

Gopalakrishnan Nair
U.S. Department of Defense, Defense Technical Information Center

Trademarks, Services Marks

Wherever used in this standard, all terms that are trademarks or service marks are and remain the property of their respective owners.

Standard Technical Report Number Format and Creation

1 Purpose, Scope, and Use

The purpose of this standard is to provide a uniform format for the creation of unique but compatible technical report numbers. The use of this standard will enable issuing organizations to assign their report numbers so that the numbers will be compatible in format with those assigned by others. Indexing services will be able to provide lists of technical reports by number without confusion. Similarly, libraries, information centers, and other technical report users will be able to identify, locate, and easily organize report literature according to a consistent and accepted pattern. The standard will also enable users to cite reports efficiently and accurately.

The Standard Technical Report Number (STRN) shall be used with all technical reports, including those produced in nonprint media. The report number shall appear in an upper comer on both the cover and title page and on the spine of a bound report if space permits so that a user will not have to remove the report from a shelf to read the number. A report number is composed of an alphanumeric report code (2-16 characters), a 2-character group separator, and a sequential group of 1-16 characters indicating the year, sequence of report issuance, and identifying characters for supplements, revisions, drafts, etc., as appropriate. The report number shall appear on all copies of each report.

2 Referenced Standards

This standard is intended for use in conjunction with the following American National Standards. When the referenced standard is superseded by a revision approved by the American National Standards Institute, consult the revision.

ANSI/NISO Z39.18-1995, *Scientific and Technical Reports – Elements, Organization, and Design*
[Note: Title changed in 2005 to *Scientific and Technical Reports – Preparation, Presentation, and Preservation*]

ISO10444:1994, *Information and Documentation – International Standard Technical Report Number (ISRN)*
[Note: This ISO standard was withdrawn in 2007, which does not affect the requirements of this ANSI standard.]

ISO 3166, *Information and Documentation – Codes for the Representation of Names of Countries*

3 Definitions

The following terms, as used in this standard, have the meanings indicated.

Term	**Definition**
country code	A code added to a **Standard Technical Report Number** to indicate country of publication. The code is optional and is not part of the Standard Technical Report Number (see 4.6).

Term	Definition
group separator	A double hyphen (--) used to separate the **report code** from the **sequential group** in the **Standard Technical Report Number**.
ISRN	The identifying label used as a prefix to the **Standard Technical Report Number**. It is not part of the **Standard Technical Report Number**. The label stands for International Standard Report Number.
local suffix	An optional field that permits the issuing organization or corporate entity to add information. It is not a part of the **Standard Technical Report Number**.
report code	The first portion of the **Standard Technical Report Number**. It designates the issuing organization or corporate entity and, in some cases, a series or a special series issued cooperatively by two or more organizations.
scientific and technical report (hereafter referred to as "report")	A document that conveys the results of basic or applied research and supports decisions based on those results. A report includes the ancillary information necessary for interpreting, applying, and replicating the results or techniques of an investigation. The primary purposes of such a report are to disseminate the results of scientific and technical research and to recommend action. A report has a unique, issuer-supplied report number and may have a contract or grant number and an accession or acquisition number. A report also exhibits some or all of the following characteristics: 1. Its readership may be limited, its distribution may be limited or restricted, and its contents may include classified, proprietary, or copyrighted information. 2. It may be written for an individual or organization as a contractual requirement to recount a total research story, including full discussions of unsuccessful approaches. 3. It is not usually published or made available through the commercial publishing trade; it is often available through a nonprofit governmental entity (for example, the National Technical Information Service or the Government Printing Office).[1]
sequential group	The second portion of the **Standard Technical Report Number**. It follows the **group separator** and constitutes the portion of the **Standard Technical Report Number** that is assigned in sequence by each report-issuing entity.
Standard Technical Report Number	The complete, formatted, alphanumeric designation that is usually the primary means of identifying a specific technical report.

[1] Z39.18-1995, *Scientific and Technical Reports-Elements, Organization, and Design*

Term	Definition
subdivider	A diagonal (/) or a single hyphen (-). Either or both may be used in the **report code** and **sequential group** to specify subdivisions of the parental organization or corporate entity, or to separate a series designation from the parental organization's symbol.

4 Creating the Standard Technical Report Number

A Standard Technical Report Number consists of two essential parts: a report code and a sequential group. The Standard Technical Report Number should be preceded by the identifying label ISRN. The ISRN label is not part of the 34-character report number.

The report code and sequential group, separated by the group separator (a double hyphen), constitute the Standard Technical Report Number and both parts shall be present in every number.

The maximum number of characters for a Standard Technical Report Number is 34, including any subdividers and the group separator. Of these 34 characters, no more than 16, including subdividers, shall constitute the report code and no more than 16 characters, including subdividers shall constitute the sequential group. Two characters are required for the group separator.

4.1 Report Code

The first character of the report code shall be an uppercase letter; the remaining characters may be uppercase alphabetic characters or numeric characters. The report code shall have a minimum of two characters and a maximum of 16. Other than the alphabetic and number characters permitted above, the only other characters that may be used within this code are subdividers (see 4.4.). For a description of the maintenance agency that coordinates the assignment of report codes refer to section 7.

4.2 Sequential Group

The sequential group may be composed of three parts: the first part preferably contains the four digits of the year of publication. The second part, preceded by a subdivider, is a sequential number; the numbers should all be arabic numerals. The third part may consist of uppercase alphabetic characters and arabic numbers pertaining to volumes, supplements, revisions, drafts, etc., and shall be separated from the second part by a subdivider. The total number of characters for the sequential group, including all parts and all subdividers shall not exceed 16 (see 4.4). If a year of publication is not given, then the first two parts may be nothing more than a single section consisting of a sequential number. Also, the third part may or may not be present. The provision for a third part is to permit supplements, revisions, and the like to have the same core number as the original report.

4.3 Group Separator

The group separator is a two-character double hyphen (--) and shall be used to separate the report code from the sequential group. The double hyphen may not be used elsewhere in the Standard Technical Report Number.

4.4 Subdivider

Subdividers, consisting of diagonals (/) and/or single hyphens (-) may be employed in both the report code and sequential group in any position after the first two characters. The absence of a subdivider from a report code indicates that no expression of a subdivision or series is intended.

4.5 Local Suffix

An optional local suffix may be of any length, and it may include any alphabetic or numeric characters and the characters comma (,), diagonal (/), and full stop (.). It can indicate the type of publication, type of nonprint media, series, in-house number, subject, language, etc. When a local suffix is used, it shall be preceded by a plus sign (+) as a delimiter, and shall immediately follow the sequential group (or optional country code, see section 4.6).

4.6 Country Code

An optional country code may be added if deemed necessary. If it is added, it should be the ISO 3166 2-alpha code preceded by a plus sign (+) and added as a suffix to the sequential group, but preceding the local suffix.

5 Formatting of the Standard Technical Report Number

The format of the Standard Technical Report Number, showing maximum length and use of subdividers, is given in Figure1. The letters ISRN serve as an identifying label—they are not part of the report number.

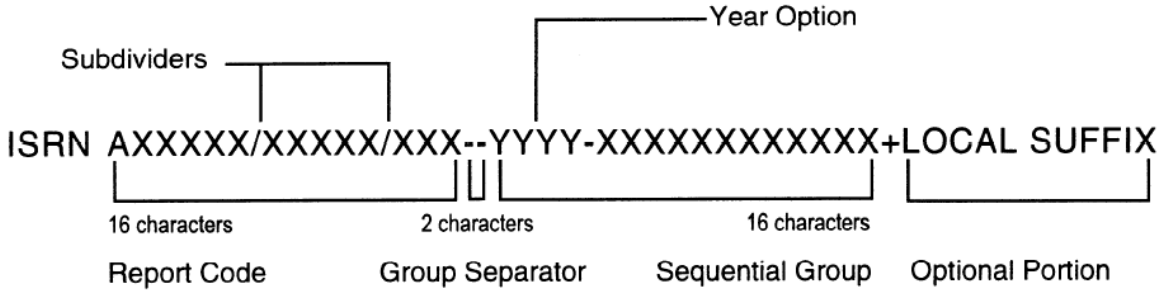

Figure 1: Format of the Standard Technical Report Number

5.1 ISRN

While this standard—ANSI/NISO Z39.23—is not an international standard, Standard Technical Report Numbers will appear in international publications and in documents published outside the United States. Therefore, the Standard Technical Report Number shall be preceded by the letters ISRN. This conforms to the format of Standard Technical Report Numbers cited in ISO 10444:1994, *Information and Documentation – International Standard Technical Report Number (ISRN)*. The addition of an alphabetic prefix is consistent with the convention for the well-established and well-known identifiers for book and serial literature, ISBN and ISSN.

5.2 Report Code

The report code may designate an issuing agency or corporate entity without subdivisions.

Examples:

METPRO
(Metallurgical Processing Corporation)

MPC
(Metallurgical Processing Corporation)

Either of these codes could be chosen provided neither has been previously registered with the maintenance agency (see Section 7.1).

In addition, the report may designate a subdivision, or a series, or both, through the use of subdividers that may be placed in any position from the third to the fifteenth character.

Examples:

METPRO-CB-562
(Metallurgical Processing Corporation. Chicago Branch. Project 562)

METPRO/ED
(Metallurgical Processing Corporation. Electrical Division)

In lieu of, or in addition to an organizational subdivision, a series designator such as TR (technical report), TN (technical note), or nonprint format, such as DK (diskette), etc., may be used in the report code. Such a designator should be placed immediately preceding the group separator.

Examples:

METPRO/TR
(Metallurgical Processing Corporation. Technical Report)

METPRO/ED/DK
(Metallurgical Processing Corporation. Electrical Division. Diskette)

5.3 Group Separator

The group separator, a double hyphen (--), divides the report code from the sequential group and may be inserted in any position depending on the length of the report code.

Example:

MPC--METPRO/ED--METPRO-MWD-QPR--

5.4 Sequential Group

With or without the year designation, the sequential group shall immediately follow the group separator.

Examples:

ISRN METPRO/ERR--1995/216
(Metallurgical Processing Corporation. Engineering Research Report. 1995, 216th report)

ISRN METPRO/ERR--26715
(Metallurgical Processing Corporation. Engineering Research Report No 26715)

ISRN METPRO/ERR--1995-1784-DRAFT2
(Metallurgical Processing Corporation. Engineering Research Report, 1995, 1784th report, draft no 2)

5.5 Local Suffix

If a local suffix is employed, it may provide a variety of additional information intended for local or in-house use.

Example:

ISRN METPRO/CB/TR--1995/216+PR-ENVR-WI
(Metallurgical Processing Corporation. Chicago Branch. Technical Report. 1995, 216th report. This is a progress report on environmental research in Wisconsin.)

6 Characteristics of the Standard Technical Report Number

All Standard Technical Report Numbers share common characteristics.

6.1 Permanence

A Standard Technical Report Number is the unique identification for a given report and shall be assigned to one report only. It is a permanent assignment and shall never be altered or replaced.

Examples:

ISRN METPR0--1995/1

ISRN METPR0--1995/1/V2
(Volume 2 of METPR0--1995/1)

ISRN METPR0--1995/1-R3
(Revision 3 of METPR0--1995/1)

ISRN METPR0--1995/1-PT2
(Part 2 of METPR0--1995/1)

6.2 Placement

The Standard Technical Report Number shall appear on all copies of a report. It shall be placed on the front cover and on the report documentation page of the original document as provided in ANSI/NISO Z39.18-1995, *Scientific and Technical Reports – Elements, Organization, and Design*. If a report documentation page is not employed, the Standard Technical Report Number shall be placed on the title page or on the page immediately following the front cover. On nonprint media the STRN shall be easily legible and shall be placed in a prominent position.

6.3 ISRN Label as Prefix

The Standard Technical Report Number shall be identified by the label “ISRN” (all uppercase letters) printed as a prefix to the report code. The ISRN is an identifying label and is not part of the report number.

7 Application

All Standard Technical Report Numbers shall be registered.

7.1 Maintenance Agency

A maintenance agency shall monitor and coordinate the assignment of unique report codes. It shall maintain a registry of report code assignments, and promote the assignment and use of the Standard Technical Report Number. See Appendix A: for details on the maintenance agency for this standard.

7.2 Assignment and Dissemination

The assignment of unique Standard Technical Report Numbers is the function of each independent issuing agency or corporate entity. To ensure unique report codes, however, the issuing organization shall submit its proposed report code(s) to the maintenance agency for coordination, approval, and registration.

Appendix A:
informative
Designation of Maintenance Agency

(This appendix is not part of the American National Standard for *Standard Technical Report Number Format and Creation*, ANSI/NISO Z39.23-1997. It is included for information only.)

The functions assigned to the maintenance agency as specified in Section 7 will be administered by the National Technical Information Service (NTIS). Questions concerning the implementation of this standard and requests for information should be directed to NTIS as follows:

Mail

NTIS
5285 Port Royal Road
Springfield, VA 22161

Fax

(703) 321-8547.

Fax service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. To verify receipt of your fax, call (703) 487-4679 Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. - 5 p.m.

[Note: NISO may change the assignment of a maintenance agency at any time or replace such an agency with a Standing Committee. Refer to the NISO website for the currently assigned maintenance agency.]