TNI Policy Committee Meeting Summary
Friday April 17, 2015

1.   Welcome, Roll Call and Announcements

The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 11 am Eastern. Attendance is recorded in Attachment 1. Alfredo noted that any changes to the previous meeting's minutes should be requested within a week.

2.   New NEFAP Representative to Policy Committee

NEFAP identified Calista Daigle as the person to represent NEFAP on Policy Committee. With a quorum present, Mei Beth nominated and Silky seconded Calista's membership in the committee. Approval was unanimous.

Calista was invited to join the meeting a little bit late, so that she is not present during the voting on her nomination, but joined in time to discuss the Quality Management Plan (below.)

3.   Position Paper on PT from Advocacy Committee

Alfredo offered his philosophy that Policy Committee's role in approving Position Papers is "Passive" – that is, ensuring that new positions do not conflict with existing policies, procedures or positions of the organization but not challenging the actual "position" supported.

Ilona noted that, in the Acknowledgements section of the document, the full committee name should be used, Proficiency Testing Program Executive Committee. This is an editorial change that should not require re-approval by either committee.

Mei Beth moved and Lynn Boysen seconded that this document be approved with the change noted. Approval was unanimous, and the position paper will be shared with the TNI Board for its endorsement, at the next meeting. NOTE: The Advocacy Chair and PA have been notified.

4.   TNI Draft Final Quality Management Plan

A near-final version of this Quality Management Plan (QMP) for TNI was distributed at the Strategic Planning Meeting in October 2014. A few more details needed to be worked through and included, and those are now included.

Lynn summarized the extended development process of this plan, and how it has evolved over several years from having designated part-time "quality staff" to a more distributed "quality function" that essentially relies on the involvement of TNI's Program Administrators to ensure consistency, plus systematic internal audits over time, with the Board Chair holding the ultimate authority and responsibility, while relying on others to carry through with the plan.

One Board member had offered a different format, based on the EPA plans, but committee members agree that the current format and plan looks more like what's needed for an organization that does not actually use environmental data, per se, for either primary or secondary purposes, but rather just seeks to ensure that its processes and procedures are consistently followed.

A section by section review of the plan document produced the following comments:

The signature page is appropriate
The Table of Contents should be revised to match the actual contents

§1.0 – 4th sentence, drop the "s" from includes, as subject of sentence is plural

§1.1 – 1st sentence should begin "The mission…" since that is the word used in the header and the organization's mission statement.

§1.2 – 1st sentence, please revise to read "TNI operates on the premise that all affected stakeholders have the opportunity to fully participate…." 1st bullet should end with a comma, and should be changed to read "Accreditation Bodies and other entities that…"

§1.3 – identify acronym for organization, add "(ANSI)" at end

§2.0 – 1st sentence, replace "unusual" with "exemplary," replace "over 900" with "a large number of scientists…" and add "(NEMC)" at end of final sentence

§2.1 – please reword the 1st paragraph to eliminate reference to number of committee members, as this is covered in SOPs, then add a list of the 5 program areas. Drop 1st bullet, leaving 2nd and 3rd bullets in place

§3.1 – 2nd sentence, stop after "senior manager for quality." (No QA Director will exist.)

§3.4 – last sentence, replace QA Director with "Chair"

§3.5 – last sentence, add "once available" to end.

§4.1 – 2nd sentence of 1st paragraph, replace "or" with "of"

§4.2 – eliminate phrase about submitting charters to Board for approval, since some committees submit to their executive committee – may need to clarify whether Board actually wants to approve all charters?

§4.4 – consider identifying who needs to initiate charter revision process

§5.1 – end of 1st paragraph, indicate that performance is assessed "periodically." The committee discussed this and realize that on-going discussions and staff meetings include many aspects of performance, such as workload distribution and that acute problems are typically addressed as they arise, so that while it may not be formal review, performance reviews are occurring continually.

The review of the QMP will resume with the second paragraph of §5.1, at the next committee meeting. Ilona noted that she has some comments on the attachments to the QMP, so Alfredo asked her please to return for the next meeting and to bring those comments.

5.   **Next Meeting**

Policy Committee will meet again on Friday, May 1, 2015, at 11 am Eastern. Documents and teleconference information and an agenda will be circulated in advance of the meeting. Unless another priority arises, we will continue reviewing the draft final TNI Quality Management Plan.

Action Items are included in Attachment B and Attachment C includes a listing of reminders.

Attachment A

Name/Affiliation	Representing	Present
Alfredo Sotomayor, Chair Wisconsin Dept. of Natural Resources, Madison, WI asotomayor@mmsd.com	TNI Board	Yes
JoAnn Boyd Southwest Research Institute, San Antonio, TX jboyd@swri.org	Lab and FSMO	No
Lynn Boysen MN ELAP Lynn.Boysen@state.mn.us	NELAP AC	Yes
Silky Labie, Vice Chair Env. Lab. Consulting & Technology, LLC Tallahassee, FL elcatllc@centurylink.net		Yes
Calista Daigle calista.daigle@moellerinc.com	NEFAP Executive Committee	Yes
Mei Beth Shepherd mbshep@sheptechserv.com		Yes
Eric Smith ALS eric.smith@alsglobal.com	PTP Executive Committee	Yes
Bob Wyeth Retired rfwyeth@yahoo.com	CSD Executive Committee	No
Jerry Parr (ex-officio) Executive Director, TNI Jerry.Parr@nelac-institute.org		No
Lynn Bradley, Program Administrator The NELAC Institute (Staunton, VA) lynn.bradley@nelac-institute.org		Yes
Ilona Taunton, Program Administrator Ilona.taunton@nelac-institute.org	Will continue to participate until QMP review is completed, at Chair's invitation	Yes

Attachment B

Action Items – TNI Policy Committee

	Action Item	Who	Expected Completion	Comments/ Completion
60	Send request for review of POL 5-100 to NEFAP EC	Alfredo	April 2014	?
73	Complete and transmit to PTPEC Chair a package of Policy Committee Review Forms for SOP 4-102, 4-105 and 4-107, accompanied by a note that review of the PTPEC Evaluation SOP 4-104 will be postponed pending its revision after V3&V4 of the TNI ELSS standard is completed	Alfredo	November 2014	Materials sent to AST at his new email for processing
78	Revise SOP 2-100 per committee comments and request re-vote by CSDEC	Bob	March 30	April 3, 2015 Revised SOP 2-100 reviewed and recommended for presenting to TNI Board for April meeting
79	Compile comments on all reviewed NEFAP SOPs and send to Alfredo for transmission to NEFAP Chair	Lynn	Mid-April	April 22, 2015

Attachment C

Backburner / Reminders – TNI Policy Committee

	Item	Meeting Reference	Comments
1.	Look into need to include something about review schedule in all SOPs.	3/20/12	
2	Include mention of abstentions in SOP 1-102 revision (or elsewhere,) to ensure that intentional choice of appropriate wording is made in committee decision making choices	10/5/12	
3	In SOP 1-101, "Committee Operations," or else SOP 1-102, "Decision Making…," some mention of "default" decision making rules would be beneficial, since most committees do not have documentation of their decision processes.	10/22/12	SOP 1-102 discusses various options and situations where one might work better than others, but SOP 1-101 refers to 1-102 as if it sets a default.
6	New Committee Charter format should include listing for Executive Director as ex officio member for all committees (per Bylaws.)	9/20/13	Charter format to be upgraded to address committee annual budgets later this year
7	Next revision of Pol 1-122 include addition of a sentence addressing the possibility of additional stakeholder categories.	2/21/14	Committees may add an additional stakeholder category with approval of TNI Board
8	When the CSD PEC charter is next updated, it should clarify which committees have added stakeholder categories and note that Board approval is required and was obtained for including those additional representatives in the committee(s.)	2/21/14	
9	Revise SOP 1-100 (SOP on SOPs) to address use of bullets and alternative numbering systems	9/5/14	
10	Revise Guidance SOP 1-105 to note that a new approval request is required for updates to existing guidance products	10/3/14	
11	Create SOP for document review of Policy committee documents (which will automatically require Board review)	10/17/14	Grew out of streamlining the approval process for SOPs and Policies
12	Revise how TNI refers to its own training courses, prepared and presented to train individuals for the accreditation and peer review (evaluation) processes. Typically, these are courses required in order to perform a specific function, yet are not referred to as a credential, per se, but are designed and presented under contract to TNI and thus implicitly endorsed by	1/23/15	From discussion about language used in SOP 5-101 (TNI-recognized training) versus usage elsewhere as just "TNI training" (e.g., NELAP Evaluation SOP 3-102)

	the organization.		