



SOP 2-101

PROCEDURES FOR EXPERT COMMITTEE OPERATIONS

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Reviewed by the Policy Committee: March 3, 2008

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1.0 GENERAL

1.1 Purpose

These procedures govern the operations of TNI expert committees. The TNI Consensus Standards Development Board is responsible for appointing such standing and special committees as deemed necessary to further the objectives of the Institute. The Board may also appoint special committees as needed.

1.2 Scope

These procedures shall apply to the membership and operation of all expert committees.

2.0 COMMITTEES

2.1 Expert Committees and Duties

2.1.1 Introduction

The duties of Expert Committees include development and maintenance of a standard for the accreditation of environmental laboratories. Expert Committees may also develop guidance documents. The number and scope of Expert Committees may not necessarily be limited to the list in Section 2.1.2.

2.1.2 Committees and Duties

2.1.2.1 *Proficiency Testing Committee.* This committee develops a standard for laboratory proficiency testing and proficiency testing samples, including: criteria for selection of the providers of the samples; protocols for the use of proficiency test samples and data in the accreditation of laboratories; and criteria for Proficiency Test Oversight Bodies/Proficiency Test Provider Accreditors (PTOB/PTPA).

2.1.2.2 *On-Site Assessment Committee.* This committee develops a standard for on-site assessments. This standard also addresses the minimum frequency of assessment, and the minimum education, experience, and training requirements of assessors.

2.1.2.3 *Quality Systems Committee.* This committee develops a standard for the quality systems in environmental laboratories. The elements of the quality system include organizational structure, responsibilities, procedures, processes, and resources (e.g., facilities, staff, equipment) for implementing quality management in testing operations.

2.1.2.4 *Accreditation Body Committee.* This committee develops the standard for operation of accreditation bodies.

2.1.2.5 *Field Activities Committee.* This committee develops a standard for the accreditation of field sampling and measurement organizations (FSMO).

2.3 Committee Composition

2.3.1 Committees shall consist of:

Committee Members whose votes are tallied to determine the passage or failure of a voting item, and whose votes with comments must be brought to resolution for passage of the voting item; and

Associate Committee Members whose votes are not tallied to determine the passage or failure of a voting item, and whose votes with comments must be brought to resolution for passage of the voting item. Every TNI member is an Associate Committee Member of every Expert and Administrative Committee.

2.3.2 All Committee Members and Associate Committee Members must have individual TNI membership, or must be Affiliates as defined in the TNI Policies Governing Standards Development, Section 1.3.1. The number of Committee Members on any Committee shall be not less than five (5) and not more than fifteen (15).

2.3.3 No organization may have more than one Committee Member at any one time on a particular Committee. An organization is a company, state government, EPA Program/Office/Region, or other federal agency.

2.3.4 TNI will maintain balance of interests on Expert Committees.

2.4 Procedures for Joining Committees as Committee Members

2.4.1 Committees will publicize no later than October 1 of each calendar year the number of openings available on the committee and the interest categories needed for additional Committee Members. Applications for committee membership will be accepted for thirty (30) days after the announcement of committee vacancies.

2.4.2 TNI members or affiliates can nominate themselves or be nominated by another individual to be Committee Members. Any TNI member or any materially affected person may apply to join any Committee by completing and returning the nomination form provided on the TNI web site and entitled Nomination Form for Membership on TNI Committees. Instructions for returning the completed form to TNI are also provided.

2.4.3 Nominees must be able to:

- Represent an affected party or stakeholder;
- Cooperate effectively with other affected parties or stakeholders;
- Communicate with affected parties or stakeholders;
- Commit a significant amount of time over a multi-year period;
- Understand the technical and/or policy issues pertaining to national environmental laboratory accreditation; and
- Contribute substantively to the issues assigned to the Committee.

2.4.4 No individual may serve as a Committee Member on more than one Expert Committee concurrently.

- 2.4.5 Every nominee must declare one interest category as described in the TNI Policies Governing Standards Development. The declared interest category will be confirmed by the Chair of the TNI Board of Directors with the concurrence of the Board of Directors, before the nomination may move forward for consideration by the Committee Members.
- 2.4.6 Upon receipt of a nomination form, TNI staff will review the form to verify that the information is complete and sufficient for the committee chairs to consider the potential Committee Member. If the nomination form requires additional information, TNI staff will return it to the sender with instructions about the required additional material.
- 2.4.7 TNI staff will maintain a record that tracks the nomination forms received and their status.
- 2.4.8 Once a nomination form is considered complete, it will be forwarded to the chair(s) of the committee(s) for which the individual has been nominated. The nominee will also be informed within sixty (60) days of receipt of the nomination that the nomination is under consideration.
- 2.4.9 No later than December 1, the Committee Members of each Committee will identify any new Committee Members who are to be appointed the following calendar year, and will recommend their appointment to the Chair of the TNI Board of Directors.
- 2.4.10 Appointments of Committee Members will be confirmed by the Chair of the TNI Board of Directors, and will normally become effective on January 1. If openings exist on a committee, new Committee Members may be appointed at any time during the year, such appointment being immediately effective, and having a term beginning on January 1 of the year the individual joined the committee.
- 2.4.11 Committee Member nominees will be informed about the disposition of their nomination at the time new committee lists are posted on the TNI website (December - January). An individual not selected to join a Committee as a Committee Member may participate as an Associate Committee Member.
- 2.4.12 Committees will publicize, on the TNI website, the number of openings available on the committee and the interest categories needed/desired for additional Committee Members.
- 2.5 Committee Members Terms of Appointment**
- 2.5.1 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 nominated for a second three-year term, but no member may serve more than two (2) three-year terms consecutively. If a member resigns before his/her term of appointment is complete, the Committee Chair may nominate another individual from the same or another organization to complete the resigning member's term.
- 2.5.2 Any Committee Member who changes employment during his or her term of office must again declare one interest category (as defined in the Policies Governing Standards Development). In the case of an Expert Committee, if the criteria for balance (Policies Governing Standards Development) are no longer met, the

Committee Member will be removed from the Expert Committee unless balance can be re-established by immediately appointing one or more new Committee Members. In addition, any Committee Member who does not continue to meet the requirements of Section 2.4.3 (above) will be removed from the Committee.

- 2.5.3 Members of the TNI Board of Directors may serve as Committee Members on any Committee.
- 2.5.4 Any Committee Member who is absent from three (3) successive meetings of the Committee (including telephone conferences) or who is absent from at least 50% of the meetings in a six month period will, on the recommendation of the Committee Chair, be removed by the Chair of the TNI Board of Directors with concurrence of the Board of Directors as a Committee Member. It is permissible to hold closed meetings when matters relating to the removal of a member are discussed.
- 2.5.5 For an official vote of a Committee to pass, a two thirds majority of the members must vote in favor of the item.
- 2.5.6 In order for a Committee Member to be eligible to vote at the committee level, an individual must have been a Committee Member of the Committee continuously during the three-month period preceding the vote. Any Expert Committee Member who does not participate in any three (3) consecutive committee votes on a Voting Draft Standard will be removed from the committee.

2.6 Committee Leadership

Each Committee shall select a Chair from among its Committee Members, and the Chair of the TNI Board of Directors shall confirm the appointment of the Committee Chair with the endorsement of the Board of Directors. After obtaining concurrence from the Board of Directors, the Chair of the TNI Board of Directors has the authority to remove any Committee Chair from that office. With the exception of a newly formed committee, the Chair shall have at least one year's experience on the committee. The committee shall elect a Vice Chair who normally will assume the duties of the Chair at the expiration of the Chair's term of office. The Chair may appoint any additional officers necessary for efficient operation of the committee.

2.7 Committee Charter

Committees shall have a charter stating mission and objectives of the committee. The charter will be developed using a template provided by the TNI Executive Director, and will be approved by the Chair of the TNI Board of Directors with the concurrence of the Board of Directors.

2.8 Subcommittees

- 2.8.1 The Committee Chair with concurrence of the committee may appoint subcommittees on various issues. The scope and duties delegated to the subcommittee shall be approved at the time it is formed, and subsequent changes in scope or duties shall also require approval. An appropriate balance of subcommittee interests should be considered, but is not required.

2.8.2 The subcommittee is responsible for actions delegated to it by the Committee and any subcommittee recommendations and actions require approval by a two thirds majority of the full committee.

3.0 COMMITTEE MEETINGS

3.1 Conference Calls

3.1.1 Participation in all meetings of Committees is open to all TNI Members and Affiliates and all interested persons from the public. Any TNI Member who wishes to participate on the Committee as an Associate Committee Member or any member of the public who wishes to participate should register with the Committee Chair and then re-register annually.

3.1.2 Every Committee will post on the TNI website a schedule of proposed conference calls. This schedule will cover, at minimum, the period from the end of one semi-annual TNI forum on laboratory accreditation up to the date of the next. Notice of any supplementary meetings will be posted at least 5 days in advance of the meeting if possible. Notice of any cancelled meetings will be posted at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting if possible.

3.1.3 At least 5 days prior to a scheduled meeting, the Committee Chair will send out a meeting invitation notice to all Committee Members and Affiliates, and all Associate Committee Members and members of the public who have registered with the Chair (see Section 3.1.1). Accompanying the notice will be an abbreviated agenda, and all recipients of the invitation who wish to attend the meeting will be required to so notify the Committee Chair at least 24 hours prior to the meeting; otherwise, a telephone line will not be made available for that person. Before the meeting, the Chair will send out a detailed draft agenda to all persons scheduled to be on the call.

3.1.4 If a non-responder or any other TNI member or member of the public calls in to the teleconference, the Chair may tell him/her to hang up and try again in 10 minutes. Then, if there is still an open line, the person will be allowed to stay on the call.

3.1.5 During the call, any changes to the agenda must first be agreed on, and the minutes must reflect those changes.

3.1.6 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.

3.1.7 Minutes must be taken and circulated to the committee for comment within five (5) days. Minutes can be discussed, amended and approved by e-mail or during the next conference call of the Committee. Final minutes should go to TNI within ten (10) days after approval.

3.2 Face to Face Committee Meetings

- 3.2.1 Participation in all meetings of Committees is open to all TNI Members and Affiliates and all interested persons from the public. Face to face meetings will include the semi-annual TNI forum on environmental laboratory accreditation and any special meetings a committee decides to hold.
- 3.2.2 Notification procedures for both types of meeting will be developed. As with Conference Call Meetings, procedures will be written for the agenda, approving and posting minutes, and for keeping order during the meetings.
- 3.2.3 Notification and agenda for the semi-annual laboratory forum will be taken care of by the TNI Executive Director and must be at least sixty (60) days prior to the meeting. Ground rules will be applied to the sessions. A facilitator and/or scribe may be used at the Chair's discretion.
- 3.2.4 Notification of special meetings must be at least sixty (60) days prior to the meeting. (It is recommended that committees post notices of special meetings well in advance, since they can always be cancelled if not needed). At a reasonable time prior to the meeting, the Chair will send out a reminder to all Committee Members and Affiliates, and all Associate Committee Members and members of the public who have registered with the Chair (see Section 3.1.1), and will include an abbreviated proposed agenda. TNI members should request travel assistance from TNI if needed.
- 3.2.5 During the meeting, any changes to the agenda must first be agreed on, and the minutes must reflect those changes.
- 3.2.6 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.
- 3.2.7 Minutes must be taken and circulated to the committee for comment within ten (10) days. Minutes can be discussed, amended and approved by e-mail or during the next conference call of the Committee. Final minutes should go to TNI within ten (10) days after approval.