

**Towards an Electronic Code****Background**

1. At its meeting in September 2013, an overwhelming majority of IESBA members expressed support for the Working Group to explore, at an early stage, the potential of an electronic Code to facilitate navigation and usability of the Code taking into account the planned structural changes.

**Potential Users of an Electronic Code**

2. The Working Group considered the potential types of users of an electronic Code and agreed that these would comprise a broad range of stakeholders, including professional accountants, member bodies of IFAC, regulators, firms, and students. The needs of each user group differ and tailoring the Code for different user needs would increase the complexity, cost and timing of the initiative. Accordingly, the Working Group agreed that there should be one electronic Code designed for use by individual professional accountants, but to which individual IFAC member bodies could provide a link for their members should they wish.

**Development of a Hyperlinked (HTML) Code**

3. In consultation with the Working Group, staff has started work on supplementing the PDF version of the Code with an HTML version on the IESBA website as an initial step towards the eventual development of an electronic Code with greater functionality. The HTML version would, among other matters:
  - Incorporate hyperlinks from all defined terms to their definitions;
  - Include a contents list enabling the user to jump straight from the home page to any particular section; and
  - Enable the user to drill down to individual paragraphs of the Code.
4. Staff expects that this can be achieved within an estimated 3 months.
5. The HTML Code will be housed on the IESBA website.
6. The PDF version will remain the official version of the Code.
7. It is anticipated that a new tab will be added to the IESBA home page that will take users to the HTML version of the Code.
8. The following plans have been discussed with the webmaster:
  - The HTML version will be based on the 2014 Handbook.
  - It will follow the exact structure and wording of the Code.
  - The structure of the webpages will follow the structure of the extant Code:
    - a. Level 1: Part A; Part B; Part C
    - b. Level 2: (using Part B as an example) Sections 200, 210; 220; 230.....290
    - c. Level 3: (using Section 290 as an example) Financial Interests, Loans and Guarantees, etc.

- d. Level 4: (using the non-assurance services provisions as an example) Management responsibilities; Preparing Accounting Records, etc.
  - Levels 1, 2 and, ideally 3, are to be visible on the landing page so that users can see the structure of the Code, obtain an overview, and hyperlink to the relevant section. The Working Group considered that although the non-assurance services provisions in Section 290 are important, it is necessary that they remain Level 4. This involves drilling down several layers to access the non-assurance services paragraphs in order to retain the existing structure of the Code.
  - Each definition will be hyperlinked to every use of the related defined term in the Code.
  - Definitions will be linked to other definitions where appropriate.
  - Each subsection will be printable.
9. The Code landing page will include:
- Welcome statement.
  - The Code in HTML format.
  - Search box.
  - PDF version of code to download or to print.
  - Translations of the Code – links to approximately 30 foreign language versions.
  - Links to PDFs of earlier versions of the Code (2010, 2012, 2013).
  - Changes to the Code that are not yet effective.
10. Attention will be needed to the need for a regular check of consistency between the HTML and pdf versions of the Code.

### **Future Developments**

11. Concurrently with the development of an HTML version of the Code, the Working Group is looking ahead to the 2018 IESBA website that will contain an electronic version of the restructured Code with greater functionality. The Working Group anticipates that each subsection will have a unique webpage including sections for:
- Link to fundamental principles
  - Link to the conceptual framework
  - Specific requirements
  - Application and other explanatory material
12. Each defined term will be linked to the related definition and other relevant sections of the Code.
13. The Working Group also anticipates exploring enhanced functionality that could be built into this electronic Code, for example, calling up or searching for all prohibitions applicable to audits of public interest entities, or identifying all requirements applicable with respect to audits of related entities of a listed entity.