

TNI Board of Directors Meeting Summary Friday, November 13, 2020

ROLL CALL

Directors	Present	Staff	Present
Jordan Adelson	X	Lynn Bradley	X
Aaren Alger		Carol Batterton	X
Steve Arms	X	Jerry Parr	X
Justin Brown	X	Suzanne Rachmaninoff	X
Kristin Brown	X	Iлона Taunton	X
David Caldwell	?	Janice Wlodarski	X
Stacie Crandall	X	Bob Wyeth	X
Bob Di Rienzo	X		
Jack Farrell	X		
Maria Friedman	X		
Myron Gunsalus			
Paul Junio	X		
Judy Morgan			
Patsy Root	X		
Debbie Rosano	X		
Scott Siders			
Nick Slawson	X		
Alfredo Sotomayor	X		
Dave Speis	X		
Lem Walker	X		
Curtis Wood	X		
Past Chair			
Sharon Mertens	X		

AGENDA

1. Consent Agenda (Attachments 1 and 2)

The September and October meetings contained spirited discussion about key strategic issues, but left no time for routine issues that are now held over for the third month. After the call, Jerry and Alfredo discussed options for improving the efficiency of the Board calls to allow more time for discussion of important issues while also dealing with routine matters. Jerry proposed a Consent Agenda approach for this purpose. Such an approach is widely used by many groups such as city councils. Attachment 1 provides more information about this topic and Attachment 2 contains the Consent Agenda for November.

Any Director can request any item in the Consent Agenda be added to the normal agenda and it will be accepted without discussion.

Motion to approve the use of the Consent Agenda process for BOD Meetings, except for review of Financials, as well as anything that needs Board approval:

Motion to Approve: Jack Farrell
Second: Dave Speis
Approved: Unanimous

2. NEFAP Marketing Plan and Metrics (Attachments 3 and 4)

The NEFAP Executive Committee was asked to prepare a NEFAP marketing plan as well as performance metrics to the board for review and consideration. See Attachments 3 and 4.

Motion to approve the NEFAP Marketing Plan and Metrics report as presented to the Board, including a schedule to provide status reports to the Board:

Motion to Approve: Dave Speis
Second: Jack Farrell
Approved: Unanimous

3. Third Quarter Financial Statement – move to main agenda going forward

The 2020 Third Quarter financial statement was reviewed.

4. Program Reports, Section 5.3 Chemistry Committee

- The Chemistry Committee is working to resolve issues regarding 2021 committee membership and leadership issues. Specifically, the Chair is rotating off the committee. The vice-chair, because of current commitments, cannot accept the role. The committee was looking for volunteers from the committee to take the roles, but no one stepped forward. Bob is looking for people to take on the Chair and Vice Chair roles.
- They also dealt with SIRs 389, 390 and 391. These SIRs deal with questions of the need for second source materials for surrogates and internal standards and calibration requirements for Ion Specific Electrode analysis. Committee responses to all three SIRs were sent to the LASEC. The committee will continue its initial efforts regarding modifications to Module 4, specifically as relates to Initial and Continuing Demonstration of Capabilities for the laboratory and individual analysts.

Attachment 1 Background on Consent Agendas

What is a consent agenda?

Standard, repetitive items often eat up the Board agenda and not enough time is left to focus on serious deliberation. Consent agendas are one way of liberating the allotted meeting to important issues requiring careful discussion. The benefit: board members become more actively engaged in preparing for the meeting and in deciding what the key issues are.

A consent agenda is a component of a meeting agenda that enables the board to group routine items and resolutions under one umbrella. As the name implies, there is a general agreement on the procedure. Issues in this consent package do not need any discussion before a vote. Unless a board member requests a removal of an item, the entire package is voted on at once without any additional explanations or comments. Because no questions or comments are allowed on the content, this procedure saves time.

What items should be included in a consent agenda?

Routine, standard, non-controversial, and self-explanatory are adjectives that well describe consent agenda items. Here are some examples:

- Previous board meeting minutes
- Routine revisions of a policy or SOP
- Policies or SOPs approved by the Policy Committee
- Program Reports
- Informational Items

How do we make a consent agenda function efficiently?

Information pertaining to the items to be included in a consent agenda should be distributed to board members ahead of the meeting. This allows thorough examination of the routine items without using up valuable meeting minutes. If a board member has a question, he or she can contact a colleague to clarify a concern. If this is not helpful enough, during the meeting before a vote, any board member may request that an item from the consent agenda be removed and discussed separately. To keep the process intact and efficient, this is the only comment allowed concerning the contents of a consent agenda. To streamline the process even more, board members could be invited to contact the chair prior to the meeting to request that an item be removed.

What precautions need attention?

As consent agendas are not automatically included in meeting procedures, their use needs to be well explained to all board members to ensure that everyone understands both the rationale and the steps involved. To achieve the objective of a consent agenda — to save valuable discussion time for meaningful issues — it is important to make sure that board members receive support materials well before voting, and that they familiarize themselves with the details. When putting the agenda together, the chair and the executive director need to pay special attention to include only items that are suitable. Board members need to be vigilant so that debatable issues do not accidentally pass through without appropriate deliberation.

Attachment 2
CONSENT AGENDA – November 13, 2020

1. Consent Agenda (main Agenda, Attachment 1, Attachment 2)

Discussion regarding the use of the Consent Agenda format for the TNI Board of Directors Meetings, from this point on took place, with unanimous approval (see below) to move forward with this course of action.

The motion to approve the Consent Agenda format includes everything, except, at this meeting, Third Quarter Financial Statement, and item #5.3 – Chemistry Committee Program Report – both of which have been moved to the main agenda to be discussed separately.

Program Reports will be approved, from this point onward, as part of the Consent Agenda.

Motion to Approve the Consent Agenda, without item #3 and item #5.3, and including the suggestion to label Consent Agendas with the current month/meeting date:

Motion to Approve: Stacey Crandall

Second: Curtis Wood

Approved: Unanimous

2. October 2020 Minutes

Ready to post on the website.

3. SOP 6-100

SOP 6-100: Conducting Pilot Studies for New Concentration Ranges and Acceptance Limits for Source Sampling Audit Samples. This SOP is a very technical SOP based on a comparable PT SOP and does not require Board approval.

4. Board of Directors Election

Nominations for the 2021 Board election will in November according to this schedule:

- November 16 – December 31, 2020: Nominations accepted
- January 1-15, 2020: Nomination Committee will review the nominations and prepare a slate of candidates.
- January 16: Voting opens with the announcement of the slate of candidates on the TNI website
- February 16: Voting closes
- March 10: Newly elected Directors assume office

Directors whose terms expire in March 2021 are Bob Rienzo, Jack Farrell, Maria Friedman, Myron Gunsalus, David Speis, and Curtis Wood. The TNI Bylaws allow, and in fact encourage, Directors to serve multiple terms.

The current make-up is 5 AB, 6 lab, and 7 other (including 3 ex-officio).

PROGRAM REPORTS

Note Regarding Program Reports: Each program administrator should let us know/point out things that are important/need to be noticed/discussed. Each item should be written in as much detail as possible. Example is the Chemistry Committee report: committee membership and leadership issues – be more specific about what the issues are. In this instance, these are succession issues/decisions.

Write these going forward with the understanding that they may not be discussed and therefore may need more detailed provided in them.

5. CONSENSUS STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT REPORT

5.1 CSDP Executive Committee

- TNI has submitted its final version of the Corrective Action Plan (CAP) and operational SOPs in response to the ANSI audit. TNI awaits the decision of the ANSI Executive Standards Council on reaccreditation. The time frame for a response from the ANSI Executive Standards Council is not known.
- The TNI Glossary work group has been active by preparing a comparison document of all definitions presented in TNI documents and the current glossary as completed last year. Relevant ISO standards definitions are also being included as appropriate. The work group is also collating definitions from TNI ABs to ensure consistency with State rules and regulations.
- Revisions to training materials for committee chairs and committee members, and revisions to the Internal Checklists for CSDEC and Expert committees based primarily on changes to SOPs 2-100, 2-101 and 1-125, are all continuing activities of the CSDEC.
- Committee chairs have also been requested to review their committee rosters and determine the potential need for new members in 2021 which will be advertised in the TNI Newsletter for solicitation of committee candidates. Committee chairs will be asked to make attempts to bring expert committee to the full complement of 15 voting members.

5.2 Asbestos Committee

- The asbestos expert committee continues to develop their summary document. Upon committee approval of this summary, the Draft Standard and the Summary will be posted and announced consistent with Rev. 3.2 of SOP 2-100. This announcement will be directed to all relevant TNI committee chair as well as the non-TNI interested parties.

5.3 Chemistry Committee – moved to main Agenda

5.4 Laboratory Accreditation Body Committee

- LAB members voted on the draft revision of V2M1, with 11 votes in favor and one opposed with comment. The negative comment concerns one technical edit plus a concern about a change made at the recommendation of the Field Activities Task Force. These two items will be addressed at the November meeting and another vote taken once the negative comment is resolved. At that point, LAB will be able to report back to the Board about how the FATF recommendations were addressed.

5.5 Microbiology Committee

- The Committee did not meet in October. They finalized their Summary of Changes document and will be doing their public webinar on December 1, 2020 from 12-1:30 pm Eastern.
- The Committee is looking at new membership.

5.6 Proficiency Testing Committee

- The proficiency testing expert committee continues to develop a work plan focusing on needed changes to Module 1, including review of ISO 17011, 17025, 17034 and 17043 for consistency with the TNI standard. In this regard the committee their previously developed list of potential issues and prioritized and categorized each for committee consideration. The PTEC is attempting to expand its membership to a full 15 voting member group. The underrepresented “Other” and “AB” stakeholder groups create balance issues when trying to fill committee positions.

5.7 Quality Systems Committee

- The Committee did their public webinar to receive more input on the needed changes/additions to the Module 2 Standard. They have started looking at the written feedback they received by email and have prepared a summary of the feedback received on the Webinar. There were 201 participants attending the Webinar, so they were unable to respond to all questions during the presentation. They are finalizing a written response to the questions by email and everyone who attended the webinar will receive a copy of this.
- The Committee set a goal to have a DRAFT Standard to present at the winter meeting so they can hit a target of August 2021 for an approved CSDP Module 2 Standard. The Committee discussed this target with Alyssa Wingard (QS Committee Member and DoD ELAP Program Manager and Chair, QA Oversight Subgroup) and she provided a copy of a presentation she gave early August. She will get back to the committee with additional feedback on whether the committee’s timing will be useful in their update. The presentation she shared noted:

QSM Version 6 Development

- Incorporating a moderate portion of TNI 2016 verbatim
- A small portion of TNI 2016 will either be rewritten or only partially incorporated
- Some requirements will not be included as QAOS deemed equivalent to ISO 17025:2017
- Some requirements will not be included – QAOS determined requirement unnecessary
- The Committee reviewed SIR 393 (deals with calibration and weights) and determined that it should not have been accepted as an SIR. A response is being prepared for LASEC.
- The Committee is looking at new membership.

5.8 Radiochemistry Committee

- The Committee has just about completed its review of the public webinar feedback and recommended changes to their module.
 1. They are currently reviewing references to other documents in the 2016 Standard so they can be updated as needed.
 2. They will also be looking at references in Module 2 that will likely need to be updated when Quality Systems completes their DRAFT Standard.
 3. Bob Shannon is looking into one recommendation and will report back to the Committee: Consider updating requirements for standards. ISO requirements for standards are vague and make no distinction in requirements for reference materials used for calibration and QC/PT standards.
 4. There was one recommendation that may be more appropriate in in Module 2 or 4. Terry is working with Jessica Jensen on this.
- The Committee is looking at new membership.

5.9 Stationary Source Audit Sample Committee

- The Committee is continuing work on an update to SOP 6-101 (SSAS Table Management).
- The Committee is continuing to meet more frequently to try to finish up their last SOP and the Standard updates in hopes that these changes to the program will encourage another audit sample provider to apply. A concern was raised during the last meeting that the current sole provider may be slowing production of audit samples and may not be able to maintain all the SSAS requirements. The Committee is looking into this and considering whether to push for a Public Webinar to review possible changes to their Standard so they can finish the Standard sooner. Some of the proposed changes are expected to help the current situation.

5.10 Whole Effluent Toxicity Committee

- The WET committee members continue working on the various issues underway while the Chair and AB representatives are focusing on attaining closure about an acceptable process for analyst initial demonstrations of competency. Because most WET committee memberships expire at the end of 2020, Rami has been approved for a third term (to continue managing the revision of the standard) and active associate members are encouraged to apply for voting membership. A few new AB representatives are also in the pipeline and an election will be held at the December meeting.

6. NEFAP REPORT

6.1 NEFAP Executive Committee

- Members of the NEFAP Training Workgroup sat in on a TNI Training Committee meeting to brainstorm ideas for future courses.
- The Nominating Committee Chair (Geneva Bowman) has stepped down. Tracy Szerszen will take on this role with a goal to complete the vote before the end of the year.
- AIHA (Geneva Bowman) provided the following letter:
 - *In representing AIHA LAP, Cheryl Morton and I have enjoyed our combined years of volunteer service on the committee, and we are grateful for the opportunities being part of this community has afforded us. However, due to a change in our organization's priorities, AIHA LAP cannot continue to meet its commitments as a member for this committee. Thank you for the opportunity to contribute, collaborate and learn from the committee. We wish you all continued success in its future endeavors.*
- No progress made. The Committee is working on reviewing the Field Standards and providing formal review comments to the Field Activities Expert Committee.
- No progress. Justin and Scott Haas (Chair, FAC) are discussing the need for the Scope Guidance document. It may just become a recommendation the FAC can consider in their Standard update.
- The Committee is still working on SOPs and updating its internal audit checklist.

6.2 Field Activities Expert Committee (FAC)

- The Committee did not meet in October. It is continuing work by email on the DRAFT FSMO Standard that was developed by combining the 2014 Standard with the new ISO/IEC 17025:2017. The Committee is focused on preparing a Summary of Changes document in order hold a public webinar in January.
- The Committee is looking at membership.

7. NELAP REPORT

7.1 Accreditation Council

- The first remote site visit (New York) for an AB renewal of recognition was completed, the site report delivered, and the corrective action response is undergoing review. Five additional applications are either in preparation or awaiting various stages of review.
- At this month's meeting, the updated SIR webpage was discussed with AB representatives and then followed by a free-flowing conversation about operational status for the various NELAP ABs. Most are using remote assessments or some combination of remote and in-person assessments, but initial applications are generally restricted to labs doing work for the NELAP state and having in-person assessments available – all agree that initial assessments must be in-person. Remote assessments provide additional time for in-depth review of documentation, since travel time is not a consideration, but at the same time, are more demanding of the assessors.
- The implementation status of all NELAP ABs is unchanged from the March Board meeting, and thus the table will not be displayed until changes occur, as discussed at the April Board meeting.

7.2 Laboratory Accreditation Systems Executive Committee

- LASEC members continue planning for the Mentor Session and Assessment Forum sessions at the winter meeting and approved another revision of the SIR Management SOP 3-105, which was delivered to Policy Committee for review. Stacie Crandall was elected to membership.
- The SIR Subcommittee is actively recruiting new members. These individuals should preferably be either full or associate members of LASEC. The SIR Management SOP now requires that this autonomous subcommittee be balanced in terms of stakeholder composition, and that change will be made in the LASEC Charter in the upcoming revision of charters, when requested.

8. PROFICIENCY TESTING PROGRAM REPORT

- The Executive Committee is still working on the PCB Analyte Request Application (ARA) and plans to distribute a survey to gather information about NELAP and non-NELAP PT requirements. Shawn is also planning to propose new footnote language to the table: For a laboratory to pass a proficiency test sample for Aroclors/PCBs, all Aroclor/PCB analytes for which the laboratory is accredited shall be reported and there shall be no “not acceptable” evaluations for any individually reported Aroclor/PCB.
 - Shawn reached out to Michelle Potter and Rachel Ellis from the NELAP AC (on 10/21/20) to see if the following language would be acceptable for a footnote on the FoPT table: “For a laboratory to pass a proficiency test sample for Aroclors/PCBs, all Aroclor/PCB analytes for which the laboratory is accredited shall be reported and there shall be no “not acceptable” evaluations for any individually reported Aroclor/PCB.”
- The PT SOP Subcommittee is continuing work on their FoPT limit setting SOP (4-101).

9 ADMINISTRATION REPORT

9.1 Advocacy Committee

- The target date for publishing the newsletter was Tuesday, November 10.
- The TNI winter meeting is scheduled for the week of January 25 and will be completely virtual. Special sessions include:
 - How accreditation to the TNI standard improved my lab
 - Assessment forum: Accreditation issues with emerging contaminants
 - Value of accreditation
 - Wastewater epidemiology and COVID-19
 - Operating a laboratory during a pandemic
 - Success stories with remote assessments

- TNI's Change to QMS and other changes to 1.3
- Mentor session: Implementing the New EPA MDL and TNI LD/LOQ Requirements, Implementing the New TNI Calibration Requirements for Chemistry, Effectively Managing Your PT Program
- The Mentoring Subcommittee continues to work out the details of their proposed mentoring plan and expects to have a complete proposal for presentation at the winter meeting.
- The Advocacy Committee is reviewing the 2020 strategic plan to identify high priority items to include in their 2021 workplan.

9.2 Policy Committee

- The Committee only met once in October and the focus was on Voting procedures. All program voting procedures were looked at. At its first meeting in November, the Committee determined that it would update SOP 1-102 (Decision Making Rules for TNI Committees) in such a way that all TNI Programs can use it for their voting procedures. A Program can have a separate SOP that includes additional detail if needed or the Charter may be used to designate voting procedures used in SOP 1-102. The Committee reviewed the PT Program's voting SOP (SOP 4-105) and has provided comments to the PTPEC.
- The Committee will prepare a request to all TNI Committees to update their Charters based on the new Strategic Plan. The due date is expected to be in January. Internal Audit Checklists need to be updated and given the workload in IT, a new due date for the 2020 internal audit will be discussed at the next Policy Committee meeting.

9.3 Training Committee

- The Committee completed updates to their Charter and a final submission has been sent to the Policy Committee.
- The Committee reached out to NELAP ABs to see what training needs they see. Six responses were received, and the Committee reviewed the information. There were a number of requests for classes TNI is already providing. The Committee is looking at developing a marketing workgroup to look for better ways to communicate training that is available.
- The following workgroups were formed to start working on Charter items:
 - Review current course offerings to ensure that examples, references, and links are still current and appropriate.
 - Use of digital badges
 - Review current list of course offerings and look for gaps and ideas for training classes that can be developed. This will feed into a 2021 RFP for training.
- The Committee will continue work with William to find a way to produce certificates, so it is not as manual. CEU classes and assessor classes may need to remain more manual, but Certificates of Attendance should be automated.
- Current Classes being worked on:
 - Good Laboratory Practice – Internal Audits – Part II (ANAB) – Ilona met with ANAB for an update. They will be making the requested updates to this class and then it will be available as a self-paced course. No update.
 - Risk Based Thinking in the Environmental Laboratory. Dates for this class have been determined (January 13-14, 2021) and this class will be included in the next Training Series flyer. This will be a 10-hour class.
 - Marlene and Ilona are still discussing evaluator training for the NEFAP/PTP Evaluations.
 - Scott Siders completed his training course on October 22, 2020: Lowering the Cost of Poor Quality (CoPQ) with an Effective Quality Management System and Integrating Risk Management Principles.
 - Jerry is working with Judy Morgan on a course based on a presentation they did during NEMC: History of Environmental Monitoring. This course is being offered on December 4, 2020.

- Silky has finished 3 days of her 4-day course: Implementing the 2016 TNI Standard Series. The last course will be 11/24/20. Total class attendance including groups is 40.
- Jerry completed his class on October 30, 2020: Theoretical and Practical Consideration for Establishing Sensitivity of Measurements. Total class attendance including groups was 68.
- Jerry completed a free to TNI members class to review the tools available to implement the TNI Standard: Tools and Resources for Implementing the 2016 TNI Standard. Total class attendance including groups was 68. Ilona will be working with William to post the recording (when it is available) on the TNI website beyond just the training tab.
- A new training has been submitted by the WET Expert Committee: Whole Effluent Toxicity (WET) Testing – Data Interpretation Training. Details to follow.

9.4 Forum on Environmental Accreditation

- Registration is now open for the winter meeting scheduled for January 25-29, 2021.

9.5 National Environmental Monitoring Conference

- Planning for the 2021 Symposium is well underway. Registration for the exhibit program will open in November along with the Call for Abstracts.

9.6 NGAB

- IAS Evaluation: The NGAB evaluation SOP has been updated and is awaiting provisional approval by the Policy Committee. Jerry asked that Policy prepare this update for the TNI Board since the TNI Board currently oversees the NGAB recognition for accrediting environmental labs. (SOP 7-100: Evaluation of Non-Governmental Accreditation Bodies (NGAB) for Accrediting Environmental Laboratories under Recognition by The NELAC Institute (TNI)).
- A new SOP is being finished to decouple issuance of certificates from evaluations for NGABs. This is something similar to what NELAP did for NELAP ABs.

10. TASK FORCES AND OTHER GROUPS

10.1 Competency Task Force

- At its October meeting, the group affirmed its September changes to the generic assessment competencies and included some additional ideas gleaned from a Training Committee survey. This group is actively coordinating with both the LAB committee's revision of V2M1 and the Training Committee's efforts. Next up will be consideration of professional and foundational competencies to evaluate whether any of those items should be included in training, and then to define what should be included in the technical training portion (assessing the PT and QS modules of Volume 1 plus assessing to the analysis-specific modules) and technical module training (specific technologies and methods used in Modules 3-7), that will accompany the assessor competencies already identified.

10.2 Consumables Task Force

- The Task Force is continuing in the process of listing and classifying critical products, supplies and services. This information collection effort is utilizing a previously approved spreadsheet for this purpose. Inputs from all Task Force members are being received and collated by the Task Force Chair. While the Task Force did not meet in October due to conflicting participant schedules the November meeting resulted in defining elements of the first area of concern, general products and supplies required for all laboratories.

10.3 Environmental Monitoring Coalition (EMC)

- The EMC had a briefing from Chris Impellitteri from EPA ORD to talk about the National Defense Authorization Act which requires multiple federal agencies to develop a workgroup to address CECs. They are developing a draft response from the EPA Administrator about what laboratory resources are available for CEC analyses, primarily in drinking water and drinking water sources. Jerry offered to provide information on how to access TNI's database of accredited labs and a link. EMC members indicated they would be willing to provide whatever technical support and assistance EPA needs. Chris expects a draft report to be available by the end of the year and would like feedback from the EMC.
- At the last meeting Dan Hautman was receptive to guidance from the EMC on IDOC requirements. Jerry volunteered to do a first draft document incorporating language from the TNI standard and Mike Delaney volunteered to help. They will have a draft for discussion by the next call.
- Also, as a follow up to the call with Dan Hautman, the EMC voted to undertake to re-write 200.8 and incorporate collision cell technology sometime after the beginning of the calendar year.
- Richard Burrows joined the call to discuss concerns about User-Generated Mass Spec Library Acceptance Criteria. Basically, the language in Method 8270E that addresses this issue needs to be improved. Richard volunteered to draft a new section of this method to address the issues.
- David Friedman reported that the next steps on the Acrolein and Acrylonitrile Preservation and pH study are to secure samples for analysis. There will be a meeting next week to finalize the plan.
- Richard Burrows was added as a new member of the coalition.

11. MEMBERSHIP REPORT

11.1 Active Members: 1076

Attachment 3 NEFAP Strategic Plan Proposal

Prepared by:
NEFAP Training Work Group
&
NEFAP Marketing Work Group

SUMMARY:

The NEFAP Executive Committee (EC) was tasked with developing recommendations for the organizational strategic plan. We recognize NEFAP has been stagnant and is not impacting the community as much as we had expected due to the lack of participation in the program. Part of the strategic plan recommendations submitted incorporated a plan for much needed potential growth through enhanced marketing and advocacy efforts as well as evaluating the market and opportunities to establish a program focused on providing training and educational resources to the field community and stakeholders involved in accrediting and/or using field generated data. The EC established two workgroups tasked with evaluating the market and opportunities available and developing a plan for implementation.

OBJECTIVE:

To develop a comprehensive marketing and training plan creating name recognition for NEFAP. This plan will contain specific components of a targeted audience to promote the use of NEFAP along with pathways to achieve the specific goals and objectives identified. The program's strengths and weaknesses are identified and the intended audience, medium, purpose and methods of implementing at a general level are outlined:

- Identified program strengths and weaknesses:

Strengths:

- The program is already established; Standard is based on the ISO standard with valuable field specific components, and has TNI organizational support as well as the support of the accreditation bodies.
- The premise of NEFAP is supported by the understanding, throughout the environmental laboratory and field industries, that the field quality system is a critical component of the production of data of known and traceable quality.
- Unique system for FSMOs to demonstrate competency.
- Program for assessing competency of field organizations based on a sound Standard applicable to a large variety of FSMOs.

Weakness: Lack of name recognition due to the lack of marketing, lack of availability of training tools and materials for potential clients, and no regulatory driver and little non-regulatory marketing experience.

- Established audience, intention, purpose and methods of implementing:

Target audience: Data Users for Federal, State, and Commercial clients.

Intention: Drive the name recognition of NEFAP and the need for NEFAP supported training.

Purpose: Promote the benefits of participating in NEFAP to the field community. Address the gap in field specific training available and the need for sampling training and awareness. Use training as a vehicle to further promote NEFAP and TNI.

Methods: Update marketing material and training available online, develop a mechanism for implementation including identifying resources, responsibilities for implementation, specific tasks and actions to be implemented as part of the plan. Monitor the progress of these efforts and report to EC and Board periodically to evaluate success of those efforts.

TARGET MARKETS:

The target audiences have been broken down into three subcategories that will require slightly different approaches.

I. State Data Users

State environmental programs
Municipalities
Other State Agencies (Environmental, Public Health, Others)

II. Federal Data Users

EPA-National and Regional Offices
DOI (notice for training can be built on)
DOD (Navy Marine Corp, USACE, USMC, Air Labs, etc.)
DOE (Hanford, LANL, ORNL. etc.)

III. Commercial Data Users

FSMO Trade groups
Laboratories
Industry including field equipment manufacturers
Engineering Firms: Design, Implement, Review Environmental Projects
Oil and Gas (upstream, midstream, downstream)
South America (Chile has strict gov requirements beyond 17025 (Source Testing Primarily) Local competitor is not time effective
High profile sites (e.g. Nuclear power plants, Nuclear sites, NRDAs, Pharma waste, Superfund, etc.)

MECHANISM FOR MARKETING DISTRIBUTION:

Current FSMOs:

- Develop a list of currently accredited FSMOs that could benefit from training. Contact them with updates and information about the program.
- Put together example emails/templates that FSMOs can send to their clients explaining the benefits of accreditation and what it means for their data.
- Survey the FSMOs and ask the following to be used to formulate promotional materials:
 - Why is accreditation important?
 - How has it helped the organization?
- Request short written “testimonial” statements from the FSMO’s and post them on the NEFAP webpage.
- Have marketing and training material dedicated to explaining why field quality systems and NEFAP in particular are important. The “Why NEFAP?” training is an example of this.
- Provide educational materials to the FSMOs so they can encourage clients to require NEFAP. These may be online materials they can email their clients.
- Research case studies where being NEFAP accreditation has helped to protect credibility or resulted in financial savings with current FSMOs. Include data from studies in marketing materials to further demonstrate the need for accreditation.
- Develop list/database of data users and contact directly to discuss benefits of NEFAP.

Trade Shows:

- Explore trade groups that can educate their vendors and identify economical methods of participating and sharing information on the benefits of NEFAP within those groups.

- Look at which conferences would allow us free attendance with presentation or training.
- Explore cross promotional opportunities with trade groups and conferences.
- Identify conferences where NEFAP would benefit by participating and develop cost/benefit analysis of participation.

Online Resources:

- TNI's website, YouTube, Social Media (LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram, podcast interviews, search engine analytics)
- EC will determine criteria and business rules for use of social media for the program, SOP containing procedure and policy specific to E-Marketing campaign/platforms will be written by EC.
 - Interface with E-Marketing platforms would be handled from within marketing subcommittee.
 - The e-marketing platforms would each have a designated primary and secondary administrator with the TNI administrator as the tertiary administrator.
 - The e-marketing coordination would be through the NEFAP EC marketing subcommittee which would report to the NEFAP EC.
- Determine publications (e-magazine, blog, vlogs, etc.) or websites that information could be presented.
- Coordinate marketing activities between NELAP and NEFAP including social media. Work with other organizations doing training to build mutually beneficial or cross promotion relationship.

Electronic Brochures:

- Constant contact blasts, develop client list from state, federal, land commercial targets.
- Labs could be targeted with information to share with their clients and field staff.
- Develop a brief field specific newsletter to send out periodically with case studies, etc. emphasizing benefits of accreditation while also promoting any marketing and training opportunities we provide.

MARKETING IMPLEMENTATION: Refer to table below for timeline

- I. The marketing subcommittee will be formalized into a permanent subcommittee tasked with implementing and executing the marketing plan as outlined. This group will develop timeframe and POCs to coordinate, plan events and review/develop materials for advocacy. This group coordinates with the NEFAP EC and FAC and TNI staff for resources and meeting implementation goals.
- II. Update any existing marketing material.
- III. Update Training offerings (conduct survey to determine where the training needs are sans regulatory drivers).
- IV. Update TNI NEFAP Website and the marketing material available online.
- V. Collect information about potential FSMO clients and their end users and target with the updated training and marketing material;
 - Collect contact information about potential federal clients and end users (DOE, DOD, DOI, USGS, EPA)
 - Collect information about potential state and municipality clients and their end users (EPA programs)
 - Collect information about potential commercial client end users and target with the updated training and marketing material (engineering firms, nuclear/power facilities, oil & gas)

TRAINING AND MARKETING INTEGRATION

- Training opportunities will be used as a vehicle to promote program.
- Paid training activities (courses and/or tools) can be used to further fund marketing activities and components that require financial resources.
- Cross promote training with other organizations that do not compete, link sharing or sharing of clips/resources to be explored with other field organizations.

TRAINING ASSESSMENT:

After conducting a general market evaluation consisting of identifying potential training needs, reviewing existing training offerings, and evaluating NEFAP's opportunity to succeed in providing training to the community. After the

initial evaluation of market conditions, the training workgroup believes the opportunity and a market exists and is available that TNI and NEFAP can support by providing training and/or field related educational resources (tools and/or templates).

Further market research is needed to further understand the specific needs of the community and to prioritize the initial training efforts accordingly.

TRAINING IMPLEMENTATION

The training workgroup will be formalized into a permanent subcommittee that will begin working on the task list immediately upon approval by the TNI board. We will establish a liaison with the TNI training committee to update progress and status. Additional volunteers will be sought to assist in implementing and executing the action plan. Continued market research and surveying will take place immediately upon approval of this plan to identify the training priorities and best opportunities available to NEFAP.

Prioritize list of components, establish timelines for the higher priority ones.

- Survey FSMOs for training support – to be completed within 60 days;
 - ABs to assist in surveying current accredited FSMOs to identify internal training needs.
 - Training subcommittee to work with TNI to identify mailing list of potential FSMOs that are TNI members to survey for training needs.
 - Training subcommittee to work with TNI to identify other members (laboratories or data users) that may benefit from field related training and survey their needs.
- Survey EPA, State Agency, and municipality sampling training needs and opportunities – to be completed within 60 days;
 - Subcommittee will solicit information from available contacts regarding training opportunities in the public sector.
 - Subcommittee will contact EPA and identify opportunity/forum for participation in EPA's newly launched Learning Management System.
- Training subcommittee will contact all NEFAP recognized ABs to discuss framework for and needs for field technical training for their assessors – to be completed within 90 days.
- The training subcommittee will reach out to potential trainers and facilitate their application to provide AB assessor training to the NEFAP/PT standard – to be completed within 60 days of completion of combined evaluation SOP.
- Based on feedback from survey; training subcommittee will identify, prioritize, outreach and support development of technical training. – to be done in 90 days after completion of survey.
- Based on feedback from survey; training subcommittee will identify, prioritize, outreach and support development of quality/management systems and/or accreditation focused training. – To be done in 90 days after completion of survey.
- Training subcommittee will develop online training resources – Ongoing – initial efforts completed within 6 months.
 - Incorporate a combination of paid/non-paid resources
 - Committee will work with existing ABs to collaborate using their platforms or their expertise in providing online training platforms.
- Based on feedback from survey, the subcommittee will work to develop templates and tools for FSMOs or identify outsourcing opportunities; i.e. QAM template, SOP template, field technical training guides, etc. - to be completed in 12 months from implementation.
- Become clearing house for training resources by outreach to existing organizations. – Ongoing.
- Evaluate option of developing registry/pre-qualification process for trainers – to be completed within 12 months of implementation. Identify the first training topic and facilitate application submission process by 02/15/21.

STRATEGIC NEFAP PROGRAM NEEDS:

To this end, NEFAP marketing and training committee has performed a 'Needs Analysis' of our training and marketing strategic plan, and its consequent findings focus on specific areas where NEFAP has 'gaps' that can be

filled, e.g., requirements for organizational and performance improvements that can be met by TNI providing resources and guidance:

Training Plan Development Needs

- Assistance in developing technical and pricing capabilities to ensure competitive pricing for training material will be developed by NEFAP training subcommittee.
- Assistance in training preparation in those areas in which NEFAP is directing its technical services by coordination with TNI educational delivery system and the TNI Training committee.

Marketing Plan Development Needs

- Identifying means for electronic marketing and implementing this marketing plan that includes the short- and long-term objectives of promoting NEFAP.

General/Administrative Needs

- Assistance with website updates and search engine analytics to help drive online users to NEFAP.
- Assistance in expanding NEFAP’s training options to provide comprehensive costs estimates for the types of training provided.
- Assistance in accessing tools available to TNI for marketing (surveys, constant contact, etc.).

Financial Needs

- Assistance in acquiring new internet search engine analytics to support NEFAP target markets and provide opportunity for growth.
- Assistance in providing compensation for creation of training material, especially if it is not free for the user.
- Anticipate revenue from training efforts to aide in supporting marketing activities.

MONITORING OF ACTIVITIES:

Based on this strategic plan, NEFAP agrees to meet and develop the assessed needs delineated in the matrix below:

Area	What does NEFAP need?	What specifically will NEFAP do to meet the need?	Details of timeline	How will success be measured?
Update marketing material	Currently, NEFAP marketing material is not readily available or communicated to current members or data users. Without regulatory drivers, NEFAP must create new marketing material that meets the needs of our current audience.	NEFAP will have to locate and update the current marketing material. This material will need to be stored in a place that is accessible to all members. Additionally, more material will need to be created that best reach the needs of state, federal, and commercial clients	Within 6 months after approval of strategic plan and annually after initial effort.	Success will be measured by assessing the amount of marketing material created and its accessibility. Currently, NEFAP has one brochure. Our Goal is to have multiple brochures and additional marketing material online that can be directed to clients. NEFAP will also be surveyed to identify issues and opportunities for improvement

Area	What does NEFAP need?	What specifically will NEFAP do to meet the need?	Details of timeline	How will success be measured?
Update training offerings	NEFAP needs assistance with identifying training needs and updating current training offering to meet these needs	NEFAP will seek assistance to submit training surveys to determine where training is needed and what type of training is in demand sans regulatory drivers. Additionally NEFAP will need support determining competitive pricing of certified trainings offered.	Within 60 days after approval of strategic plan and annually after initial effort.	Success will be measured by determining the need and then the following development of training material. NEFAP will also be surveyed to identify issues and opportunities for improvement
Update TNI NEFAP website with current material (training and marketing) and Monitor Search Engine Analytics	NEFAP is on the second or third page of a search engine query. NEFAP needs assistance in driving more recognition to our name and ensuring marketing information is available on the NEFAP page of the TNI website.	NEFAP will need to ensure key words are used in our description that will drive people to our website when searching for field sampling. Potential marketing resources/search engine optimization tools could be used at a small cost to help get our website to the first page. We also need to ensure that all updated marketing and training material is available on the NEFAP page	Within 6 months after approval of strategic plan and annually after initial effort.	Success will be measured by any increase in “clicks” to NEFAP and the posting of updated marketing and training material to the NEFAP page
Potential Client list of End Users	NEFAP needs to develop a database of potential users that would be interested in training opportunities and potential accreditation	Collect information about potential client and their end users and target with surveys and later the updated training and marketing material for federal, state, commercial	Within 6 months after approval of strategic plan and annually after completion of initial list.	Success will be measured by the creation of client list, the execution of surveys, and the targeting marketing performance based upon the survey results
Federal/State Regulator Outreach	NEFAP needs a regulatory driver	Identify what state or federal regulators require for field sampling. Evaluate and contact states to gather field sampling criteria and discuss potential use of the TNI/ NEFAP accreditation program. Determine if/how to petition for regulation if/as needed	Within 6 months after approval of strategic plan and annually after completion of initial list.	Success will be measured by the creation of state list and participation of NEFAP members. Goal will be to get an additional state to recognize NEFAP

Area	What does NEFAP need?	What specifically will NEFAP do to meet the need?	Details of timeline	How will success be measured?
Trade Show/Conference attendance	NEFAP needs name recognition in field sampling trade groups and organizations.	Explore trade groups that can push this to their vendors. Look at which conferences would allow us free attendance with presentation or training. Our success rate for getting abstracts accepted historically is high. Also need to identify which conferences it make sense to participate in and target	Within 6 months after approval of strategic plan and annually after completion of initial list.	Success rate of getting abstracts or trainings accepted.

GANTT CHART:

Over the projected one year strategic plan program duration, the training and mentoring activities will be performed according to the schedule identified in the table above.

MARKETING & TRAINING ACTIVITY MILESTONES:

As defined in the document, upon approval of the strategic plan, marketing and training subcommittees will meet initially to perform an initial assessment of existing materials, opportunities, and needs. Once these are defined, depending on the activity, quarterly or annual milestones will be established to perform follow-up as needed. These milestones provide regular periodic opportunities for assessing effectiveness of the strategic plan and making as-needed adjustments to ensure the needs NEFAP are being met.

Attachment 4 NEFAP Program Metrics

The purpose of the metrics established by the NEFAP EC is to provide the framework in order for the program to be evaluated using measurable benchmarks to indicate the progress in sustaining and growing interest in the program. The metrics identify areas we believe will aid in determining whether interest in the program is growing as we push new marketing initiatives in 2021.

The goals submitted are realistic in terms we realize that without a significant driver our ground level marketing campaign will likely have slow returns and we do not expect dramatic impact or growth immediately. However the goals are intended to drive market penetration and awareness that will lead to more participation and growth in the program over the long term.

Metrics to be evaluated quarterly with reports to Board via program administrator report. Metrics will be reviewed for applicability and updated at least annually ensure they are an adequate assessment of the performance of the program as it relates to our growth initiative.

Tangible Program Growth Metrics

1. Increase in number of applicant and accredited FSMOs

- a. Increase the number of FSMOs with 8 new FSMO applications in 2021.

There are currently 28 (14 domestic and 14 international) FSMOs that are accredited in the program's 6 year history. We average 4½ FSMOs per year so we are looking to nearly double that number of applicants by the end of 2021.

2. Growth in number of TNI members who are FSMO's

- a. Increase FSMO membership in TNI by 10% in 2021 (need data from TNI to establish benchmark).

3. Increase in number of training courses being offered

- a. Currently there are two NEFAP training sessions and a 3 part session on field sample collection available.
- b. Develop and offer 3 revenue generating training sessions by end of 2021.
- c. Develop and offer multiple non-revenue generating training clips or informational media to drive interest in paid sessions.
- d. Increase in number of people completing NEFAP or field related training courses.

4. Increase in number of Standard purchases – (clarify

- a. We averaged 10 Standard purchases/year over last 4 years, continue to evaluate number of purchases in 2021 in YOY comparison by driving interest from new participants in program.
- b. Standard revision completion should drive that number of sales higher and we plan to coordinate with FAC to promote the Standard revision and benefits.

5. Increase in revenue to program (*Need to verify income number from TNI to set benchmark*)

- a. Increase in revenue to CSDEP (FAC) through increased Standard sales and to NEFAP through training courses/tools being offered for sale.
- b. Anticipated increase of income for NEFAP by \$1,500 in 2021.

6. Tangible increase in exposure to market via marketing efforts

- a. Increase number of presentations given: In 2020 we had 1 external presentation we plan to increase that to 3 outside of TNI in 2021 via either virtual conferences or in-person meeting attendance and participation.

- b. Increase articles published/white papers published: In 2020 we had 0 articles published by external publications. In 2021 we plan to have a minimum of 1 developed and published.
- c. Increase in Social media posts relating to NEFAP: In 2020 we have had 0 posts relating to NEFAP, in 2021 we plan to have a minimum of 20 posts.
- d. Increase in web page traffic to NEFAP page on website (need data from TNI to establish benchmark)

7. Increase in general interest in program

- a. Call participants – increase in participation on EC meetings to 75% of members or higher.
- b. Increase in number of associate members on EC. We currently have 13 associates and plan to grow that to 18 in 2021.
- c. Inquiries from new stakeholders (FSMO's, data users, public organizations, etc.): In early years of program we had many inquiries from different stakeholder groups requesting information, recently we have had little to none. An increase in these requests for information is an indicator of growth in awareness of the program.