



SOP TITLE	PROCEDURES FOR EXPERT COMMITTEE OPERATIONS
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The NELAC Institute (TNI)
P.O. Box 2439
Weatherford, TX 76086
www.nelac-institute.org

Procedures for Expert Committee Operations

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Procedures for Expert Committee Operations

1.0 GENERAL

1.1 Purpose

These procedures govern the operations of TNI Expert Committees. The TNI Consensus Standards Development Executive Committee (CSDEC) is responsible for appointing such standing and special committees, subject to approval by the Board of Directors, as deemed necessary to further the objectives of TNI. The CSDEC may also appoint subcommittees, Task Forces or Workgroups as needed. The CSDEC itself is governed by SOP 1-101, Operation of TNI Committees.

1.2 Scope

These procedures shall apply to the membership and operation of all Expert Committees. Procedures other than balance are generally applicable to subcommittees and/or workgroups (by whatever name).

2.0 RELATED DOCUMENTS

- SOP 2-100 Procedures Governing Standards Development
- SOP 3-105 LASEC Standard Interpretation SOP
- SOP 5-106 NEFAP Standard Interpretation SOP
- POL 1-129 Expected Conduct of Participants in TNI Activities
- TNI By-Laws

3.0 DEFINITIONS

3.1 Accreditation Body (AB) – The organization having responsibility and accountability for accreditation.

3.2 Balance – A condition in which no Stakeholder Group has a majority of voting members and all default Stakeholder Groups are represented.

3.3 Closed Session – An Expert Committee meeting where attendance and participation is limited to the Program Administrator and the voting members of that committee.

3.4 Committee Membership

Expert Committee Member – A TNI member with technical knowledge appropriate to the specific committee, with full voting privileges who applied for and is approved to participate on a committee.

Associate Committee Member – A TNI member who may participate in any committee, but who does not have voting privileges.

Affiliate – A person with special knowledge as a qualified individual and who is not a TNI member. An Affiliate is eligible to fully participate as a Committee Member, with all rights and privileges, including voting. Affiliates are counted as full members on committees and must be accounted for in terms of balance. No more than 30% of members may be affiliates.

NOTE – Voting Members consist of Expert Committee Members and Affiliates, who constitute the Consensus Body.

3.5 Consensus Body – A group whose membership meets the requirements of balance and lack of dominance. The group maintains: (i) openness; (ii) balance of interest; (iii) due process; (iv) an appeals process; and (v) a process to achieve consensus.

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- 3.6 Consensus Standard Development Executive Committee (CSDEC)** – The committee within TNI that has responsibility for the Consensus Standard Development Program. This Executive Committee provides oversight to Expert Committees in the development of standards.
- 3.7 Dominance** – a position of or exercise of dominant authority, leadership, or influence by reason of superior leverage, strength, or representation to the exclusion of fair and equitable consideration of other viewpoints.
- 3.8 Expert Committee** – A committee whose duties include the development and maintenance of consensus standards. The number and scope of Expert Committees is not limited and will be determined by the TNI Consensus Standards Development Executive Committee with the approval of the TNI Board of Directors. The Expert Committees are consensus bodies for TNI's ANSI standards development activities.
- 3.9 Field Sampling Measurement Organization (FSMO)** – Organizations engaged in environmental sampling and field measurement activities.
- 3.10 Laboratory** – An organization that collects or analyzes samples in a fixed-base, mobile, or field-testing facility for chemical, and/or physical, and/or bacteriological properties or parameters.
- 3.11 Stakeholder Group** – The default stakeholder groups are defined as:
Accreditation Bodies (group includes the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program [NELAP]-recognized accreditation bodies, non-NELAP recognized accreditation bodies, the National Environmental Field Activities Program [NEFAP] accreditation bodies, and Proficiency Testing Provider Accreditors [PTPA]),
Laboratories (group includes commercial laboratories, municipal laboratories, state laboratories, federal laboratories, field measurement organizations, and field sampling organizations), and
Other (group can include federal agencies, regulated industries, and other stakeholder groups such as proficiency testing providers, vendors, contractors, and so forth).
- 3.12 Standard Interpretation Request (SIR)** – The submission of a request for an interpretation of how a standard applies to a particular situation.

4.0 DUTIES OF EXPERT COMMITTEES

4.1 The duties of Expert Committees include:

- Development and maintenance of consensus standards.
- Resolution of Standard Interpretation Requests (SIR): Each committee follows its internal process to complete within 60 days of receipt of the SIR by the Committee Chair. The committee deliberation and approval of the interpretation must be captured and documented in committee minutes.
- Development of guidance documents, as necessary.
- Contributing to the development of SOPs, as necessary.

4.2 Expert Committees in existence at the time of adoption of this SOP

- 4.2.1 Asbestos Expert Committee
- 4.2.2 Chemistry Expert Committee
- 4.2.3 Field Activities Expert Committee
- 4.2.4 Laboratory Accreditation Body Expert Committee
- 4.2.5 Laboratory Proficiency Testing Expert Committee
- 4.2.6 Laboratory Quality Systems Expert Committee
- 4.2.7 Microbiology Expert Committee
- 4.2.8 Radiochemistry Expert Committee

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- 4.2.9 Stationary Source Audit Sample Expert Committee
- 4.2.10 Whole Effluent Toxicity Expert Committee

- 4.3** Other Expert Committees may be formed as necessary and appropriate following CSDEC and Board of Directors approval.

5.0 COMMITTEE COMPOSITION

- 5.1** Expert Committees may consist of Committee Members, Associate Committee Members and Affiliates. All Voting Members must have relevant knowledge of the subject matter relative to the specific Expert Committee's activities. Voting membership on the Expert Committee shall not be conditional upon membership in any organization nor unreasonably restricted on the basis of technical qualifications or other such requirements.

- 5.2** Committee Members are categorized into the following default Stakeholder Groups:

- ABs - accreditation bodies that operate accreditation programs,
- Laboratories - laboratories and other organizations (such as FSMOs) directly involved in providing sampling and measurements, and
- Other - consultants, proficiency test providers, state and federal agencies that do not run accreditation programs and all additional interested parties.

Any Expert Committee may determine that additional or different stakeholder groups are appropriate for that Expert Committee's scope of activity. Requests for changes in the stakeholder group designations for a given Expert Committee shall be presented to the CSDEC, and under its recommendation, be presented to the TNI Board of Directors for its approval.

- 5.3** The standards development process shall not be dominated by any single stakeholder group, individual, or organization.
- 5.4** Voting membership is based on approved Expert Committee membership. Details regarding the application for membership, review and approval process are presented in SOP 1-125, Committee Application and Membership Tracking Procedures.
- 5.5** Associate Committee Members may fully participate in committee activities but do not have voting privileges. Associate Committee Membership is based upon the request of the member. All TNI members are eligible to be Associate Committee Members of any TNI Expert Committee.
- 5.6** Committee Members and Associate Committee Members must be TNI members. Affiliates are qualified individuals who are non-TNI members. Affiliates may be sought out by the Expert Committee based upon their expertise or may be nominated for Expert Committee participation by a TNI member. An Affiliate serving on a committee is eligible to fully participate as a Committee Member, with all rights and privileges, including voting. Affiliates are counted as Voting Members on committees with a declared Stakeholder Group and must be accounted for in terms of balance.
- 5.7** The number of Committee Members on any Expert Committee shall be not less than five (5) and not more than fifteen (15). Affiliates are counted as full members on committees. No more than 30% of members may be Affiliates.
- 5.8** TNI Member organizations may have more than one Committee Member on an Expert Committee. An organization is a company, state or municipal government, EPA Program/Office/Region, or other federal agency. However, membership on an Expert Committee is limited to two (2) members of a single organization without the recommendation of the CSDEC

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and the approval of the TNI Board of Directors.

As TNI and all its Committees are striving for diversity within all Committees, membership should preferentially reflect volunteers who are representative of all sectors of the community. While lack of dominance by any Stakeholder Group must be ensured, Expert Committee Chairs and the CSDEC Chair will further ensure through the membership application and approval process that the overall interests of all members of the community can be maintained. Committee openings will be submitted annually for inclusion in *ANSI Standards Action*.

- 5.9** Individuals may serve as a Committee Member on more than one Expert Committee concurrently.
- 5.10** At least annually, or whenever there is a change made to the make-up of an Expert Committee, the CSDEC Chair and applicable Expert Committee Chair(s) will review Expert Committee membership rosters to ensure balance and lack of dominance, general make-up of the committees and appropriate representation by the overall community. Any changes to committee make-up or stakeholder affiliation must be addressed and appropriately documented as per SOP 1-125.

6.0 PROCEDURES FOR JOINING EXPERT COMMITTEES AS COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- 6.1** At least annually, an announcement is placed in the TNI Newsletter that lists each Expert Committee and the number of representatives of each Stakeholder Group on that committee. In conjunction with that announcement, instructions are included directing any interested applicant to the website to file an application to join an Expert Committee, as well as contact information to request additional clarity.
- 6.2** Applications for committee membership may be submitted and potentially accepted at any time.
- 6.3** Any TNI member may apply to join any Expert Committee by completing the TNI Committee Application in the Member section of the TNI website.
- 6.4** Applicants must be able to:
- Identify a specific Stakeholder Group;
 - Cooperate effectively with affected parties and stakeholders;
 - Effectively communicate with affected parties and stakeholders;
 - Commit a significant amount of time over a multi-year period;
 - Understand the technical and/or policy subject matter of the Expert Committee; and
 - Contribute substantively to the issues relevant to, and tasks assigned to, the Expert Committee.
- 6.5** TNI procedures for receiving applications and tracking committee membership can be found in SOP 1-125. Applications are reviewed for completeness and accuracy. Each applicant declares a Stakeholder Group, and this is taken into consideration when reviewing an application and the effect on committee balance. The application database tracks the status of each application and ultimate disposition. Records are also maintained that include individual committee membership and terms of service, changes in Stakeholder Group, resignations, or terminations from the committee.
- 6.6** Expert Committees vote to add qualified new members and vote to confirm second three-year terms of existing members during a closed session of the committee. If openings exist on an Expert Committee during the year, new Committee Members may be elected to the Committee at any time. If there is not an available position on the Expert Committee for a new member of that Stakeholder Group, the application will be returned to the Program Administrator (PA) for

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notification of the applicant and documentation of the decision. Any applicant who cannot be approved for Voting Membership, for whatever reason, will be offered an Associate Committee Member position.

6.7 As soon as practicable, but within 30 days of the decision to accept a nominee as a member of an Expert Committee, the Chair of the Committee will recommend their appointment to the Chair of the CSDEC.

6.8 Appointments of Committee Members will be confirmed by the Chair of the CSDEC, as soon as practicable but within 30 days of receipt of notice that a new member was elected. If an applicant is not confirmed for appointment to a committee, the application will be returned to the Program Administrator and Expert Committee Chair for notification of the applicant and documentation of the decision.

6.9 Committee Member nominees will be informed about the acceptance of their appointment by the committee's Chair or PA as soon as practicable but within 15 days of the decision of the Chair of the CSDEC. The Program Administrator will document the decision in the minutes.

7.0 COMMITTEE MEMBER TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

7.1 Committee Members are appointed to three-year terms that are staggered so that members rotate off each year. Any member who has completed a first term may be elected for a second three-year term, but no member may serve more than two (2) three-year terms consecutively, except as described in 7.4 below. Members of newly formed Expert Committees shall be given staggered terms at the outset of committee functions.

7.2 Terms on a Committee routinely begin following the Winter TNI Conference. Rights and privileges of Committee Members added to the committee throughout the year, begin immediately upon approval by the CSDEC Chair without regard to when their terms may begin.

7.3 Terms for committee members expire as follows. A Committee Member voted onto the Committee prior to September 1 of a calendar year has a term that expires three years from that calendar year. If a Committee Member is voted onto the Committee on or after September 1 of a calendar year, the term expires three years from the following year. The year the term expires is recorded in the database according to SOP 1-125.

7.4 A Committee Member, with the endorsement of the Committee Chair, may petition the CSDEC to serve an additional term of three years or less (beyond the second term). Such waivers should only be granted in exceptional circumstances, such as a Committee Member taking on a new substantive role within the committee, when an ongoing activity led by the Chair needs to be completed or when no other qualified candidates are available. If the Committee Chair is making this petition, the Chair needs a vote in favor of the additional term by a majority of the Expert Committee.

7.5 Any Committee Member who changes employment during their term of office must again re-declare one Stakeholder Group. If the criteria for balance are no longer met, the Committee Member will be removed from the Expert Committee as a voting member unless balance is re-established by appointing one or more new Committee Members. Any Committee Member who does not continue to meet the requirements of Section 6.4 (above) due to a change of employment will be removed from the Expert Committee.

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7.6 Any Committee Member who is absent without good cause from three (3) successive meetings of the Expert Committee (including telephone conferences) or who is absent from 50% or more of the meetings during a calendar year may be removed from the Expert Committee. A request to remove an Expert Committee member is made by the Committee Chair, after a closed session vote of the committee, to the Chair of the CSDEC. The Committee Member in question is removed from the committee upon notification by the CSDEC Chair.

7.7 The Voting Members of an Expert Committee constitute the Consensus Body for the Standard, volume, or module for which they are responsible. When a Standard, volume or module is presented to the committee for approval all Voting Members of the Expert Committee are required to vote. Failure of a Committee Member or Affiliate to provide a vote on a Standard or any portion thereof when presented for approval (without good cause) shall result in their removal from the Expert Committee.

8.0 COMMITTEE LEADERSHIP

8.1 On an annual basis each Expert Committee shall elect a Chair and a Vice Chair from among its Committee Members and/or applicants. With the exception of a newly formed Expert Committee, the Chair should have at least one year's experience on the Expert Committee.

8.2 Upon the recommendation of the CSDEC, the Chair of the TNI Board of Directors, with the concurrence of the TNI Executive Committee, has the authority to remove any Committee Chair from that office.

9.0 COMMITTEE CHARTER

9.1 Expert Committees shall have a charter stating the mission and objectives of the Expert Committee. The charter will be developed using a template provided by the TNI Policy Committee and will be approved by the Chair of the CSDEC with the concurrence of the CSDEC Members. Final approval of an Expert Committee Charter or revisions thereof is the responsibility of TNI Board of Directors with consideration of the recommendation(s) of the Policy Committee.

9.2 The Charter of each Expert Committee will be updated as necessary; Charters must be reviewed for updates upon implementation of a new TNI Strategic Plan or Quality Management Plan or new directive from the Board of Directors.

10.0 SUBCOMMITTEES/WORKGROUPS

10.1 The Committee Chair with concurrence of the Expert Committee members may appoint subcommittees or workgroups on various issues. The scope and duties delegated to a subcommittee shall be approved by the Committee upon its formation. Subsequent changes in scope or duties shall require Committee approval. A workgroup of limited duration should be given explicit direction by the Expert Committee and shall report back to the Expert Committee. An appropriate balance and absence of dominance of subcommittee interests should be considered, but is not required.

10.2 The subcommittee or workgroup is responsible for actions delegated to it by the Expert Committee and any subcommittee or workgroup recommendations and actions require approval of the Expert Committee. Subcommittee minutes must be reported to their Expert Committees.

10.3 The formation of subcommittees or workgroups is at the sole discretion of the Expert Committee.

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11.0 COMMITTEE MEETINGS

11.1 Conference Calls

- 11.1.1 Participation in all meetings of Expert Committees is open to all TNI Members and Affiliates. Any TNI Member who wishes to participate on the Expert Committee as an Associate Committee Member may do so by contacting the PA and/or Chair.
- 11.1.2 A schedule of conference calls for every Expert Committee will be posted on the TNI website. Any changes to the regularly scheduled meetings will be communicated to attendees as far in advance as possible by whatever means appropriate. Notice of any supplementary meetings (other than closed session meetings) will be posted at least five (5) days in advance of the meeting, whenever possible. Notice of any cancelled meetings will be provided to attendees as far in advance of the meeting as possible.
- 11.1.3 Prior to a scheduled meeting, the Committee Chair or Program Administrator will send out a meeting invitation notice to all Committee Members and Affiliates, and all Associate Committee Members. At least three days prior to the meeting, the Chair should distribute a draft agenda and appropriate materials to all persons invited to the call.
- 11.1.4 At the Chair's discretion, *Robert's Rules of Order* may be invoked as needed. For disciplined debate of an issue, a motion may be proposed and adopted, and debate may be limited to a fixed time per person. Also, the Chair may first limit debate among Voting Members before inviting Associate Committee Members to speak.
- 11.1.5 Minutes must be taken and circulated to the Expert Committee for comment prior to the next scheduled committee meeting. Minutes can be discussed, amended, if necessary and ultimately approved by e-mail or during the next conference call of the Expert Committee. Approved minutes of Expert Committee are posted on the TNI website.
- 11.1.6 Minutes shall include date and time of the meeting, a list of those in attendance, any changes to the agenda are noted, applicable voting results, record of all action items/matters taken up by the committee, the time of adjournment, and the date and time of the next meeting. The minutes may include a listing of Committee Members with email addresses, employer and Stakeholder Group, but must not include telephone numbers, as these are publicly available documents.
- 11.1.7 Discussions on Standards (or any portions thereof) that are conducted during committee meetings and/or input received during public forums must be summarized in meeting minutes. Voting on Standards that are a proposed American National Standard (ANS) must be accompanied by an individual tally of each member's vote and confirmed by an electronic form of the vote.
- 11.1.8 TNI routinely uses the recording feature available from conference calling applications for quality control purposes for the sole purpose of accurately capturing discussion for subsequent publication in the published minutes of the call of the TNI Board and committee meetings. The recordings are not maintained once the minutes are produced and are not provided to anyone except the TNI Program Administrators. Any TNI committee member who objects to this activity has the option of not speaking during the call or not participating in the TNI committee meeting.

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11.2 Face to Face Committee Meetings

- 11.2.1 Participation in all meetings of Expert Committees is open to all TNI Members and Affiliates and all interested persons from the public. Face to face meetings will generally include the semi-annual TNI forum on environmental laboratory accreditation and any special meetings scheduled by an Expert Committee.
- 11.2.2 Notification of face-to-face meetings is the responsibility of the Executive Director of TNI or their designee, and is typically accomplished via the TNI website and hard copy brochure. As with Conference Call Meetings, during face-to-face meetings the same procedures are followed regarding the agenda, approving and posting minutes, and keeping order during the meetings.
- 11.2.3 The agenda for the Expert Committee face-to-face meeting shall be supplied to the TNI Executive Director or designee by the committee chair or the committee's PA as requested by the Executive Director.
- 11.2.4 Notification of special meetings must be five (5) days prior to said meeting, if possible. The Chair will send out a reminder to all Committee Members, Affiliates and Associate Committee Members, and members of the public who have registered with the Chair (see Section 11.1.1). A tentative agenda should be included with the reminder.
- 11.2.5 As with conference calls, during these meetings any changes to the agenda must first be agreed on, and the minutes must reflect those changes.
- 11.2.6 At the Chair's discretion, *Robert's Rules of Order* may be invoked as needed. For disciplined debate of an issue, a motion may be proposed and adopted, and debate may be limited to a fixed time per person. Also, the Chair may first limit debate among Committee Members before inviting Associate Committee Members and members of the public to speak.
- 11.2.7 Minutes must be taken and circulated to the Expert Committee for comment as soon as practicable and prior to the next scheduled committee meeting. Minutes can be discussed, amended and approved by e-mail vote or during the next conference call of the Expert Committee.
- 11.2.8 Minutes shall include date and time of the meeting, a list of committee members and associates in attendance, any changes to the agenda are noted, applicable voting results, record of all action items/matters taken up by the committee, and the time of adjournment. The minutes may include a listing of Committee Members with email addresses, Stakeholder Group, and employer, but should not include telephone numbers.

12.0 REFERENCED DOCUMENTS

- 12.1** SOP 1-101, Operation of TNI Committees
- 12.2** SOP 1-125, Committee Application and Membership Tracking Procedures
- 12.3** *Robert's Rules of Order*

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13.0 SOP APPROVED CHANGES

Revision	Effective Date	Description of Change
0	10/17/2007	New Document.
1.0	3/18/2010	Major rewrite to match TNI operations.
1.1	1/23/2015	Changes based upon voting requirements and clarification of recorded meeting records.
2.0	01/11/2018	Changes to sections: 2.1.2 by adding the Asbestos and WET committees; 2.3.3 by adding a sentence about representation; 2.4.4 allowing individual to serve on more than one committee; 2.5.2 was added to allow an additional term in special situations; 3.1.7 and 3.2.7 by removing the 5 and 10-day requirement for minutes; 3.2.8 was added to not list phone numbers of committee members; and minor editorial changes.
2.1	1/10/2019	Modified section 2.3.3 to allow for more than one member per organization (up to 2) on an expert committee.
3.0	06/11/2020	Revised throughout to reflect operational changes.
3.1	06/12/2020	Editorial changes to 11.1.6 and 11.2.8.