



<b>SOP TITLE:</b>	<b>Control of TNI Documents</b>
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## 1.0 Purpose and Applicability

This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) describes procedures for the custody and control of TNI documents. The SOP addresses processes for managing documents, including their retention, access, storage, and disposal.

This SOP applies to all TNI committees, boards, subcommittees, work groups, and task groups and covers the following types of documents, among others:

- Policies, SOPs, guidance and other records published by TNI in hard copy, electronically, or posted on TNI's Website.
- Standard Interpretation Requests (SIRs).
- Preliminary drafts of documents created by committees.
- Records associated with the evaluation of Accreditation Bodies (ABs) and Proficiency Testing Provider Accreditors (PTPAs) recognized by TNI.
- Tables or lists describing fields of proficiency testing (FoPT), method codes, and acceptance ranges.
- TNI consensus standards, working drafts, and voting drafts of standards.
- Records associated with business confidential information, personnel transactions, and records generated during closed committee or board sessions.

This SOP does not apply to electronic mail messages. The management of electronic mail messages is addressed in POL – 121, Management of Electronic Mail Messages.

## 2.0 Summary

This SOP classifies documents controlled by TNI into five classes, depending on their level of dissemination, publication status, retention period, and availability. The SOP specifies procedures for custody and control of documents, their access, and storage. The SOP addresses document revisions, disposal, and withdrawal.

## 3.0 Related Documents

- 3.1 POL-104, Management of Records
- 3.2 POL-121, Management of Electronic Mail Messages [TBD]
- 3.3 SOP 1-100, Format Guidelines for Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) of The NELAC Institute (TNI)
- 3.4 SOP 1-116, Development and Approval of TNI Policies and SOPs

## 4.0 Definitions

- 4.1 Controlled document: Any TNI document necessary to perform an activity effectively or to ensure that customer and stakeholder requirements are met, including but not necessarily limited to any document intended for public dissemination created or commissioned by a TNI committee or a board, a working draft of a document intended for public dissemination, or a document that is necessary to recreate a TNI official activity or proceeding.

Note: Examples of controlled documents are consensus standards, TNI policies, SOPs, guidance, meeting minutes, committee charters, and tables of proficiency testing acceptance ranges.

- 4.2 Document class: Any of five tiers to which a controlled document is assigned based on its importance, dissemination, applicability, and need for permanence.
- 4.3 Record: A paper or electronic document, or a collection of documents.

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- 4.4 Restricted: An access mode of some TNI documents limited to designated TNI members, or to the general public after redaction of selected sensitive information by the Secretary.
- 4.5 Uncontrolled document: Any TNI document that is not a controlled document, including, but not necessarily limited to documents created by an individual, a TNI committee, the Board of Directors or TNI staff whose principal purpose is to facilitate day-to-day operations, is generated as part of conducting recurring committee and board business, and that is not critical for reconstructing a past activity or to interpret an existing controlled document.

Note: Examples of uncontrolled documents are messages reminding members of upcoming meetings, brochures advertising TNI events, notes conveying instructions for performing a specific clerical task, and letters of appreciation received by a committee chair.

## 5.0 Classes of Documents

- 5.1 TNI documents are either controlled or uncontrolled. When there is doubt as to the control status of a document, the TNI Secretary shall have the authority to assign the document to a category.
- 5.2 Controlled documents are assigned into five tiered classes:
  - 5.2.1 **Class I** documents are final versions of consensus standards, including working and voting drafts standards.
  - 5.2.2 **Class II** documents are normative, or are supplementary to Class I documents, or help implement, understand, or interpret them, and may undergo endorsement involving entities beyond the documents' creators. Typical Class II documents are policies, SOPs, bylaws, SIRs, guidance, FoPTs, templates, manuals, application forms, vote tallies, and responses to comments issued with votes on standards.
  - 5.2.3 **Class III** documents reconstruct or relate TNI meetings or proceedings, and are not generally approved or endorsed by entities beyond their authors. Typical Class III documents are meeting minutes, meeting agendas, proceedings of symposia and forums.
  - 5.2.4 **Class IV** documents are committee or board drafts of Class I and Class II documents that have not been designated final. Class IV documents are used by committees and boards to create or arrive at what may become Class I or Class II documents.
  - 5.2.5 **Class V** documents are associated with personnel, financial matters, contractual obligations, assistance agreements, and records associated with evaluations of ABs and PTPAs. Some Class V documents are designated confidential. Confidential Class V documents include, but are not limited to:
    - 5.2.5.1 Business records dealing with contractual agreements.
    - 5.2.5.2 Records documenting TNI personnel transactions.
    - 5.2.5.3 Records generated during closed sessions of committee and program meetings.
    - 5.2.5.4 Membership information contained in TNI databases.
- 5.3 Class IV documents become Class I and Class II documents when they are designated final either by a voting process or by a responsible committee or board.
  - 5.3.1 Class IV documents become Class I documents when a committee releases a working draft standard for publication or when a committee votes to have a voting draft standard become a standard.
  - 5.3.2 Class IV documents become Class II documents when a committee or board approves or endorses a document for publication.
    - 5.3.2.1 Class II documents required to be endorsed by a group other than the one creating them become final once they receive such endorsement.

## 6.0 Custody and Control of Documents

- 6.1 The Secretary is the official custodian of all final TNI controlled documents and is responsible for their management. The Secretary may delegate their custody to individuals within programs.

- 6.2 The Secretary ensures that all TNI committees and boards have systems that facilitate compliance with this SOP.
- 6.3 The Secretary shall prepare and maintain current a list of all TNI controlled documents. The list shall include, as necessary, a clear identifier and the issue or effective date of all controlled documents.
- 6.4 The Secretary shall ensure that a copy of each superseded or obsolete controlled document is retained to provide a historical reconstruction of a document's revisions and amendments. Superseded or obsolete documents are not posted on the TNI Website, but may be available by request.
- 6.5 TNI committees and boards shall ensure that superseded or obsolete controlled documents are not supplied to members and the public except by an expressed request. Any copies retained by TNI of superseded or obsolete versions of controlled documents shall be identified accordingly.
- 6.6 TNI committees and boards shall establish systems for ensuring the distribution of the latest approved versions of their controlled documents.
- 6.7 TNI staff and committees shall ensure that different versions of controlled documents are readily identifiable. Controlled documents in electronic format shall have unique file designations.
  - 6.7.1 SOPs shall follow the control documentation requirements specified in the current revision of SOP 1 – 100 and the file naming convention in SOP 1-116.
  - 6.7.2 Class II documents shall include a date and revision number (e.g.,xxxx-1-31-11-Rev1).
  - 6.7.3 Class IV documents shall include the current date and a unique draft version number retained with each draft version until they become final, in addition to any other identifiers required by the documents. Note: These documents receive a version number which is different than the revision number applied to Class 1 and 2 documents. It is denoted with a small "v" (e.g., xxxx-1-15-11-v0).

## 7.0 Access and Storage

- 7.1 TNI provides universal access to all documents posted on its website, except for those documents that are available to members only, or those sold for a fee.
- 7.2 Requests for documents not available on TNI's Website shall be directed to the Secretary.
  - 7.2.1 The Secretary or designee shall determine whether the requested document can be supplied or whether it is restricted or confidential.
  - 7.2.2 The Secretary or designee shall supply requested non-confidential documents or direct the requestor as soon as practical to a source for their access.
  - 7.2.3 Access to non-confidential original documents in hard copy may require special arrangements for their review. TNI may charge a fee for providing copies of original hard copy non-confidential documents.
  - 7.2.4 No committee, board or TNI group may use the exemptions granted in this SOP to avoid access to any document that should otherwise be legitimately available.
- 7.3 TNI archives most of its records in electronic format in a secure server maintained by the TNI Webmaster.
- 7.4 TNI's hard copy records are stored in a secure location, protected from deterioration.

## 8.0 Retention Time Period of Documents

- 8.1 TNI controlled documents are assigned a retention time period commensurate with their importance, applicability, usage, and coverage by regulations. The retention time period of TNI documents in common usage is specified in Appendix A, Specifications for TNI Controlled Documents. Controlled documents not included in the published list will be retained for a minimum of two years.
- 8.2 The previous version of a controlled document that is revised before its retention time expires shall be placed in archive for at least three years or until its original retention time expires, whichever is longer.
- 8.3 The Secretary may extend the retention time of any controlled document beyond the minima included in the published list.

## 9.0 Access Mode and Availability of Documents

- 9.1 TNI documents that are not confidential are accessible through the TNI Website or requests made to the Secretary. Some documents will be available universally, while others may be only available to members, or specific committee members and board directors. Appendix A, Specifications for TNI Controlled Documents, indicates the access mode for and availability of controlled documents in common usage. Controlled documents not included in the list may be available by request to the Secretary.
- 9.2 Uncontrolled documents are not assigned a retention time period, but if available, may be provided to a requester by the Secretary.
- 9.3 The Secretary may request changing the status of an uncontrolled document to controlled and may request retaining specific uncontrolled documents when he or she determines that availability of an uncontrolled document is desirable.

## 10.0 Revision, Withdrawal, and Disposal of Documents

- 10.1 Creators or final endorsers of controlled documents are responsible for notifying the Secretary or designee of their revision or withdrawal.
- 10.2 Creators of controlled documents are responsible for retaining former versions of revised or withdrawn documents in accordance with Appendix A, Specifications for TNI Controlled Documents.
- 10.3 The Secretary may dispose or direct the disposal of controlled documents that have exceeded their retention time period.
- 10.4 TNI committees ~~and boards~~ may dispose of uncontrolled documents unless they are notified by the Secretary to retain a specific uncontrolled document.

## 11.0 SOP Approved Changes

Prev. SOP No.	New SOP No.	Date of Change	Description of Change
Rev 0	Rev 0.1	2/3/11	Update to new format
Rev 0	1.0	10/5/12	Added SIRs to list of Class II documents; minor editorial changes and inclusion of Specifications for TNI Controlled Documents as Appendix A

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Appendix A

Specifications for TNI Controlled Documents

Document Class	Type of Document	Retention Time Minimum	Access Mode	Availability
<b>Class I</b>				
	Final versions of standards, including working and voting drafts, without material copyrighted by an entity other than TNI	Until revised or withdrawn. When revised or withdrawn, previous version is retained for five years.	Website	Universal
	Final versions of standards, including working and voting drafts, with material copyrighted by an entity other than TNI	Until revised or withdrawn. When revised or withdrawn, previous version is retained for five years.	By subscription	Universal
<b>Class II</b>				
	“Response to Comments” documents [addressing comments received when voting on standards]	For the life of the associated version of a standard. Retained for five years after the corresponding version of a standard has been revised.	Website	Universal
	Proficiency Testing (PT) Program Tables [describing fields of proficiency testing, method codes, and acceptance limits for PT samples]	Until revised. When revised, previous version is retained for five years.	Website	Universal
	“Interpretation of Standards” documents [Endorsed interpretations to TNI Standards]	Until revised. When revised, previous version is retained for five years.	Website	Universal
	Bylaws	Until revised. When revised, previous version is retained for five years.	Website	Universal
	Committee	Until revised.	Website	Universal

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Document Class	Type of Document	Retention Time Minimum	Access Mode	Availability
	charters	When revised, previous version is retained for three years.		
	Policies	Until revised. When revised, previous version is retained for three years.	Website	Universal
	Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)	Until revised. When revised, previous version is retained for three years.	Website	Universal
	Guidance, templates, manuals, and checklists	Until revised or withdrawn. When revised or withdrawn, previous version is retained for three years.	Website or by subscription	Universal
	Application forms for TNI committee or board membership	Until revised. When revised, previous version is retained for three years.	Website	Universal
	Application forms of National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program (NELAP) and PT programs	Until revised. When revised, previous version is retained for three years.	Website	Universal
	<u>Specifications for TNI Controlled Documents list</u>	Until revised.	Website	Universal
<b>Class III</b>				
	Meeting minutes for all TNI programs, <b>except</b> the Consensus Standards Development Program (CSDP)	Three years	Website	Universal
	Meeting minutes for the CSDP	Five years	Website	Universal
	Proceedings of and presentations made at TNI symposia and forums	Three years	Website	Universal
<b>Class IV</b>				



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Document Class	Type of Document	Retention Time Minimum	Access Mode	Availability
	Committee drafts of Class I documents	Until corresponding voting draft becomes a standard.	By request	Universal
	Committee and board drafts of Class II documents intended for sale	Until draft becomes final	Restricted	Committee members, board directors, and designated affiliates or associates
	Committee and board drafts of Class II documents not intended for sale	Until draft becomes final	By request	Universal
<b>Class V</b>				
	Annual Report	Three years	Website	Universal
	Annual Budget	Three years	Restricted	Universal
	Financial Statements	As required by Internal Revenue Service	Restricted	TNI Board, institutions requiring disclosure, and others as determined by the Secretary
	Assistance agreements	Five years or as required by awarding institution, whichever is longer	Restricted	TNI Board, institutions requiring disclosure, and others as determined by the Secretary
	Contractual agreements with service providers	Five years	Confidential	Executive Director, TNI Board of Directors
	Personnel files and performance evaluation records	Five years	Confidential	Executive Director, TNI Board of Directors
	Proceedings of closed committee and board sessions	Three years	Confidential	Committee or board members in closed session; TNI Board of Directors
	Completed applications to TNI committees and boards	Three years	Restricted	Committee members and board directors
	Completed NELAP and PTPA applications	Five years	By request	Universal

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<b>Document Class</b>	<b>Type of Document</b>	<b>Retention Time Minimum</b>	<b>Access Mode</b>	<b>Availability</b>
	Final evaluation reports of ABs and PTPAs	Five years	By request	Universal
	Responses to evaluation reports of ABs and PTPAs	Five years	By request	Universal
	General TNI business correspondence not already identified as Class V documents	Three years	By request	Universal