



TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Technical Advisory Committees (TAC) exist to organize the Division's technical expertise regarding major commodities inspected and other specific issues/program areas. These committees will advise the Division Director regarding policies and inspection procedures, training materials, visual aids, defect scoring, and other current matters relevant to the inspection of the specified commodity or issue/program area. In accordance with Division priorities and available funding, establishment of a TAC is at the discretion of the Director.

Assignments

Specific assignment of each TAC will be determined by the Director in consultation with Division Management and the TAC membership. Generally, these assignments will involve one or more of the following activities:

- A. Identify and prioritize issues regarding policies, grading procedures, defect identification and scoring, and recommend development and/or revisions to the Director.
- B. Develop nationwide instructional materials with the advice and assistance of the Chief of the Training Branch, for use by all Federal and Federal-State staff who train inspectors in a particular commodity. Specifically, these materials would include a basic lesson plan, associated classroom training aids, and, where applicable, a computer-based training module.
- C. Review, develop, and recommend official visual aids with the advice and assistance of the Chief of the Standardization Branch.

Membership

Each committee will typically consist of not more than six members appointed by the Division Director, and may be comprised of DC Operations and/or Standardization Branch (STDZ) staff, Federal Program Managers (FPM), Officers-In-Charge (OIC), and Federal-State Inspection Program (FSIP) officials. Division staff with knowledge and skills in other areas of expertise will be considered for membership as the TAC objectives dictate.

The role of Chairperson will be assigned to the Headquarters staff member unless the Director assigns this role to one of the other members. To promote the efficiency and consistency of TAC operations, terms served by all members will be indefinite until such time that a replacement is named by the Director.

Operations

Based on the relevant issues, each committee should meet at least once a year. Meetings can be in person or via telephone or video conferencing, as appropriate. If the TAC is commodity oriented, it is recommended that a meeting take place prior to the start of a shipping season. Other meetings may be scheduled as dictated by assignment workload.

Any member may raise an issue to the attention of the committee at any time for resolution. The committee may seek comment on draft recommendations from the Division, FSIP officials, and the industry.

The committee will propose by consensus new or revised written policies, procedures, training materials, and visual aids for consideration by the Director. The Director will, as soon as practical, either:

- A. Approve the committee's recommendations as submitted;
- B. Approve the recommendations with modifications and provide an explanatory notice to the committee regarding any substantive modification; or
- C. Decline to approve the recommendations with an explanatory notice.

At the discretion of the Director and with written notice to each member, a TAC may be dissolved when its general objectives have been accomplished, or if its continued operation would provide little or no benefit to the Division.

Specific Responsibilities of Members

The Chairperson will:

- A. Preside over all meetings and coordinate communications among the committee and between the committee and the Director.
- B. Communicate with other Division Management team members the need for other Division staff to participate in the coordination of the development, formatting, revision, approval and issuance of documents pertinent to their areas of responsibility (i.e., Standardization Branch for visual aids, commodity inspection instructions and standards; Training Branch for training materials; DC Operations for personnel, uniformity and program development; and Inspection Services for financial and information technology).

- C. Obtain travel authorizations for committee meetings, ensure that approved procedural revisions are incorporated into guidance documents and distributed to the field, and provide for the general administrative coordination of the committee.

The Federal Program Manager(s) on the TAC will serve as liaison with their counterparts and FSIP officials in their assigned territories. Federal Program Managers not on the TAC have the responsibility to keep FSIP officials in their territories informed of committee activities and solicit input from FSIP and industry representatives during the development of committee resolutions.

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