

The Association of National Numbering Agencies: 40 Years of ISIN

Celebrating 40 Years of a global, common language of financial instruments processing

London, 1st November 2021 – The Association of National Numbering Agencies (ANNA), a global association dedicated to the support of efficient capital markets through the use of widely embraced International Organization for Standardization (ISO) standards, today announced the 40th anniversary of the ISIN, the International Securities Identification Number, used to uniquely identify financial and referential instruments.

The first version of the ISIN standard, ISO 6166, was published on the 1st November 1981. Development of the standard was driven by an industry need to improve cross-border trading and global interoperability. Under rigorous processes, the industry has developed the ISIN to become the globally adopted, common language of financial instruments processing. There are now more than 79 million ISINs and related information available worldwide.

Early champions of the ISIN and the first National Numbering Agencies (NNAs) founded ANNA on January 29th, 1992, to be the registration authority of the ISIN. ANNA is a global member association that fosters standardisation within the financial industry by upholding and promoting ISO's principles for adopting, developing and maintaining the ISIN and other key international standards. ANNA now has 118 members and partners globally who are allocating ISINs for more than 200 jurisdictions.

Another significant milestone for the ISIN came in 1993 when the first centralised ISIN reference database was established. It meant that for the first time, ISINs across all jurisdictions could be consolidated in a single database, and a new central repository was created. This database has developed into the ANNA Service Bureau, ASB, which was established in 2001. CUSIP Global Services and SIX Financial Information jointly operate and maintain the ASB providing daily support as well as evolving the service as needed, with the latest upgrades having gone live in September 2021. The ASB is now the largest database of ISINs and associated data available which can be accessed via a free online lookup service or through additional subscription services.

Dan Kuhnel, Chairman of ANNA, said, “We are delighted to be celebrating ISIN’s 40th anniversary. Over the past four decades, the ISIN has assisted in bringing greater transparency and supervision capabilities to the global financial markets across the full suite of asset classes. Through ISIN use, organisations can leverage the efficiencies related to global interoperability and realise the benefits of harmonisation across capital markets. As a result, ISIN has become the recognised global standard for unique identification for all types of financial instruments, helping to connect and protect global markets.”

Uwe Meyer, ANNA Executive Director & Secretariat, said, “Having joined ANNA in 1989, I have witnessed how industry has collaborated over the past decades to promote a standard to help the industry, and to better foster cooperation between countries on cross-border identification of asset classes. The early founders’ foresight was tremendous. It is heartening to see that even after forty years, there are still countries in the world that recognise the importance of the standard in their own jurisdictions. ANNA membership continues to grow, which is a testament to its professionalism and good governance. I am proud to have been part of the early journey and thrilled to see so much enthusiasm for the ISIN into the future.”

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About ANNA

The Association of National Numbering Agencies (ANNA) is a global member association seeking to foster standardisation within the financial industry by upholding the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) principles and by promoting ISIN, FISN and CFI codes for financial instruments. This is achieved through ongoing, collaborative work with market participants, regulators and other standards bodies.

Under ANNA's stewardship, the role of the ISIN in enabling global financial communications has been established worldwide. Founded in 1992 by 22 numbering agencies, today ANNA's membership continues to grow, with more than 120 global members and partners allocating ISIN, FISN and CFI codes on behalf of their local jurisdictions. By putting in place rigorous governance around the development, allocation and sharing of ISIN, FISN and CFI codes, ANNA helps facilitate open, transparent markets diminishing barriers to access, while protecting the integrity of the standards. As a result, ISIN has become the recognised global standard for unique identification for all types of financial and referential instruments, helping to connect and protect global markets.

In addition, ANNA has established the Derivatives Service Bureau (DSB), a fully automated global numbering agency to meet the specific operational and regulatory requirements of the over-the-counter derivatives markets.

For information about ANNA, its members and activities, please visit anna-web.org.