

SOC Meeting Minutes

January 9, 2007

Attendees:

SOC members participating included Eberhard, Shing, Kuchma, Sanders, Rix, Deirlein, Aiken, Ricles, Wight, Yim and Abdoun. NEESinc Staff participating included Berger, Pistochini, Heiser, Lea and Whitmer.

Agenda:

- 1) Overview of revised plans (Jay)
- 2) Procedure for quick SOC review of plans that the site identifies as satisfactory. Specifically, I propose that only the person originally leading each site review go over the plan for his site. If issues arise, then the group leaders can participate in the re-review as necessary.
- 3) Remaining issues identified by staff (Jay) and SOC discussion of these issues and identification of follow-up activities as necessary.
- 4) Planning next meeting.

Meeting:

- 1) Berger presented a PowerPoint to describe the Revised FY07 AWP review process by NEESinc. The main points of the presentation were:
 - a) Staff contributors: roles and responsibilities.
 - b) Objectives of Revised AWP's: improve document content, provide better direction, and satisfy NSF and NEES governance requirements.
 - c) Tentative Schedule:
 - i) Staff recommendations to SOC 1/12.
 - ii) SOC recommendations to BOD 1/19.
 - iii) BOD approves AWP's 2/2.
 - d) Overall impression of revised AWP's: better descriptions, improved content, optional activities better justified.
 - e) New planned budget distribution chart presented. Movement of ~\$500k from Fixed Scope to Readiness and Optional Activities
 - f) Tables of outstanding issues: concerns, criteria and comments. Written definition of PMC and EEI categories needed for reviewers to fallback on when questions arise. EEI activities require greater scrutiny than PMC.
- 2) SOC Review Procedure – Proposed.
 - a) NEESinc staff performs the initial review of the revised AWP's and creates a draft report.

- b) The original SOC site reviewer will analyze the revised AWP.
 - c) SOC reviewer will update the draft report to create a final report for the BOD.
- 3) Remaining Issues Identified by NEESinc Staff and SOC Discussion
- a) Fixed Scope Issues
 - i) High costs by comparison to other sites. No NEES sites were mentioned at this time. Staff will work with Sites and individual SOC reviewers to clarify and resolve.
 - ii) Apportionment of costs between MOM and research projects at a few sites with focus on large project budgets at Buffalo. Two issues: 1) Ensure costs not charged to both MOM and the researcher (minor concern), and 2) Are sites charging MOM budget for personnel and non-personnel costs that are the financial responsibility of the research budget (major concern)? One consideration is to create a policy that better defines financial responsibility for research support costs. Staff is currently relying on NSF NEES Operations RFP in reviewing appropriateness of fixed scope AWP resource demands.
 - iii) Plans to use MOM support for research project on non-NEES equipment at sites with multiple testing facilities. San Diego proposes a new non-NEESR shared use project using the Caltrans soil pit. Discussion ensued about using MOM resources by local PI to support experimental work on non-NEES tools. Concern voiced about other sites, such as Berkeley with the shake table facility next to the NEES lab, using NEES resources to support their experimental work on non-NEES tools. Another concern is that the San Diego-Caltrans soil pits are not advertised as NEES equipment to the research community. Consensus reached to not recommend approval of this type of fixed scope activity.
 - b) Required Flexible Scope Issues
 - i) Two sites (Berkeley and San Diego) with high NEESinc administration costs were discussed. Email's have been sent to the two sites for clarification, but no response has been received.
 - ii) One site (Berkeley) with large website re-development costs was discussed. An email has been sent to the site for clarification, but no response has been received.
 - iii) One site (Buffalo) appeared to have a small contingency risk fund in the Safety "other" category for unexpected events.
 - iv) The classification of a PMC activity (shaker modeling) at Davis that may be an EEI activity was discussed. UC Davis has responded they do not believe the shaker modeling contributes to "enhancing" the facility significantly. This is another area where a written definition or policy for the SOC and others to use as a guideline would be beneficial.

c) Optional Flexible Scope Issues

- i) The optional sections of the revised AWP were greatly improved by most of the sites with more activity detail and deliverables provided.
- ii) EEI-IT: IT-focused EEI plans should follow standard software development procedures, be coordinated with NEESit, and be needed at the site to enhance their capabilities. They should not be research projects.
- iii) It was decided to form subgroups for the EEI and EOT issues. Marc Eberhard will coordinate the selection of group participants. The groups will review the outstanding EEI and EOT issues.

4) Next full SOC meeting: Marc Eberhard to setup, date uncertain at this time.