



<b>SOP TITLE:</b>	<b>Operation of TNI Committees</b>
<b>SOP NO.:</b>	<b>1-101</b> <b>First Part Numerical Designator:</b> 1 = Administration and Support 2 = Consensus Standards Development Program (CSDP) 3 = National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program (NELAP) 4 = Proficiency Testing Program (PTP) 5 = National Environmental Field Activities Program
<b>REVISION NO:</b>	<b>2.0</b>

<b>Committee:</b>	Policy	<b>Approved Date:</b>	April 5, 2013
<b>Program:</b>	NA	<b>Approved Date:</b>	NA
<b>Policy Committee Reviewed Date:</b>			NA
<b>TNI Board of Directors Endorsed Date:</b>			April 10, 2013
<b>SOP Effective Date:</b>			Rev. 0: January 31, 2008 Rev. 2.1: April 18, 2014

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## 1.0 Purpose and Applicability

This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) gives uniform guidelines for the operation of TNI committees.

This SOP does not apply to the TNI Board of Directors, the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program (NELAP) Accreditation Council, the National Environmental Field Activities Program (NEFAP) Executive Committee and the CSDP Expert Committees. The operations of these groups are governed by documents referenced in Section 3.0.

This SOP will generally apply to TNI Administrative Committees. Any specific differences are addressed in Appendix A.

This SOP may be complemented by procedures developed and documented by committees to which it applies, but may not be superseded by those procedures.

## 2.0 Summary

This SOP describes the fundamental principles guiding operations such as basic duties, membership, leadership, meetings, terms of appointment for members, and documentation of proceedings of the TNI committees to which it applies.

## 3.0 Related Documents

SOP 1 – 102, Decision Making Rules for TNI Committees  
SOP 1 – 119, Operations of TNI Board of Directors [To be drafted]  
SOP 1 – 120, Documenting Proceedings of TNI Committees and Boards [To be drafted]  
SOP 2 – 100, Procedures for Expert Committee Operations  
SOP 3 – 100, TNI NELAP Accreditation Council General Operating Procedures  
SOP 5 – 101, TNI NEFAP Executive Committee General Operating Procedures  
SOP 5 – 102, Voting Procedure for General Business and Field Activities Accreditation matters  
SOP 5 – 103, Nominating Committee Procedure (NEFAP)

## 4.0 Definitions

<b>Administrative Committee:</b>	A committee authorized by the TNI Board of Directors to perform administrative duties for the all of TNI or the TNI Board of Directors, or to conduct day to day business of the Institute.
<b>Associate Committee Member:</b>	A TNI member who may participate in any committee, but who does not have voting privileges.
<b>Committee:</b>	A committee authorized by the TNI Board of Directors to conduct activities for a specific program.
<b>Committee Chair:</b>	A Committee Member elected to direct the activities of a committee.
<b>Committee Member:</b>	A TNI member with full voting privileges who is elected by a committee.
<b>Decision-Making Rule:</b>	The method used by a TNI unit to arrive at a decision.
<b>Dominance:</b>	A condition by which an organization or stakeholder group becomes a majority in a committee.
<b>Ex-Officio Committee Member:</b>	A TNI member serving in a committee or program board in virtue of his or her office or position in TNI. <i>Note:</i> TNI's Executive Director is an Ex-Officio, non-voting, member of all committees..
<b>Sub-committee:</b>	A unit under a committee that performs a specific task and whose actions and recommendations are considered by a parent committee.

## 5.0 Commitment to Openness, Inclusiveness, and Transparency of Operations

5.1 Committees shall attempt to conduct their activities openly, following procedures that promote the inclusion of all TNI members. To this end, committees shall provide due notice of their meetings and shall document their proceedings, deliberations, and decisions in a manner that is accessible to all TNI members.

- 5.2 Committees may at times consider personnel matters or confidential business information, and may choose to conduct such deliberations in closed sessions. This eventuality shall not be used to otherwise circumvent TNI's commitment to transparency of operations. Deliberations and decisions made during closed sessions shall be documented, but may only be available to the members of the committee that conducted the closed session, and the TNI Board of Directors.

## **6.0 Basic Duties of Committees**

- 6.1 Committees shall have authority to establish policies and procedures to conduct their business in support of TNI's mission.
- 6.2 Committees shall document, at a minimum, their mission, sponsors, members and their affiliations, and objectives in charters following a format developed by the TNI Policy Committee.
- 6.3 Committees shall document decisions they make following established rules.
- 6.4 The TNI Policy Committee shall review committees' policies, procedures, and charters, to ensure they are not in conflict with each other.
- 6.5 The TNI Board of Directors shall endorse all policies, procedures, and charters before they are finalized.

## **7.0 Committee Membership**

### **7.1 Committee Composition**

- 7.1.1 Committees are constituted by Committee Members, Associate Committee Members, and Ex-Officio Committee Members. Committee Members are allowed to vote on committee decisions. Ex-Officio Committee members do not vote on committee decisions, unless a committee grants them that privilege by documented decision.
- 7.1.2 The number of Committee members in any committee shall be at least five (5) and not exceed fifteen (15). There is no limit to the number of Associate Committee Members that may participate in a committee.
- 7.1.3 Committees should represent, to the extent possible, the diversity of the entire TNI membership, by considering the stakeholder group, interest, expertise, geographic location, and professional affiliation of Committee Members. Although not all committees need to achieve a strict balance of membership among its Committee Members, all Committees should strive to avoid dominance.
- 7.1.4 No organization may have more than one Committee Member at any one time on a committee. An organization in this context is a state government agency, EPA Program, EPA Office, EPA Region, Federal Agency other than EPA, or company.

### **7.2 Becoming a Committee Member**

- 7.2.1 The normal cycle of committee appointments starts on January 1 and ends on December 31 of the same year, although committees may appoint members to fill vacancies at any time during the year cycle.
- 7.2.2 TNI members interested in becoming Committee Members may nominate themselves or can be nominated by another TNI member by completing an electronic nomination form available from the TNI Website. The TNI member completing the nomination form shall declare a stakeholder group.

Note: The electronic nomination form shall be provided to any interested party, upon request, in an alternative format.

- 7.2.3 The nominee's stakeholder group and TNI membership status shall be verified by TNI staff before the nomination form is forwarded to the Chair of any committee selected by or for the nominee.
- 7.2.4 Committee Chairs shall respond to a nominee acknowledging his or her forwarded nomination form within 60 days of its receipt.
- 7.2.5 Candidates nominated shall be eligible for consideration to appointments on January 1. .
- 7.2.6 Committee Chairs may request additional information from nominees to evaluate their ability to serve in a committee.
- 7.2.7 When reviewing nominees, committees shall evaluate a nominee's ability or capacity to effectively:
  - 7.2.7.1 Represent a stakeholder group.
  - 7.2.7.2 Cooperate with other stakeholders groups.
  - 7.2.7.3 Dedicate time to engage in committee activities, including other current TNI committee memberships.
  - 7.2.7.4 Communicate with TNI members.
  - 7.2.7.5 Promote and further the mission of TNI and the committee for which the nominee is being considered.
  - 7.2.7.6 Contribute specialized skills needed by a committee.
  - 7.2.7.7 Enhance a committee's diversity with respect to stakeholder representation and geographic location of its Committee Members.
- 7.2.8 No committee shall be obligated to recommend for appointment a nominee whose nomination form meets the timelines specified here if the committee determines the nominee would not meet the criteria specified in 7.2.7.
- 7.2.9 The Chair of the TNI Board of Directors will confirm all appointments of Committee Members.
- 7.2.10 Nominees not selected to be Committee members shall be notified of the non-selection and of their rights to appeal the decision in accordance with established TNI procedures.
- 7.2.11 If a Committee Member position becomes available before the end of an appointment cycle, and the vacancy does not create dominance, the Chair of the committee having the vacancy may appoint and recommend the confirmation of a nominee that does not create dominance any time during the year.
- 7.2.12 If a Committee Member position becomes available before the end of an appointment cycle and the vacancy creates dominance, the provisions of sub-section 7.4 shall be followed.
- 7.2.13 Any Committee Member who changes employment shall declare his or her new employer and the member's stakeholder group resulting from the change and is subject to the provisions of subsection 7.4.

### **7.3 Terms of Appointment for Committee Members**

- 7.3.1 Committee Members are appointed to three-year staggered terms to allow Committee Members to rotate each year and to appoint new members. Each year of a Committee Members' appointment term starts on January 1, regardless of the actual date in which the appointment is confirmed.
- 7.3.2 Any Committee Member completing a term may be eligible for appointment to a second term, but no Committee Member may serve more than two consecutive terms in the same committee, except as described in 7.3.4 below.

- 7.3.3 If a Committee Member resigns, the Chair of that committee may nominate another member from the same organization or from a different organization representing the same stakeholder group to complete the term of the resigning Committee Member.
- 7.3.4 A Committee Member may petition the governing body for the committee (i.e., an Executive Committee, or the TNI Board of Directors) to serve an additional term of three years. Such waivers should only be granted in exceptional circumstances, such as a Committee Member taking on a new substantive role within the committee, or when no other qualified candidates are available.

#### **7.4 Avoiding Dominance in a Committee**

- 7.4.1 If a Committee Member changes employment and the change makes a committee have two Committee Members of the same organization, one of the Committee Members employed by the organization shall resign from the committee. The resigning committee member may become an Associate Committee Member.
- 7.4.2 If a Committee Member changes employment and the change creates dominance, the Committee Member shall resign from the committee unless dominance can be eliminated by appointing as soon as possible one or more new Committee Members.
- 7.4.3 If a Committee Member resigns from a committee and the change creates dominance, the Chair shall appoint as soon as possible a new Committee Member to resolve the dominance.

#### **7.5 Removal of Committee Member**

- 7.5.1 Any Committee Member who is absent from three consecutive meetings without an excuse communicated to the committee's Chair or who is absent from at least half of the meetings in a six month period may be removed, on the recommendation of the Committee Chair, from the committee by the TNI Board of Directors or the Executive Committee of a core program.
- 7.5.2 Any Committee Member who does not continue to meet the requirements of paragraph 7.2.7 may be removed from the committee by the TNI Board of Directors on the recommendation of the Committee Chair.

#### **7.6 Participating in a Committee as an Associate Committee Member**

- 7.6.1 TNI members may be Associate Committee Members of any TNI committee. There is no restriction to the number of committees that a TNI member can join as an Associate Committee Member or to the number of Associate Committee Members a committee may have.
- 7.6.2 TNI members that wish to participate in a Committee as Associate Committee Members must register with the committee's Chair. A member may register at any time to become an Associate Committee Member.
- 7.6.3 Associate Committee Members must renew their registration annually, each January, to continue participating in any committee in that capacity.
- 7.6.4 Committee Chairs shall allow Associate Committee Members to participate in all committee meetings, but may establish rules that allow Committee Members time to deliberate among themselves and to complete committee business.
- 7.6.5 The participation in closed committee sessions is limited to Committee Members.
- 7.6.6 Associate Committee members may participate in discussion but may not vote.

## **7.7 No Alternate or Proxy Voting Allowed**

7.7.1 Participation as a committee member is based on the education and experience of the individual, and not the organization the member represents. No person may participate as a substitute for a Committee Member unable to attend a meeting.

7.7.2 Proxy votes are not allowed.

## **8.0 Committee Leadership**

- 8.1 Committees shall elect a Chair from among its Committee Members at the committee's first meeting of the year. Except for a newly created committee, the Chair should have served in the committee as a member or associate for at least one year.
- 8.2 The Chair of the TNI Board of Directors shall confirm the appointment of any new committee Chair. The TNI Board retains authority to remove, for cause, a committee Chair from office.
- 8.3 The committee Chair is responsible for the efficient operation of his or her committee. The committee Chair with the support of the Program Administrator:
- 8.3.1 Schedules committee meetings.
  - 8.3.2 Posts committee meeting schedules on the TNI Website.
  - 8.3.3 Sets the agenda for committee meetings.
  - 8.3.4 Presides and conducts committee meetings.
  - 8.3.5 Ensures that minutes of committee meetings are posted on the TNI Website in a timely manner.
  - 8.3.6 Conducts the selection process of new Committee Members and new committee Chair.
  - 8.3.7 Maintains up to date rosters of Committee Members.
  - 8.3.8 Provides to the TNI Board an annual report by December 1st of committee activities and accomplishments.
  - 8.3.9 Serves on an Executive Committee, when a program has an Executive Committee constituted by the chairs of all its program committees.
  - 8.3.10 Facilitates communication with other committees to fulfill program objectives.
- 8.4 Committees shall elect a Vice Chair. The Vice-Chair performs any duties assigned by the Committee Chair and all the duties of the Chair in the Chair's absence.
- 8.5 The Committee Chair may appoint additional officers with the committee's concurrence.

## **9.0 Subcommittees**

- 9.1 Committee Chairs, with concurrence of their respective members, may establish subcommittees to complete specific tasks that help fulfill program objectives.
- 9.2 Subcommittees shall consist of at least three members.

- 9.3 The scope of tasks assigned to the subcommittee shall be approved by the committee forming the subcommittee. Subcommittees may only provide recommendations on proposed actions to be taken to a parent committee.

## **10.0 Meetings**

### **10.1 Teleconferences**

- 10.1.1 Committees may meet by teleconference to conduct their business. All teleconferences are open to all TNI members and the general public, except when a committee meets during a closed session.
- 10.1.2 Schedules for teleconferences shall be posted on the TNI Website at least one week in advance.
- 10.1.3 Committee shall send invitations, electronically, to teleconferences to all Committee Members and to all registered Associates in a timely manner. Invitations should be sent at least two days prior to a teleconference date and should include an abbreviated agenda.
- 10.1.4 Guests may be invited for particular issues at the discretion of the Chair.
- 10.1.5 Committee may invoke Robert's Rules of Order to conduct committee business or limit debate to Committee Members before allowing Associate Committee Members to speak.

### **10.2 Face to Face Meetings**

- 10.2.1 Committees may meet face to face as necessary to conduct their business. All face to face meeting are open to TNI members and the general public, except when a committee meets during a closed session.
- 10.2.2 Notification of committee meetings associated with national meetings sponsored by TNI shall be posted on the TNI Website. Mail invitations and registrations may be sent to TNI members and members of the general public with a potential interest in the activities and deliberations of the meetings. All notifications should be posted at least 30 days in advance and should include an abbreviated or preliminary agenda.
- 10.2.3 Notification of committee face to face meetings that are not associated with a national meeting sponsored by TNI shall be posted on the TNI Website in a timely manner. Notification of these types of face to face meetings should be posted at least 7 days in advance and should include an abbreviated or preliminary agenda.
- 10.2.4 Attendees of face to face meetings of committees shall receive any documents considered by committee members.
- 10.2.5 Committee Chairs may invoke Robert's Rules of Order to conduct committee business or limit debate to Committee Members before allowing others to speak.

### **10.3 Documentation of Proceedings**

- 10.3.1 The proceedings of all committee meetings shall be documented in minutes available on the TNI Website.
- 10.3.2 The minutes of all teleconferences and face to face meetings shall be posted on the TNI Website in a timely manner.



## 11.0 Decision-Making Rules

11.1 Committees shall make decisions following rules referenced in SOP 1-102, Decision-Making Rules for TNI Committees.

## 12.0 SOP Approved Changes

Prev. SOP No.	New SOP No.	Date of Change	Description of Change
	1-101	1/31/2008	New SOP
	1-101 Rev 1.0	5/16/2012	Remove Program Boards; remove references section
	1-101 Rev 2.0	4/5/13	Added Appendix A; other minor changes
	1-101 Rev 2.1	4/18/14	Revised section 8.1 changing must to should in second sentence

Appendix A

<b>Exceptions from SOP 1-101</b>	
<b>Administrative Committees</b>	
Advocacy	Chair is the Past Chair of the TNI Board. The TNI Small Laboratory Advocate is also a designated member. Other members are selected for special qualities and may serve unlimited terms.
Conference Planning Committee	Chair is the TNI Executive Director. Standing members include the TNI Meeting Planner, the TNI Exhibit Coordinator, the Chair of the TNI Board, and the TNI Board Treasurer. Ad hoc participants are invited to represent a particular group or topic of current interest (e.g. vendors; USEPA program offices.) Membership may change based on the meeting location. There is no requirement for balance. Committee members may serve unlimited terms. Does not require a Vice Chair.
Finance Committee	Chair is the TNI Treasurer. All other members must be Directors of the TNI Board. There is no requirement for balance. Committee members may serve unlimited terms. Does not require a Vice Chair.
Information Technology Committee	The TNI IT Administrator and Database Administrator serve on committee. There is no requirement for balance. Committee members may serve unlimited terms.
Nominating Committee	Chair is the Past Chair of the TNI Board. Each year, the Chair selects two individuals who are not Directors of the TNI Board. See SOP 1-108. Does not require a Vice Chair
Policy Committee	Chair is the TNI Board Secretary. Other members are selected by each core program as representatives of that program, and their terms coincide with their term on the committee they represent. There is no requirement for balance. May have at-large members with unlimited terms.
<b>Program Committees</b>	
Consensus Standards Development Executive Committee	Chair must be someone knowledgeable about the consensus standards process and is selected by the Board. Other members of the committee are current Chairs of each Expert Committees, who serve as long as they are a committee chair. Up to three at-large members may also be added by the Committee Chair, and may serve unlimited terms. There is no requirement for balance.
Laboratory Accreditation System Executive Committee	The TNI Small Laboratory Advocate is an Ex-Officio member
National Environmental Field Activities Program (NEFAP) Executive Committee	Not covered by this SOP, SOP 5-101 applies
National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program (NELAP) Accreditation Council	Not covered by this SOP, SOP 3-100 applies
Proficiency Testing Executive Committee	No exceptions.
<b>Expert Committees</b>	SOP 2-101 governs operation
<b>Board of Directors</b>	TNI Bylaws govern operation.