

Risk Management and ISO 31000 in Argentina

Interview conducted for isotc262.org
with

Verónica Marinelli project manager of the Argentinian mirror committee to ISO/TC 262



Verónica Marinelli is a chemist (Licenciada en Ciencias Químicas, UBA) and specialises in information security. She has over 12 years of experience in the field of information security, working on PKI, digital signature, development of standards for CAs certification procedures, validation, issuance and management procedures for digital certificates and other PKI related agreements. For the last 6 years she has worked as standardization convener at IRAM (Instituto Argentino de Normalización y Certificación). She is responsible for the national subcommittees on Risk Management, IT Quality, IT Security, Health Informatics, Cinematography, amongst others, participating in the corresponding regional and international standardization committees ISO/JTC 1/SC 7, ISO/JTC 1/SC 27, ISO/TC 36, ISO/TC 215, ISO/TC 262, AMN/CSM 27 Comité Sectorial Mercosur de Calidad de Software, AMN/CSM 90:06 Comisión Especial de Gestión de Riesgos and AMN/CSM 28 Comité Sectorial Mercosur de Seguridad de la Información.

isotc262.org: *Verónica you are the project manager of the Argentinian mirror committee to TC 262. Can you briefly introduce the Instituto Argentino de Normalización y Certificación (IRAM), your national standardization organization in Argentina, please?*

Verónica: The Instituto Argentino de Normalización y Certificación (IRAM) is a private non-profit body. Founded in 1935, it became a legal entity in 1937 and was shortly afterwards granted recognition by the Government as the Central Organization for the technical and scientific study of standards, with the object of developing and maintaining uniformity of systems and criteria.

The present relationship between the Government and IRAM is defined in Presidential Decree 1474/94, approved in August 1994, which establishes the National System for Standards, Quality and Certification. The System consists of a National Council, the Argentine Accreditation Body (OAA) and the Argentine Standardization Body (IRAM). On 2 February 1995, IRAM signed an agreement with the Secretariat of Industry, which contains rights and obligations for both parties.

IRAM represents the Argentine Republic in ISO, IEC, together with AEA (Argentine Electrotechnical Association), COPANT (Pan American Standards Commission) and AMN (Asociación Mercosur de Normalización). In close collaboration with Government, industry, consumers, technology and research it studies technical standards, which (when approved) are applied at national level on a voluntary basis - unless otherwise decided by a government authority, especially in the case of health and safety standards. IRAM prepares the national positions before the respective technical committees of ISO and IEC (together with AEA).

The main activities of IRAM are: standardization; certification of products, processes and services; certification of management systems; education and training courses; and running the Information Centre.

isotc262.org: *Did you adopt ISO 31000 as a national standard in Argentina or didn't you adopt it and what were the reasons for this decision? [Provided you did not adopt ISO 31000, what does this mean for Argentina's organizations operating nationally and for those operating globally?*

Verónica: We did adopt ISO 31000 as IRAM-ISO 31000:2015. Gestión del riesgo. Principios y guías. We have also adopted ISO Guide 73 and IEC 31010 and are in the process of adopting ISO TR 31004.

isotc262.org: *What is risk management based on in Argentina (e.g.: are there any laws, regulations, national standards or other rules?) and what is the impact of risk management in Argentina?*

Verónica: We have no laws or regulations on risk management except those required specifically to financial and insurance institutions by their respective regulatory bodies (based on Basel II and Solvency II). Risk management in Argentina is not a widespread activity except as an isolated task in specific areas where it is regulated (health and safety, finance, insurance, environment) and only in very big industrial companies, it is now been seen as integrated.

isotc262.org: *Who are the key stakeholders of risk management in Argentina?*

Verónica: The first members of our national committee came mostly from the financial sector, consulting and IT but we later incorporated members from private and public organizations, industries, health and safety related firms, universities (national public universities mostly), professional bodies, airlines, energy providers. Recently because ISO 9001 introduced the concept of risk-based thinking, all kind of companies have become interested in risk management.

isotc262.org: *What are the biggest obstacles for integrating risk management in all organizational activities – an essential principle of ISO 31000 – for managers in Argentina?*

Verónica: One of the biggest problems is that different sectors have very different views and even speak differently about risk management. Most areas see risk only from the negative standpoint and are repelled by the standard as soon as they read the risk definition. If they do not see the standard as applicable to them due to the definition there is even less hope for integration of risk management organization-wide.

isotc262.org: *How does your mirror committee involve itself in standard development at present and how do you see this developing in the future?*

Verónica: Our national committee, Subcomité Gestión de Riesgos, was created on 2004. During the first years, it published national standards IRAM 17550:2005. Sistema de gestión de riesgos. Directivas generales and IRAM 17551:2009 Sistemas de gestión de riesgos. Requisitos. It participated on the study of the both Guide 73 and ISO 31000. And afterwards adopted them. We were also working on a national business continuity standard before ISO TC 223 was established and when it did, because of the other work included in TC 223, other national committee took over. We are now focused on following the revisions of ISO 31000 and IEC 31010.

isotc262.org: *What are the key developments your mirror committee hopes to see in ISO 31000 and in risk management standard development in general at an international level over the next years?*

Verónica: Everybody expects ISO 31000 to have an important role in establishing common language across sectors and domains, and integrating areas within organizations. Perhaps the standard to be able to succeed has to address all the different current and past views on risk management and also take into account the different viewpoints that should be involved in risk management in order to be implemented transversally; it should:

- give top management the reasons it needs to be convinced that risk management is good for business and do so in a language they would understand,
- give technical people knowledgeable in risk management guidelines for integrating risk management and
- give operational sectors a way to implement the risk management process into their daily activities to be able to manage operational risk in a way they would understand.

Adding practical examples of implementation in a separate standard would go a long way. Explaining positive risk and explaining how it allows for opportunities is the only way

people outside the risk management will be able to embrace the standard. The same goes for uncertainty and how people can apply this standard for the risk-based thinking ISO 9001:2015 has now incorporated but other standards like ISO/IEC 27001 always had. Other standards in the family could take IEC 31010 as an example and provide more profound technical tools for risk management.

isotc262.org: *ISO 31000 globally quickly became one of the bestselling and most well recognized standards in ISO. What do you think about the future of the standard – particularly in Argentina – and how will it change to adapt to new challenges?*

Verónica: My previous answer addresses this question in part and I think we have to make huge communication and training efforts to get the standard to be as successful as TC 262 wishes it to be.

isotc262.org: *What advice can you give to interested parties in Argentina who want to offer their input to the work of ISO/TC 262 and Subcomité Gestión de Riesgos and who should they address?*

Verónica: We are always looking for new members on our committee. The more varied the input on our standards, the richer the standards turn out to be. They can contact me at vmarinelli@iram.org.ar.

isotc262.org: **Thank you very much!**

Verónica: You are welcome. Thank you!