



**QUESTION:  
WHAT IS THE  
VALUE OF A  
“NON-STANDARD”  
STANDARD, SUCH  
AS A PAS?**

The PAS, or Publicly Available Specification, forms part of our spectrum of standards information ranging from full international consensus to bespoke individual company advice. Market demands in recent years are for sector-relevant, speedy but accurate statements of good practice and the PAS is our tool for meeting this need, producing guidance on some of the most pertinent subjects of the day.

Consider recent examples: PAS 11000 covers collaborative business relationships; PAS 78 deals with web accessibility; PAS 83 offers guidance on cell-based therapeutics – these are topical, practical guidelines responding to the specific demands of industry and its customers.

And when you come up with a timely solution to a demand, it can drive the agenda. Once in the market place we have the ability to go forward to a formal consensus standard as experience in its use develops and the scope broadens, as is the case with the recently launched BS 25999 business continuity management standard which began as PAS 56 *Guide to business continuity management*. Or it stands as a definitive statement of good practice as with PAS 71 *Vocabulary – Nanoparticles* which developed and encourages the use of a common language for nanotechnologies. Either way it represents a catalyst for business change and that's invaluable.

Mike Low, Director, British Standards

## VIEWPOINT

“‘Non-standard’ standards, such as a PAS, answer an industrial need in a timely fashion. Engagement with the key stakeholders is essential, to obtain the necessary user-community confidence, and as such, any non-standard standard must be developed in a rigorous and repeatable fashion. It must distil the quagmire of existing standards, legislation and best practice into a single, coherent and concise model that can be used effectively by the people who need it – the industry. A standard with rigour and stakeholder engagement means confidence and user buy-in. A standard without such will always be just another ‘nice idea’.”

**Dr Jon Holt, PhD, BEng, CEng, FIEE, FBCS**  
**Managing director,**  
**Brass Bullet Ltd**



“When you're looking at something significant – from the safety of hang gliders to IT service continuity management – giving organizations the ability to benchmark what they do against agreed best practice is essential. Having an informal standard where there is no applicable standard at all is the first step along the road to formal international standards, and a PAS allows BSI to produce a view of best practice much faster than they could if they were producing a formal standard.”

**Oscar O'Connor, Lead author,**  
**PAS 77 IT Continuity Management**  
**Programme director, Adam Continuity**

# The **PAS** represents a catalyst for business change and that's invaluable