

TO	Network Wide
FROM	Head of Engineering Standards
DATE	15 April 2024
SUBJECT	All Disciplines - Use of Shall, Should and May in Engineering Documents Technical Note
TITLE	EGN-05-01 Technical Note - Use of Shall, Should and May in Engineering Documents v1.0

Background

The terms must, shall, should and may are used throughout engineering documents to prescribe requirements and make recommendations or suggestions.

While some documents define these terms many do not, leaving them open to end user interpretation.

For the use of verbal forms for expressions of provisions ARTC engineering documents are written using the principles that apply to all Australian Standards, defined in SG-006 Rules For The Structure and Drafting of Australian Standards. These requirements are detailed below.

Scope

This note applies to all Engineering Standards

Engineering Requirements

The following terms shall be used to identify the level of prescription in engineering documents.

Term	Definition
Must	Indicates a constraint provided by an external source such as legislation. These are mandatory requirements.
Shall	A mandatory requirement set by ARTC. These may only be deviated from through the use of an appropriate waiver.
Should	A recommendation. These are not mandatory, however a person must be able to reasonably justify deviation from these recommendations. The decision to not adopt a recommendation may only be made by ARTC personell. Non-ARTC personall shall treat these requirement as mandatory unless approval is provided by ARTC.
May	These clauses are suggestion or permission and do not require a justification to apply or deviate from.

Where standards state that a requirement may be otherwise approved by another authority e.g. ARTC or the asset management authority, then a waiver is not required provided that noted authority provides acceptance.

Note: In some legacy documents the word 'must' was incorrectly applied where 'shall' would be appropriate. Clarification can be sought from standards@artc.com.au