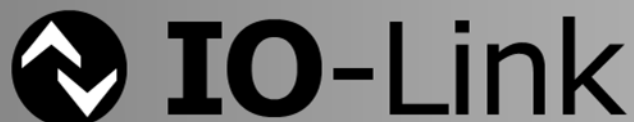


## **Body of Rules**

### **Supplemental Rules of Cooperation Between IO-Link Members and the PNO**

**Version V2.18  
March 2026**

**Order No: 3.702**



File name: **IO-Link\_Rules\_3702\_V218\_Mar26**

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<b>shall:</b>	indicates a mandatory requirement. Designers shall implement such mandatory requirements to ensure interoperability and to claim conformity with this specification.
<b>should:</b>	indicates flexibility of choice with a strongly preferred implementation.
<b>can:</b>	indicates flexibility of choice with no implied preference (possibility and capability).
<b>may:</b>	indicates a permission.
<b>highly recommended:</b>	indicates that a feature shall be implemented except for well-founded cases. Vendor shall document the deviation within the user manual and within the manufacturer declaration.

**Revision log:**

Version		Date	Changes/History
V1.0		12/15/2009	Final version
V1.01		1/21/2010	Final version with editorial changes
d1.02		4/19/2012	Adjustments to new working group structure and rules of use for IO-Link logo and patent list updated
d1.1		7/4/2012	Changes for Steering Committee
V1.1		7/31/2012	Final version after approval by Steering Committee
d1.2		7/25/2013	Proposal of changes by Lorenz, Striegel, Wenzel, Witte
d1.5		June 2015	License model incorporated in agreement with team. Lorenz, Wenzel, Witte, Uffelmann, Willems
V2.0		6/10/2015	Approved version
V2.1		9/15/2015	Editorial changes from Advisory Board Review after clearance with Steering Committee
d2.11		2021-08-19	Changes after coordination Moritz, Wenzel
d2.12		2022-09-05	Changes after coordination Moritz, Wenzel, Uffelmann
d2.13		2023-04-25	Review and comments by Wenzel
d2.14		2023-05-04	Talk through Uffelmann Wenzel
d2.15		2023-06-06	Minor editorial changes Wenzel
d2.16		2024-05.16	Adaptation Chapter 6
V2.16		2024-06.28	Adaptation Chapters 3.3 and 4; approval
V2.17		2025-06-20	Amendment to Chapter 5: Addition regarding termination of membership, by Westrik, Exner, Uffelmann, Hackenstraß
d2.18		2025-11-28	Adjustment of the frequency of the general meeting to at least once every three years Links to chapters corrected by the Steering Committee
V2.18		2026-03-17	Release by Steering Committee

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## **1 Motivation and objective**

This document governs the cooperation between IO-Link members or licensees and the PNO and describes the rights and obligations of the partners.

### **1.1 Technology**

The IO-Link technology (or SDCI) is described in detail in the corresponding specification ([www.io-link.com](http://www.io-link.com)) or in IEC 61131-9, IO-Link Safety in IEC 61139-2 and IO-Link wireless in IEC 61139-3.

### **1.2 Fieldbus independence**

A primary goal of IO-Link technology is its fieldbus independence.

This means that in principle the IO-Link technology can be used on all fieldbus systems (in compliance with the corresponding rules of the fieldbus).

In general the goal is to grant all interested companies and organizations access to the IO-Link technology. The rules and possibilities relevant for this are presented in this document.

## 2 Organization within PNO

The technology is managed within the PNO in Committee C "IO-Link". The IO-Link structure with all WGs (Working Groups) and PGs (Project Groups) can be found in document [A4].

The existing "TC/WG Guidelines" [A1], the supplemental "IPR-Rules" of the PNO containing specifications for handling intellectual property rights (patents and copyrights) [A2], and the "Document Management" [A3] of the PNO and its bylaws also apply without exception. Supplemental rules are presented in this paper and its appendices [A4] to [A10].

### 2.1 Committee C IO-Link

The Committee C IO-Link (CC IO-Link) was established - like every existing committee - by the PNO Members Assembly. The leadership of the CC IO-Link is elected by the PNO Advisory Board.

Tasks of the CC IO-Link Leader:

- Coordination of all activities of the PNO Support Center with regard to IO-Link
- Representation of IO-Link interests in the PNO and vice versa
- Report to the PNO Advisory Board
- Representation of the IO-Link Steering Committee (SC) spokesperson

### 3 Organization and processes of the IO-Link community

The IO-Link Community is made up of IO-Link members, i.e. members of the PNO and/or the Regional PI Associations (RPA) - hereinafter referred to as members of PROFIBUS&PROFINET International (PI) - who actively support the IO-Link technology.

All members of PI can also become members of the IO-Link Community if they also recognize the rules of this document in writing after acquiring PI membership.

If the IO-Link Community is dissolved, all rights to the IO-Link technology, results from the IO-Link work and remaining financial resources from contributions are transferred to the legal successor organization.

#### 3.1 IO-Link members

The central task of the IO-Link members is to decide on the technical development of the IO-Link technology. Included under this is the independent establishment of connections with other organizations in coordination with the PNO Board of Directors.

All IO-Link members have the right to nominate participants in the PGs/WGs of IO-Link.

The IO-Link Support Center informs the CC and the PG/WG Leader about interested parties and new IO-Link members.

Rights and obligations of IO-Link members:

- Election of the SC
- Annual information about the activities of the SC
- Annual budget information
- Contribution to technological development by participation in working groups
- Worldwide promotion of the IO-Link technology (marketing)

Each IO-Link member can run for election to the SC.

#### 3.2 Composition of the IO-Link Steering Committee

The IO-Link members meet at least every 3 year (IO-Link General Assembly). Every 3 years, the General Assembly elects a **Steering Committee (SC)**. The SC is made up of representatives of the elected member companies and the heads of the IO-Link PG/WG (SC members).

At the IO-Link General Assembly, the member companies of the SC are elected from a proposed list of candidates (electoral list). Each member company elected to the SC can nominate a representative who has the right to attend SC meetings.

The IO-Link PG/WG Leaders proposed by the SC and confirmed by the PNO Advisory Board are automatically members of the SC.

The number of SC members must be within the limits of 5-21. The SC has the right to increase the number of its members if necessary.

#### 3.3 Tasks and rules of the IO-Link SC

The Steering Committee manages the implementation of technology- and marketing-related measures in the individual PGs/WGs. Within the working groups, the respective PG/WG Leader can establish teams as needed and on a time-limited basis and name a Team Leader.

Rights and obligations of the SC:

- Election of the SC Spokesperson
- Nomination of a Leader for the CC (SC Spokesperson and CC Leader should be the same person); the CC Leader is automatically a member of the SC
- Nomination of the PG/WG Leaders



- 74 • Steering of the technology development (additions to standards, profile creation, testing)
- 75 • Steering of the IEC-related activities
- 76 • Establishment of Competence and Test Centers
- 77 • Steering and approval of the actions decided in the Marketing WG
- 78 • Planning and release of financial resources

79 The SC meets 4 to 6 times per year, as needed.

80 Meeting minutes are prepared for each meeting and are stored on the IO-Link Project Server  
81 ([www.io-link-projects.com](http://www.io-link-projects.com)). Each IO-Link Community Member has access rights to this server.

82 The SC reports on its main activities and use of financial resources in the meeting minutes.

83 Any member can submit proposals and questions to the SC. The topics raised will be handled at  
84 one of the next meetings.

85 The following rules apply to the SC:

- 86 • Each company represented in the SC has only one vote.
- 87 • Proxies:
  - 88 ✓ Elected SC members of member organizations (companies) can appoint a proxy in their
  - 89 company to exercise the voting right
  - 90 ✓ PG/WG Leaders can have their voting right exercised by a representative of their own
  - 91 company as well as by a particular representative of another company.
- 92 • SC members are informed about pending decisions in a timely manner, i.e., at least 2 weeks
- 93 in advance (e-mailed invitation including agenda). The SC shall then have a quorum.
- 94 • All decisions are deemed accepted with a simple majority. Exception: organizational changes
- 95 require approval by a 2/3 majority.

#### 96 **Role of the SC Spokesperson**

- 97 • Convenes the SC and the annual General Meeting.
- 98 • Serves as moderator of the SC meetings and the General Meeting.
- 99 • Performs external IO-Link communications (e.g., press, international standards committees,
- 100 other fieldbus organizations).
- 101 • Reviews conflicts regarding technology and marketing strategy reported to him and brings
- 102 about a decision.

103

## 4 Conformity and Competence/Test Center

### Conformity/Test:

Every IO-Link Master and IO-Link Device that is placed on the market must have a manufacturer's declaration regarding IO-Link conformity. The appropriate tests must be conducted in accordance with the valid test specification in each case using test tools approved by the SC. These tests must be passed and documented with the manufacturer's declaration. The contents and format of the manufacturer's declaration are defined by the SC and described in the test specification, the use of which is mandatory. Details are described in the IO-Link Quality Policy [A5]. A certification requirement may be decided on by the SC at a later time.

For an IO-Link Master with fieldbus interface, the relevant certification or conformity guidelines of the respective fieldbus organizations apply.

### Competence Centers and Test Centers

The IO-Link Community has established Competence Centers to ensure qualified worldwide technical support. Details on requirements, rights and obligations as well as the establishment process can be found in the document [A.8] IOL Quality of Service Agreement. The quality of products from non-members is checked by tests in established Test Centers. Rules for this can be found in chapter 4.2.1 Licensing for non-members and document [A.9] Test Center Guideline.

## 5 Membership and licensing

### 5.1 IO-Link membership

With IO-Link membership, the member company acquires the right to place any IO-Link products on the market in observance of the presented rules.

The rights to use word marks and figurative marks (logos) (see 9) and the rights to use relevant patents and property rights (see 10) are granted in accordance with the rules established in this document.

Membership also provides unlimited access to results of the working groups (WG/PG) via the IO-Link Project Server and the opportunity to actively participate in desired working groups (WG/PG).

Membership fees are described in "Finances/membership fees".

Manufacturers have the right to use the IODD Finder only for those products for which there is a manufacturer's declaration.

Products/product groups can be included in the "Approved Component List" (by the IO-Link Support Center) free of charge upon submittal of the manufacturer's declaration.

### 5.2 Licensing for non-members

Non-members can only market those IO-Link products and use the word/figurative mark for which they have acquired a license.

The license model does not include the possibility of active participation in the WG/PG or access to the work results of the WG/PG. This is only available to members.

Details on rights and obligations in connection with the acquisition of a license by a non-member are described in [A6] IO-Link License Model.

### 5.3 Termination of Membership

The following rules apply upon termination of IO-Link membership:

- 1. Termination period:** IO-Link membership may be terminated up to 3 months before the end of the annual term. Membership fees already paid are non-refundable.
- 2. Costs and Quality for Existing Devices:** After the membership ends, the right to continue marketing devices already on the market must be covered by the IO-Link licensing model [A.6]. Otherwise, the right to list these devices in the IODDfinder and to sell them with the IO-Link logo on the devices will expire.
- 3. IODD Finder:** Without a valid license, the relevant products will be removed from the IODD Finder.
- 4. Use of the IO-Link logo:** The right to use the IO-Link logo in any form expires unless a license is obtained.
- 5. Access to working group results:** Access to the results of the working groups (WG/PG) and the ability to actively participate in these groups ends upon termination of membership.

## **6 Finances/membership fees**

The annual determination of the financial contributions to be used for IO-Link activities is made by the PNO Board of Directors in consultation with the management of the IO-Link Support Center and the IO-Link Steering Committee (represented by the Steering Committee Speaker). The PNO strategy, the expected income for the calendar year, the PNO expenditure required to implement the PNO strategy and the requirements of the IO-Link team are taken into account. For budget planning, the IO-Link Steering Committee specifies the concrete requirements with the quantified projects to the IO-Link Support Center.

The previous regulation that the contribution can be reduced by 50% of the normal contribution due for companies with up to 100 employees that are only interested in IO-Link will be canceled.

The prerequisite for acquiring membership is the written acceptance of the rules of this document (email).

The PNO determines the expenditure for IO-Link and documents this information on an annual basis (at the end of the calendar year). Every IO-Link member is entitled to view the data via the CC IO-Link Leader.

The budget for the fiscal year (calendar year) of the IO-Link members is based on the data presented by the PNO. The resources for IO-Link are managed by the IO-Link Support Center.

If the budget is used up by IO-Link projects or at the decision of IO-Link members, additional projects can be decided on according to "TC/WG Guidelines" [A1]. §6 of the "TC/WG-Guidelines" described in detail the transaction of projects financed by IO-Link members<sup>1</sup>.

The fees indicated above are reviewed annually with the Support Center and the SC Spokesperson/CC Leader.

### **6.1 Appropriation**

The budget must be used for IO-Link technology projects and IO-Link marketing projects.

### **6.2 Release of resources**

The SC provides information on the current budget (planning and realization of expenditures for marketing, technology, etc.) to the IO-Link members. SC decides on how the budget will be used.

### **6.3 Cash audits**

At every plenary meeting of the SC, the IO-Link Support Center will inform the SC about the current status of resources along with a forecast.

The cash audit is performed as part of the overall annual audit of the PNO. The report is issued as part of the PNO General Meeting.

The results will be announced in the meeting minutes.

---

<sup>1</sup> Adherence to an orderly project sequence ensures adherence to functionality, schedule, quality, and budget requirements.

## 7 Documents

Rules for creating documents are specified in §3 of the "TC/WG Guidelines". As a deviation to these guidelines, the IO-Link specification is not labeled as "PNO confidential", in order to make it accessible to other bus organizations. The same applies to the bus-specific integration specifications outside PROFIBUS DP and PROFINET IO.

Rules for the layout, the required formal parameters, the creation and review processes, and the distribution of a document are specified in the "Document Management" of the PNO [A3] and the supplemental rules of the IO-Link Community [A10] „Document Management & Working Group Rules“.

### 7.1 IEC Standards

The IO-Link technology is standardized in IEC 61131-9, IO-Link Safety in IEC 61139-2 and IO-Link wireless in IEC 61139-3.

Revisions will be recorded in the IO-Link specification documents and included into the respective next versions of the relevant IEC standards. In the case of discrepancies, the IO-Link specification documents prevail.

## **8 Marketing**

### **8.1 Web server**

The CC is authorized to set up a neutral server that contains the technical information and marketing activities. However, PNO-specific information is only available by means of corresponding links on the IO-Link Projects web server.

Regarding the distribution of documents, a different requirement applies, in that the IO-Link specifications on web servers of other fieldbus organizations can be linked to the neutral IO-Link web page in order to prevent version conflicts.

### **8.2 Trade fair appearance**

The PNO extends an offer to the CC, under the usual conditions, of exhibit space in the PNO booths at various trade fairs and will be considerate of neutrality requests, to the extent possible. The procedures at international trade fairs will be governed by the Regional PROFIBUS&PROFINET Associations (RPA). The IO-Link Support Center will provide support for these.

Notwithstanding this offer, the IO-Link members are free to arrange their own trade fair activities.

### **8.3 Contact with other fieldbus organizations or companies**

Contacts with fieldbus organizations and companies that belong to or drive other fieldbus organizations require the approval of the PNO Board of Directors. For its part, the PNO is obligated to enable cooperation agreements with the above-indicated companies or organizations for purposes of cooperation with IO-Link. This should ensure the worldwide dissemination of IO-Link.

IO-Link members must be informed about these types of activities. If necessary, the SC can decide on special rules regarding membership fees without the consent of the General Meeting.

### **8.4 Publications**

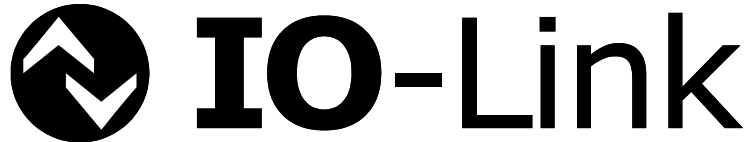
It is recommended that the press office of the IO-Link Support Center be included (copy).

## 9 Word mark/figurative mark (IO-Link logo)

Development and marketing of IO-Link products using IO-Link word marks/figurative marks (logos) is only permitted if the company:

- Has become an IO-Link member and has acknowledged these rules in writing
- Possesses a manufacturer's declaration based on the test specification.  
For test cases for which test tools previously approved in the WG Technology exist, these must be used.
- Has, as a non-member, acquired a license (see 5)

The IO-Link technology is being disseminated under a dedicated word mark/logo.



The rights to the word mark/figurative mark (logo) as represented, including its colors, have been transferred to the PNO and must be used without any alteration.  
It is available for download on the IO-Link Project Server ([www.io-link-projects.com](http://www.io-link-projects.com)) in the protected area.

Use rights for word mark and figurative mark (logo):

- Free to everyone in conjunction with fair and favorable presentations and publications
- In conjunction with products;
  - ✓ Only for those products that have been tested according to the respective valid test specification and have passed the tests and confirmed this with the manufacturer's declaration (Section 2.3)
  - ✓ For all members that have a valid manufacturer's declaration
  - ✓ For licensees that possess a valid license and have a valid manufacturer's declaration.

## 10 Patents and property rights for IO-Link members

The rules for handling patents and property rights in conjunction with the IO-Link technology are specified in the currently valid "IPR Rules" document of the PNO [A2]. These rules must be observed.

The following is specified in deviation to these rules:

- The use of relevant property rights of the IO-Link technology is granted free of charge in the context of other systems e.g. fieldbuses. Prerequisite is membership in the PNO or in one of the associated regional organizations (RPA).
- The use rights are granted only for the purpose of implementing the IO-Link technology defined in the IO-Link specification, and not for independent modification or further development.
- Sublicensing to a third party (non-affiliated company) is permitted exclusively for the purpose of development, manufacturing and sales of IO-Link products. No rights going beyond this will be granted.
- Every IO-Link member is obligated to grant use rights for IO-Link-relevant property rights to the IO-Link members free of charge.
- Acknowledgement of these obligations is the prerequisite for IO-Link membership.



**A.1 TC/WG Guideline**

[A1] Guidelines for the Committees and Project Groups/Working Groups of PROFIBUS Nutzerorganisation e.V. (PNO) (TC/WG Guidelines), Version 17.04.2023 (or later versions)

**A.2 IPR rules of the PNO including specifications for handling of intellectual property rights (patents and copyrights)**

[A2] Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) Policy of PROFIBUS Nutzerorganisation e.V. (PNO), Version 25.04.2022 (or later versions)

**A.3 Document Management**

[A3] Document Management Guideline of PROFIBUS Nutzerorganisation e.V., Version 1.46, 05.05.2021 (or later versions)

**A.4 IO-Link Structure**

[A4] IO-Link Organization\_20230507 (or later versions)

**A.5 IO-Link Quality Policy for all Products**

[A5] IO-Link Product Quality Policy, Version 1.3, July 2022 (document in progress);  
Manufacturer\_declaration\_MD113\_20220201.docx (or later version)

**A.6 IO-Link license model for Products of non-members**

[A6] IO-Link License Model, Version 1.20, March 2022

**A.7 Approved Component List**

[A7] IO-Link Approved Component List (Approved Component List for Master) Link:  
(<https://io-link.com/share/Downloads/Quality/Approved-Component-List-04052022.pdf>)

**A.8 Quality of Service Agreement for IO-Link Competence Center**

[A.8] IO-Link Quality of Service Agreement Version 1.2, December 2018 (or later versions)

**A.9 Test Center Guideline**

[A.9] IO-Link How to Become and to Run an Accredited IO-Link Test Center Version 1.00, March 2016 (or later versions)

**A.10 Document Management & Working Group Rules**

[A.10] IO-Link Projects Document Management & Working Group Rules Version 1.0.1, January 2020 (or later versions)

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