

Fresh Products Branch Directive

FPB-102
10/20/03

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEES

I. PURPOSE

This Directive describes the objectives, organization, and operations of Technical Advisory Committees (TAC) within the Fresh Products Branch.

II. OBJECTIVES

Technical Advisory Committees exist to organize the Branch's technical expertise regarding major commodities inspected and other specific issues/program areas. These committees will advise the Branch Chief 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 Branch priorities and available funding, a TAC may be established at the discretion of the Chief.

III. ASSIGNMENTS

Specific assignment of each TAC will be determined by the Chief in consultation with the Branch Management Team 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 Chief.
- B. Develop nationwide instructional materials with the advice and assistance of the Head of the Training and Development Section to be used by all Federal and Federal-State staff who train inspectors in that 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 Head of the Standardization Section.

IV. MEMBERSHIP

Each committee shall typically consist of not more than six members appointed by the Branch Chief, and may be comprised of Field Operations Section (FOS) and/or Standardization Section (STDZ) staff, Federal Program Managers (FPM), Officers-In-Charge and Federal-State Inspection Service (FSIS) officials. Branch 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 Chief assigns this role to one of the other members. To promote

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the efficiency and consistency of TAC operations, terms served by all members shall be indefinite until such time that a replacement is named by the Chief.

V. 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 equipment, 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 Branch, FSIS officials, and the industry.

The committee will propose by general consensus new or revised written policies, procedures, training materials, and visual aids for consideration by the Chief. The Chief 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 Chief 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 Branch.

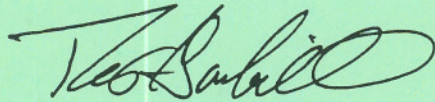
VI. SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERS

The Chairperson will:

- A. Preside over all meetings and coordinate communications among the committee and between the committee and the Chief.
- B. Communicate with other Branch Management Team members the need for other Branch 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 Section for visual aids, commodity handbooks and standards; Training and Development Section for training materials; Field Operations Section for personnel, uniformity and program development; and Program Support Section for financial and information technology).
- C. Obtain travel authorizations for committee meetings, ensure that approved procedural revisions are incorporated into handbooks 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 FSIS officials in their assigned territories. Federal Program Managers not on the TAC have the responsibility to keep FSIS officials in their territories informed of committee activities and solicit input from FSIS and industry representatives during the development of committee resolutions.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tom Gambill', written in a cursive style.

Thomas Gambill
Acting Branch Chief

