

TNI Policy Committee Meeting Summary Friday, November 16, 2012

1. Welcome, Roll Call and Announcements

The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 11 am Eastern. Attendance is recorded in Appendix A. Alfredo asked that members review the minutes from the October 19 meeting and provide him with any changes or corrections.

2. Another Complaint Submission

A complaint was submitted using the new form on the TNI Website. This complaint was about a specific AB and named a specific staff person as well. Because it involves an AB and a lab, the Committee agreed with the Program Administrator that the complaint is outside the scope of this TNI complaint process.

3. Review of Revised Draft Policy 1-109, "Whistleblower Protection"

This policy was revised according to discussions at the previous committee meeting. JoAnn offered and Susan seconded a motion to accept the revised policy as submitted. Approval was unanimous. The policy will be provided to the TNI Board for final acceptance.

4. Review of Draft Revisions to SOP 1-101, "Operations of TNI Committees"

At the previous meeting, review of a draft SOP, "Operations of the TNI Advocacy Committee," prompted a decision that special needs of individual administrative committees can best be addressed by adding appendices to the "main" Committee Operations SOP, rather than repeating most of its 8 pages for each committee to document the differences.

Accordingly, a modified version of SOP 1-101 was prepared and circulated for this meeting, with six appendices added, one for each administrative committee. The appendices for Advocacy and Policy Committees were reviewed, revised and agreed upon, along with a modification in section 1.0 to explain the appendices. Jerry offered to add content to the appendices for Conference Planning, Finance, Information Technology and Nominating Committees, since he is actively involved with each of those administrative committees, and obtain concurrence from the respective committee chairs.

5. Review of Draft SOP 1-117, "Continuing Education Credits"

Jerry provided background for this effort. Many trainees have inquired about the availability of Continuing Education Credits (CEUs) for TNI training events, and apparently the Florida Society of Environmental Analysts (FSEA) does provide CEUs for its training, so the FSEA process provided a readily accessible model. Initially, the Technical Advisory Committee was asked to include CEU administration with its training activities, but declined, so that perhaps Policy will be willing to take this on.

Lynn offered several ideas based on her experience with APHL's National Laboratory Training Network (NLTN), including having CEUs that are recognized by a national organization instead of TNI's own authority and also that the NLTN is supported by a Training Committee that advises on such matters but does not create or perform actual training.

Other ideas offered were as follows:

- ANSI has a standard for continuing education
- Recognition of our CEUs by organizations such as IACET or PACE would involve reviewing examples of past and upcoming training but might provide enhanced professional respect for TNI CEUs
- Other specific environmental programs would need to formally recognize our CEUs for them to be “usable”
- Present practice of providing TNI certificate that enumerates the number of contact hours of training is not recognized for CEU credit
- It’s important to maintain the value of TNI’s training by following a careful path forward in offering CEUs, perhaps for selected courses only, at least initially
- Future possible offering of credentials such as for a laboratory QA manager or even credentialing of analysts would be contingent upon having TNI CEUs available, similar to National Environmental Health Association NEHA program for credentialing sanitarians
- Initial claims (pre-recognition of TNI CEUs by a national body) could state “training designed to conform to the ANSI standard” as an initial step, and have the course be evaluated for conformance to the actual standard
- TNI’s training offerings are expanding into vendor-provided training and field training, assessor training, quality manager training, as well as technical training for laboratory personnel

Jerry has ordered the relevant ANSI standard. He will review and summarize it for our next meeting, and consider how best to revise this draft SOP to reflect TNI’s desire to conform to the standard.

6. Pending Items

Review of the draft appendices to the Committee Operations SOP, and continuing work on the CEU SOP are both carried over to the next meeting of the Policy Committee.

A revision of the SOP on handling Standards Interpretation Requests may be available in time for the December 21 meeting. The NEFAP Evaluation SOP and related documents remain high priorities.

7. Action Items

See Attachment B.

8. Next Meeting

The next meetings of the Policy Committee will be December 7 and December 21, 2012 at 11 pm Eastern.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 12:35 pm Eastern.

Attachment A

Name/Affiliation NOTE: Please check your email and notify Lynn of correct one. Shown here is the TNI member contact but is not always the one used to contact you for Policy Committee meetings.	Representing	Present
Alfredo Sotomayor, Chair Wisconsin Dept. of Natural Resources, Madison, WI alfredo.sotomayor@Wisconsin.gov	TNI Board	Yes
JoAnn Boyd Southwest Research Institute, San Antonio, TX jboyd@swri.org		Yes
Patrick Brumfield Sigma-Aldrich RTC, Laramie, WY patrick.brumfield@sial.com	PT Executive Committee	Yes
Gary Dechant Analytical Quality Associates, Inc. Grand Junction, CO gldechant@aol.com		no
Silky Labie Env. Lab. Consulting & Technology, LLC Tallahassee, FL labie@comcast.net		Yes
John Moorman South Florida Water Management District West Palm Beach, FL jmoorma@sfwmd.gov	NEFAP Executive Committee	Yes
Mei Beth Shepherd mbshep@sheptechserv.com		No
Susan Wyatt Minnesota DOH, St. Paul, MN susan.wyatt@state.mn.us	NELAP AC	Yes
Bob Wyeth Pace Analytical Services, Inc., West Seneca, NY rfwyeth@yahoo.com	CSD Executive Committee	no
Jerry Parr (ex-officio) Executive Director, TNI Jerry.Parr@nelac-institute.org		Yes
Lynn Bradley, Program Administrator The NELAC Institute (Staunton, VA) lynn.bradley@nelac-institute.org		Yes
Guest: none		

Attachment B

Action Items – TNI Policy Committee

	Action Item	Who	Expected Completion	Comments/ Completion
22	Send finance SOPs for voting per pass-through process	Alfredo	For 10/9/12 Board Meeting	Approved by Policy, Board review initiated 11/14/12
26	Draft statement re “abstentions” for committee review and then sending to all committee chairs	Jerry	10/31/12	Completed and sent, 11/19/12
27	Update priority list of items pending Policy Committee review	Jerry	10/31/12	11/14/12
28	Revise Policy 1-19, Whistleblower Protection	Jerry	for 11/2/12 meeting	Revisions approved by Policy for submission to TNI Board, 11/16/12
29	Develop Attachment or Appendix to Committee Operations SOP 1-101 with the identified “unique” characteristics of Advocacy Committee (from draft SOP 1-109)	Jerry	For 11/2/12 meeting?	Completed for 11/19/12 meeting
30	Add content to the appendices of draft revision to SOP 1-101, for Conference Planning, Finance, Information Technology and Nominating Committees	Jerry	For 12/7/12 meeting	
31	Procure the ANSI standard about continuing education credits; review and summarize, consider how best to revise draft SOP on CEUs to reflect TNI's desire to conform with the ANSI standard	Jerry	For 12/7/12 meeting	
32				
33				
34				

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.