



SOP TITLE	Control of TNI Documents and Records
SOP NO.	1-104
REVISION NO	3.0
PROGRAM	Administration

SOP Approval Dates

	Initial Approval	Last Revision Date	Last Review Date
Committee: Policy	12/5/2008	9/4/2026	
Program	NA	NA	
Policy Committee Review	NA	NA	
TNI Board of Directors Endorsement	12/10/2008	9/9/2026	
SOP Effective Date	4/1/2009	9/4/2026	

1.0 Purpose and Applicability

This SOP addresses processes for managing TNI controlled documents and records, including their retention, access, storage, and disposal. This SOP is designed to ensure business continuity to enable the TNI Secretary and others (as designated) to retrieve any controlled document or record.

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

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

This SOP does not apply to electronic mail messages nor uncontrolled documents.

2.0 Summary

This SOP defines classification of documents and records controlled by TNI. The SOP specifies procedures for custody and control of documents and records, their access, and storage. The SOP addresses revision, disposal, and withdrawal of documents, and disposal of records.

3.0 Related Documents

POL 1-104, Management of Records
SOP 1-115, TNI Newsletter Preparation and Distribution
SOP 1-118, Developing Position Statements
SOP 1-105, Process for Creating Guidance
SOP 1-122, Advocacy Document Control
SOP 1-123, Personal Data Collection and Use
SOP 1-125, Committee Application and Membership Tracking Procedures
SOP 1-129, Development of Examinations
SOP 1-130, Maintenance of the TNI Glossary
SOP 2-100, Procedures Governing Standards Development

4.0 Definitions

Term	Definition
Class	A tier to which a controlled document or record is assigned based on its importance, dissemination, applicability, and need for permanence.
Document (n.)	Any written component of the quality management system (e.g. policy, procedure, instruction, form, or template).
Draft Standard	A standard developed by TNI's Consensus Standards Development Program that has been posted for comment.
Record (n.)	Information maintained as evidence on paper or stored electronically.
TNI Content Management System	Software that is used to create, manage, store, and modify digital content on the TNI website.
Restricted	An access mode of some TNI documents or records limited to designated

Control of TNI Documents and Records

	TNI members, or to the general public after redaction of selected sensitive information by the Secretary.
Uncontrolled document	Any TNI document that, is generated as part of conducting recurring committee and board business, and that is not critical for reconstructing a past activity or to interpret an existing controlled document.

5.0 Custody and Control of Documents

- 5.1 The TNI Secretary is the official custodian of all final TNI controlled documents and is responsible for their management. See Appendix A for a list of Controlled Documents. The Secretary may delegate responsibility for custody to individuals within programs, such as the TNI Executive Director, TNI Program Administrators, or Committee Chairs.
- 5.2 The TNI Board ensures that TNI has systems that facilitate compliance with this SOP.
- 5.3 All controlled documents are securely managed and stored in either TNI's Content Management System or in a cloud-based system.
- 5.4 Obsolete versions of controlled documents which are retained by TNI are identified accordingly. The TNI Secretary shall ensure that a copy of each obsolete controlled document is retained to provide a historical reconstruction of a document's revisions and amendments in a secure cloud storage environment. Obsolete documents are not posted on the TNI Website but may be available by request. Obsolete documents released to the public must be clearly marked as "Obsolete."
- 5.5 Controlled documents in electronic format shall have a unique file name.

6.0 Access to Controlled Documents

- 6.1 TNI provides public access to all active controlled documents on its website. However, some controlled documents are only available to members or provided for a fee.
- 6.2 Appendix A, Specifications for TNI Controlled Documents, indicates the access mode.

7.0 Retention Time Period of Documents

TNI controlled documents are assigned a retention time period commensurate with their importance, applicability, usage, and coverage by regulations. The retention time period of TNI documents in common usage is specified in Appendix A, Specifications for TNI Controlled Documents.

8.0 Publication, Revision, Withdrawal, and Disposal of Documents

- 8.1 Creators or final endorsers of controlled documents are responsible for ensuring that controlled documents are made available to the public.

Creators or final endorsers of controlled documents must designate an individual to carry out the publication and archiving of the previous document as appropriate.
- 8.2 Revised or withdrawn versions of controlled documents must be stored in accordance with Appendix A, Specifications for TNI Controlled Documents. The TNI Secretary or designee may dispose or direct the disposal of controlled documents that have exceeded their retention time period.

9.0 Custody and Control of Records

- 9.1 The TNI Executive Director is the official custodian of all final TNI controlled records and is responsible for their management. See Appendix B for a list of controlled records. The TNI Executive Director may delegate responsibility for custody to other TNI staff such as Program Administrators, or Executive Administrators.
- 9.2 All controlled records are securely managed and stored in a cloud-based system accessible by at least two TNI staff members.
- 9.3 Records are generally not supplied to members and the public except by request.
- 9.4 The TNI Executive Director may dispose or direct the disposal of records that are no longer needed.

10.0 References

- SOP 1-100: Format Guidelines for Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) of The NELAC Institute (TNI)
- SOP 1-116: Development and Approval of TNI Policies and SOPs

11.0 SOP Approved Changes

Revision No.	Effective Date	Description of Change
0.1	4/1/2009	Update to new format
1.0	10/5/2012	Added SIRs to list of Class II documents; minor editorial changes and inclusion of Specifications for TNI Controlled Documents as Appendix A
2.0	7/24/2017	Update due to 5-year review and adoption of TNI QMP. Revised Section 5.2.2 to include Advocacy document
2.1	12/13/2017	Minor editorial revisions from the TNI Board
2.2	05/07/2021	Removed Class V documents, added FOPT Tables, significant revision to Appendix, clarifications based on revisions to other SOPs
2.3	05/21/2021	Editorial Only: Changed definition of Document Class from 5 to 4 tiers
3.0	09/04/2026	Revised title to Control of TNI Documents and Records Revised Section 1.0 by adding records, a new sentence on the purpose, and deleted a reference to PTPAs. Added records to Section 2.0 and simplified the opening sentence. Replaced "Controlled document" with "Document" and revised the definition to be consistent with the definition in ELV1 Nodule 2, but replacing "laboratory" with "quality." Added the term "TNI Content Management System" to specifically refer to documents stored on the TNI website. Added a reference to Appendix A in 5.1. Revise 5.2 by changing the responsibility from the Secretary to the Board and making this apply to all of TNI, not just committees. Deleted section 5.3 related to a list of all documents. Eliminated "hard copy" from the new 5.3, as all controlled documents are electronic files. Revised 5.4 to address obsolete document. Deleted sections 5.5 as being redundant. Deleting most of 5.6, retaining only the requirement for a unique file

Control of TNI Documents and Records

		name. Changed “universal” to “public” in 5.1, added “active controlled” in from of documents, split the sentence into two sentences, and changed “sold” to “provided.” Revised 6.2 by removing a clause about availability since all controlled documents are available. Deleted section 6.3 as all controlled documents are available. Deleted sections 7.2 and 7.3 as these sections are covered by Appendix A and the last sentence in 7.1 relating to documents not in Appendix A. Revised 8.1 to clarify that it is the creator of a controlled document, not the TNI Secretary, is responsible for making the document available and adding a section 8.2 that relies on TNI staff to carry out the action. Removed a clause in 8.3 that would have required TNI to notify individuals when documents are withdrawn. Approved the addition of the new Section 9.0 on records. Made minor revisions to Appendices A and B, including indefinite retention for documents are records such as standards and committee minutes.
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Control of TNI Documents and Records

Appendix A

Specifications for TNI Controlled Documents

Type of Document	Retention Time Minimum	Access Mode
Final Standards	No limit	By subscription
Draft versions of Standards	Until revised or withdrawn, then 5 years after last use	
Obsolete versions of Controlled documents	Until five years after last use	By request
Active FOPT Tables	Until revised or withdrawn, then 5 years after last use	Website
TNI governance documents	Until revised or withdrawn, then 5 years after last use	Website
Interpretation of Standards	No limit	Website
Committee charters, Policies, SOPs, Advocacy documents	Until revised. When revised, previous version is retained for three years	Website
Guidance, templates, manuals, and checklists	When revised or withdrawn, previous version is retained for three years after last use of version by an AB	Website or by subscription
Application forms	When revised, previous version is retained for three years	Website

Appendix B

Specifications for TNI Controlled Records

Type of Document	Retention Time Minimum	Access Mode	Access By
"Response to Comments" documents [addressing comments received when voting on Standards]	No limit	Website	Universal
Meeting minutes for all TNI committees	No limit	Website	Universal
Proceedings of and presentations made at TNI symposia and forums	Ten years	Website	Universal
Reports from annual audits and corrective action plans	Three years	By request	
Annual Budget	Three years	Restricted	TNI Board, institutions requiring disclosure, and others as determined by the Secretary
Financial Statements	As required by Internal Revenue Service	Restricted	TNI Board, institutions requiring disclosure, and others as determined by the Secretary
Third party audit reports and corrective actions	5 years	Restricted	TNI Board, institutions requiring disclosure, CSDP EC, and

Control of TNI Documents and Records

(e.g. ISO, Financial)			others as determined by the Secretary
Assistance agreements	Five years or as required by awarding institution, whichever is longer	Restricted	TNI Board, institutions requiring disclosure, and others as determined by the TNI Secretary
Contractual agreements with service providers	Five years	Confidential	Executive Director, TNI Board of Directors
Personnel files and performance evaluation records	Five years	Confidential	Executive Director, TNI Board of Directors
Proceedings of closed committee and board sessions	Three years	Confidential	Committee or board members in closed session; TNI Board of Directors
Completed applications to TNI committees and boards	Three years	Restricted	Committee members and board directors
Completed AB applications	Five years	By request	Universal except information claimed confidential will not be made available
Final evaluation reports, responses and recommendations for ABs	Ten years from the previous evaluation	By request	Universal except information claimed confidential will not be made available
General TNI business correspondence not already identified	Three years	By request	Universal