

Summary of Policy Committee Meeting
April 22, 2010

1. Roll Call

Alfredo Sotomayor, Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM CDT on April 22, 2010. Attendance is recorded in Attachment 1.

There were no comments on the previous minutes and Alfredo will forward for posting on the TNI website.

2. Program Updates

John Applewhite reported that the Technical Assistance Committee was working on the regional workshops for the new TNI standards and a revised Quality Manual template.

Jo Ann Boyd reported that the LASC was continuing to review items on their action table.

3. POL 1-107: Code of Ethics for TNI Members

Alfredo reported that the TNI Board had suggested some editorial changes to this SOP that he felt needed to be endorsed by the Policy Committee. Under 2 (c), the phrase “Within the restrictions that may be imposed by government bodies,” was added. Also, the paragraph “Failure to abide by this Code of Ethics may result in suspension or termination by the TNI Board of Directors of membership in TNI in general, or participation on TNI committees. Any affected individual will be notified in writing of any such suspension or termination.” was moved after 2(e).

Silky Labie moved that the Policy Committee endorse these changes. JoAnn Boyd seconded. All members present voted in favor.

4. SOP 1-105: Process for Creating Guidance

Alfredo reported that the TNI Board did not approve this SOP because of concerns raised by Bob Wyeth and others. Bob’s concerns were communicated by email pasted below:

Fellow Policy Committee members:

Being one of the nay votes at the TNI Board meeting, I wanted to share some thoughts with you. Alfredo has accurately included my concerns regarding SOP 1-105 but most of my concerns could be addressed by a number of actions:

1. Strengthen the language in section 8.0 to better insure that guidance is approved only with adequate and sufficient justification

2. Include a mechanism for review by the policy committee or alternatively another TNI entity for review of the guidance document
3. Some means by which even approved documents can be “challenged” and/or modified if necessary.

Fundamentally, my concerns stem from the fact that I believe it is more important to review the final guidance document as opposed to reviewing the proposal to prepare the document. It is very conceivable to me that the guidance document ultimately produced is inaccurate and/or inconsistent with the proposal as approved by the policy committee. If the policy committee is judicious about the approval of guidance that is truly necessary for implementation of the standard, the number of guidance documents for our review should not be overwhelming. Finally, my overriding concern as I have stated numerous times is that if we are careful in the preparation of the standard, guidance should rarely be necessary and we can avoid the entire issue of virtually every guidance document ultimately becoming “policy” regardless of any disclaimers.

Alfredo summarized the TNI Board’s concerns as follows:

- Lack of comfort with not having a formal final review of the guidance published by committees or boards.
- Continued fear of the possible misuse of guidance.
- Persistent belief that guidance is either unnecessary or that its content should be addressed in standards.
- Absence of a process for resolving misapplication of guidance.

Additional comments by the Policy Committee:

- Guidance will always be mis-used by some.
- Small labs want guidance.
- Authors of guidance should have the credentials to do an effective job.
- Credentials can be controlled by the application process.
- Guidance documents will give options when clarification of the standard is needed, or show how to implement when there is more than one way to meet the standard.
- The issues with guidance would be the same for the NEFAP program. The SOP shows where the boundaries are.
- Some ABs may pick and choose how to use guidance. Some may try to make it mandatory. Guidance should not be enforced.
- Policy committee could triage proposals for guidance. More restrictive steps could be put in place for the more controversial guidance. Not every proposal would receive the same level of scrutiny.
- Could also establish a process for a lab to complain if assessor misuses guidance.
- Should consider switching the order of paragraphs in 5.1.1 for emphasis.

Alfredo will translate today’s comments into revisions for the SOP. He will call Bob Wyeth to discuss changes before the next meeting.

5. Bylaws

Alfredo presented the draft revisions to the bylaws which reflect the new TNI organizational structure and asked for suggestions for additional changes. It was suggested that the scope of the PT program is too narrow and does not reflect NEFAP or SSAS. Alfredo will revise.

6. NEFAP

John Moorman reported that NEFAP is voting on SOP 10-104: Dispute Resolution now. The other NEFAP SOPs have already been provided to the Policy Committee.

Alfredo stated that the Policy Committee time had now had two weeks to review these and he would schedule them for vote at the May 4 meeting.

7. Next steps

NEFAP SOPs will be presented for a vote by the Policy Committee
Alfredo will revise SOP 1-105: Process for Creating Guidance
Alfredo will call Bob Wyeth about his concerns with the guidance SOP.
Revised Bylaws will be forwarded to Jerry Parr.
Continue discussion of complaint resolution SOP.

9. Next meeting

The next meeting will be May 4, 2010, at 1:00 pm CDT.

Regular meetings will be the first Tuesday and third Thursday of each month.

Table 1
Attendance

Name	Representing	Present
Alfredo Sotomayor	TNI Board	X
Bob Wyeth	At Large, CSD Board	Absent
Gary Dechant	PT	X
John Applewhite	Technical Assistance	X
Jo Ann Boyd	LASC	X
Silky Labie	CSD	X
Jerry Parr	Ex Officio	Absent
Steve Stubbs	NELAP Board	Absent
Susan Wyatt	Advocacy	Absent
Mei Beth Shepherd	Associate	Absent
John Moorman	NEFAP	X
Carol Batterton	TNI Staff	X