

**BIFMA Sustainability Assessment Standard Stakeholder Meeting**  
**Wednesday July 26, 2006**  
**Draft Meeting Summary**

This document is part of the NSF International standard development process. This document is subject to change and may be a draft and/or non-final version. Committee members may reproduce, quote from, and/or circulate this document to persons or entities outside of their organization after first providing NSF International with written notice of to whom and for what purpose this document is to be shared.

Please go to <http://BIFMA.org/public/SusFurnStd.html> for BIFMA Sustainability Assessment Standard documentation.

Bill Stough called the meeting to order and welcomed the group. Jaclyn Bowen read the anti-trust statement. The group went around the room giving self-introductions. Bill Stough reviewed the agenda.

**I. Review of June 2006 Meeting Summary**

Bill Stough reviewed the June 22 meeting summary and questioned if any corrections/changes needed to be made.

**Motion:** Mark LaCroix motioned to accept the June 2006 meeting summary. Lou Newett seconded.

**Discussion:** Several attendees pointed out that there was a typo on page 2, under stakeholder questions. Bullet 2 and Bullet 3 should be merged together. It was also mentioned that the G in Bill Stough of SRG was left off.

**Vote:** All in favor.

*Motion passed. June 2006 Meeting Summary is accepted with suggested changes.*

**II. NSF and Overview of the NSF Standards Process**

Jane Wilson gave an introduction to NSF, NSF Policies, and the formation of task groups and Joint Committees.

NSF was established in 1944 to develop standards and test and certify food service equipment. NSF was uniquely positioned to objectively coordinate stakeholder input, and successfully attracted other industries to its standard setting and certification activities. Throughout the past 60 years, NSF's mission statement has always focused on the protection of public health and safety. Serving over 40,000 companies throughout the world, conducting thousands of audits and registering thousands of quality and environmental systems per year, NSF is the global leader in public health and safety. NSF is recognized by the World Health Organization as a Collaborating Center for Water

Safety and Treatment, Food Safety, and Indoor Environment. NSF's third-party certification programs are accredited in the US, Canada, and Europe.

Jane Wilson provided an overview of the U.S. voluntary consensus standards system and the relationship of the voluntary system with government agencies. OMB Circular A-119 requires the federal government to use voluntary standards for regulatory and procurement purposes when appropriate.

The American National Standards Institute (ANSI) is a private, non-profit organization that administers and coordinates the U.S. voluntary standardization and conformity assessment systems. ANSI is the ISO member body for the United States, provides accreditation to Standard Development Organizations (SDOs) and certification programs, and provides a process review for voluntary standards development. ANSI's primary goal is the enhancement of global competitiveness of US business and the American quality of life by promoting and facilitating voluntary consensus standards and conformity assessment systems and promoting their integrity. The US government relies on, and uses, private sector voluntary standards. Federal government agencies are required to use voluntary standards for regulatory and procurement purposes when appropriate. State and local governments and agencies have formally adopted thousands of voluntary standards produced by ANSI accredited SDOs.

The ANSI process helps ensure the development of a single American National Standard that does not overlap or conflict with other American National Standards. Through the use of an accredited, audited process, the credibility of the resulting standard is enhanced. ANSI requirements ensure the opportunity for all affected stakeholders to participate in the standards development process.

ANSI ensures due process in standards development by allowing any person with a direct and material interest the right to participate by:

- 1) Expressing a position and basis
- 2) Having the position considered
- 3) Having the right to appeal.

The benchmark ANSI requirements for due process are openness, lack of dominance, balance of interests, notification of standards activity and consideration of views and objections, evidence of consensus, and appeals procedures. NSF standard development policies implement ANSI Due Process Requirements by addressing how NSF ensures due process in its standards development activities, the operation and structure of NSF standards committees, defining at what points in the NSF process required ANSI notifications take place, the numerical requirements for consensus (balloting), and defining the NSF appeals process. Joint Committees are developed to oversee a specific standard or set of related standards. Task Groups are formed to evaluate a specific technical issue for a Joint Committee (JC). Joint Committees are similar to BIFMA's sub-committees with the exception that NSF Joint Committee's have balanced participation. NSF Task Groups are very similar to BIFMA work groups. NSF also has a Council of

Public Health Consultants (CPHC) to serve as an advisory body for standards development and program implementation. The CPHC is not a consensus body and is unique to NSF International. Since NSF publishes many public health and safety standards, the CPHC serves as a means to ensure safety and regulatory compliance. Since the Sustainability Assessment Standard will be a BIFMA standard, this document is not *required* to be balloted to the CPHC.

### **Stakeholder Questions:**

- ***One of the discussions during the last BIFMA meeting was referencing proprietary standards? What is NSF's opinion on this?***

ANSI doesn't give specific guidance on the utilization of proprietary documents. Most Standard Developers try to be transparent and prefer to include documents that are publicly available.

- ***Is referencing consensus-based standards preferred?***

Referencing documents is under the discretion of the Joint Committee. However, for the sake of maintaining integrity, many Joint Committees prefer to reference ANSI or ISO standards when available, and if they are not, they consider other options.

- ***What types of experience does NSF have with environmental standards?***

NSF was very active in the development of ISO 14001. NSF also created an EMS standard in addition to numerous other environment related standards affecting water quality, wastewater, and air quality.

- ***BIFMA's stakeholder group is huge. How will a Joint Committee be able to address everyone's concerns?***

Individuals or entities interested in the efforts of a Joint Committee have several ways to participate- as joint committee or task group members, as observers, or through public comment. Being on a joint committee requires a three year commitment and carries responsibilities such as:

- reviewing and voting on new Standards or proposed revisions to existing Standards,
- providing technical guidance to NSF on related issues,
- attending Joint Committee meetings once or twice annually, depending on need (1-2 days each),
- and participating on Task Groups as needed.

Those interested are required to submit an application and CV to NSF International. Every effort will be made to accommodate all those interested however Joint Committees normally have no more than 33 members. Additionally, these 33 members need to

represent a balance across all stakeholder groups. Also, except in rare instances, each company only gets one vote.

Individuals or companies that do not have the time to commit to the standard development process are encouraged to participate in one of the other forums.

- ***Will BIFMA members get to vote on the standard prior to it going to the JC?***

Absolutely. BIFMA membership approval makes it a BIFMA standard. Going through the NSF consensus balloting process makes it an ANSI standard.

- ***Obviously NSF is investing time and resources into this project, how does NSF hope to benefit?***

NSF does sell its standards, however, its primary sources of income are its certification and registration programs, testing services, and grants.

Anyone can purchase the standards documents (they are available electronically). Certification companies can buy it as a reference document, however they could not copy it to provide copies to their customers. Their customers would have to purchase a copy of the standard document if they want to have a copy on file. Full texts of the documents are unavailable to review online (a scope statement can be accessed without purchasing). NSF standards are also frequently available at technical libraries for public viewing.

The current cost of NSF standards varies based on the document length and technical complexity, and ranges from \$95 - \$325.

### **III. Other NSF Sustainability Projects**

Jaclyn Bowen reported that besides the BIFMA Sustainability Assessment Standard, NSF is involved in several other sustainability initiatives, namely Organic Personal Care, Sustainable Textiles, and Sustainable Carpet.

In the United States, the National Organic Program (NOP) is the federal regulatory framework governing organic food. It was made law in October 2002, and is administered by the Department of Agriculture (USDA). The NOP covers fresh and processed agricultural food products, including crops and livestock. However, shortly after its implementation, the USDA announced that personal care products did not fall under their purview and would therefore not be included under the NOP. This resulted in a large segment of the organic community no longer having a level playing field for organic claims. NSF International was approached to develop a standard for those products not covered under the NOP, namely personal care products. NSF has been working on this document since October of 2004 and is nearing completion.

This group has a joint committee with several task groups- Calculations, Scope, Commercial Availability, Chemical Processes, Definitions, Product Composition, and

Confidentiality. The Joint Committee meets quarterly via conference call and face-to-face as needed in conjunction with well-attended industry conferences and conventions. The task groups meet via conference call bi-weekly or monthly for 1 hour.

ACT approached NSF International to assist in the development of a consensus Sustainable Textiles Standard. This group has been in formation since January 2006. They currently do not have a joint committee developed, but they do have a group of stakeholders who have meetings via conference call quarterly. These stakeholders also meet face-to-face as needed at well attended industry conferences and conventions. There are several task groups– Research, Social Responsibility, Recycling, Safety of Materials, and Water/Energy. These task group meet once a month via conference call at established dates times (e.g. Second Tuesday of every month from 4pm-5pm (ET))

The Sustainable Carpet group is having their kick-off meeting on Thursday July 27, 2006 at NSF International so the exact format they will be using will be determined. Since they have a draft standard in place, it is expected that they will have task groups to address particular issues who will meet via conference call.

### **Stakeholder questions**

- ***Why not just create an ISO standard?***

ANSI is one member of many involved with the International Standards of Organization. Since Europe has many more countries than North America, ISO is more driven by European requests. After an ANSI standard is complete, you can request that it be considered for becoming an ISO standard. However, at that time, the Joint Committee would relinquish control over the document and when ISO is done with it, it could be an extremely different standard.

- ***Can the Joint Committee look to work with international standard developers working on similar projects?***

Absolutely. The Joint Committee is also welcome to review international public documents to use as normative references. Many Joint Committees do this as to not “reinvent the wheel.” Popular international sustainability standards include Eco-label standards, Nordic Swan, etc.

### **IV. Open Discussion on NSF Standards Process and Transition Questions**

Jaclyn Bowen and Bill Stough explained their roles as the Stakeholders group moves forward. Jaclyn Bowen will serve as the facilitator of conference calls and provide administrative support to the stakeholder group and task/work groups. For task/work group chairs interested in holding a conference call, you may set this up a few different ways.

- 1) Send Jaclyn Bowen a list of dates that you (the task group chair) are available for a conference call. Jaclyn Bowen can send out an e-mail with several dates/times to survey the task group members on their availability. The date that works best for the most people will be selected and Jaclyn will send out an announcement a reminder the day before. Task group chairs are responsible for sending Jaclyn Bowen all documents of discussion. Please send all mass task group correspondence through Jaclyn.
  
- 2) If you have a date in mind that you (the task group chair) have chosen offline with your group, please check with Jaclyn Bowen on her availability as well as the availability of her conference call number.

**Please note:** The routine conference call number to use will be 866-740-1260, and participant code: 8275139. The online portion that can be found at [www.readytalk.com](http://www.readytalk.com). However, due to other task group activities, sometimes there may be deviations to this number. Please reference the meeting/conference call reminders for the correct information.

Bill Stough is the project manager for the standard development process and will be involved in the task groups and the full stakeholder group to facilitate the call and maintain the draft document.

Please do not hesitate to contact Jaclyn Bowen ([bowen@nsf.org](mailto:bowen@nsf.org) or 734-769-5139) if you have questions.

### **Upcoming Stakeholder Work Group Meetings**

<b>Upcoming Stakeholder Work Groups</b>	
<b>Date/Time</b>	<b>Location</b>
Tuesday August 22- 9am-4pm (ET) Wednesday August 23- 8:30am-4pm (ET)	NSF International Headquarters, Ann Arbor Michigan
Tuesday September 19- 9am-4pm (ET) Wednesday September 20- 8:30am-4pm (ET)	NSF International Headquarters, Ann Arbor Michigan
October- TBD	
November- Individual work group meetings only	
Tuesday December 5- 9am-4pm (ET) Wednesday December 6- 8:30am-4pm (ET)	NSF International Headquarters, Ann Arbor Michigan
Tuesday January 9- 9am-4pm (ET) Wednesday January 10- 8:30am-4pm (ET)	<b>Grand Rapids- Exact location TBD</b>

***Please note: Individual work group meetings will be planned separately. Please contact the chair of your respective work group or Jaclyn Bowen if you have questions.***

In February of 2007 is the BIFMA board meeting. Following this, the standard will be balloted to the BIFMA members and then begin the ANSI balloting process in April. NSF will be sending out Joint Committee application beginning in August of 2006. After NSF begins receiving these applications, they can begin to identify stakeholder groups that may need to be recruited.

A member of the stakeholder group expressed some concern that the 2-day/month meetings may be burdensome to the regulatory members. Some of the regulatory participants may be involved in a few of these sustainability initiatives. Bill Stough stated that he would work with Jaclyn Bowen off-line to compare regulatory participation and look to form agendas to meetings/conference calls that optimize regulatory participation. Bill Stough added that if there were a time constraint for some of the stakeholders, their time would be more valuable spent at the work group level. These work groups meet less frequently and for shorter periods of time.

## **V. Update on Materials Database**

Paul Chalmers gave an update on the materials database. He started by giving an analogy comparing life cycle assessments with financial accounting.

He proposed the following approach for the Assessment system –

- 1) Start at the receiving dock
- 2) Each raw material arrives carrying all the accumulated impacts that went into producing it
- 3) Each process adds to the impact
- 4) Impact of finished product = Impact of constituent materials + Impact of Processes

The assessment would be tested by creating a “generic” assessment for a 30” two-drawer lateral file. So far, information has been received from two participants. It was suggested to use the following impact categories:

- energy
- air emissions
  - VOC's
  - particulates
  - Nox
  - CO<sub>2</sub>
- solid waste
- hazardous waste
- wastewater
- other?

Paul Chalmers added that the more thorough and conscientious the LCA, the more impacts will be tabulated. However, as he moves forward, there will need to be a way to avoid penalizing companies for being thorough and conscientious. He suggested that one approach would be to load the assessment tool with worse case data, so that if a company were more thorough or conscientious they would be credited for their extra effort. Paul walked the stakeholder group through the excel spreadsheet itemizing the inputs and outputs in the creation of a lateral file.

Denise Van Valkenburg added that HAACP's should be considered under air pollutants. Bill Stough added that the goal of this is to come out with a tool that adds value to the process and works. The document as presented, is in a rudimentary stage. Over time, this spreadsheet can become more specific.

Paul Chalmers explained that if the results are similar across plants then a template could be created with the worst-case values for specific inputs and outputs. From there, a norm can be set and then a company would be evaluated in how they deviate from the norm.

The Stakeholders agreed that Paul Chalmers is still on the right track and encouraged him to proceed with gathering information. They look forward to his continued progress.

## **VI. Work Group Updates**

### **A. Work Group 1: Human and Ecosystem Health**

Denise Van Valkenburg, chair of Work Group 1, stated that the group has made some progress since the last meeting. Work Group 1 is currently working on dividing up credits and proposing language to be discussed during the next conference call set for Monday August 14 from 12pm-3pm. The task group still needs to review the chemical list from Clinton Boyd of the Sustainable Research Group. She encouraged anyone interested in contributing to the list to let Bill Stough or her know. A stakeholder questioned why the work group was not considering using the requirements of Prop 65. Denise responded that 85% of the chemicals referenced in Prop 65 do not apply to furniture. However, she agreed to have the work group examine all parameters that apply to the furniture industry.

### **B. Work Group 2: Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy**

John Shank, chair of Work Group 2, stated that the group is working on dividing their work into three sections.

- 1) Energy performance from building the product
- 2) Energy performance from the actual product
- 3) Energy performance once in use

When Work Group 2 met in June, they discussed third party certification references. He explained that Work Group 2 was making references to documents such as those by the EPA, EnergyStar, etc. They will need to be reviewed as well as adding more meat to the bones of the actual requirements.

### **C. Work Group 3: Water and Natural Resources**

Mark La Croix, chair of Work Group 3, stated that the Water and Natural Resources group met last month. The issues discussed included third party certification and bio-based materials. Both of these issues have a direct impact on the work group 3 is doing. A few members of the work group are reviewing documents from the National Research

Council of Canada. Bill Stough and Clare Lindsay agreed to take a look at creating a new template. Bill Stough originally found this Canadian DFE guide and brought it to the group. This guide is nice because it looks at lower embodied energy products and bio-based materials together. The task group had been struggling for a while on how to treat bio-based materials. This may be a way to collapse bio-based materials into one category. Bill Stough liked the embodied energy approach as it helps to address if the product has a lower carbon footprint. A member of the stakeholder group expressed some concern that some of the task groups appear to be morphing in their focus. This “embodied energy” approach needs to be shared with John Shank and Work Group 2. Mark LaCroix added that this group needs additional participation from the OFM side.

#### **D. Work Group 4: Social Responsibility**

Bill Foley, chair of Work Group 4, stated that this committee has been very active even though they have yet to hold a meeting. Most of their work has been completed via e-mail. Recent correspondence discussed the impact of third-party certification and what that really means to this group as they were looking at giving extra credit for those who had third party certification. Jane Wilson reminded that group that the motion simply meant that third-party certification can be one way to document compliance however it must not be the only way. The standard should neither encourage nor discourage third party certification.

#### **VII. Discussion on Outstanding Questions**

The stakeholder group discussed how to get additional representation from architects, designers and NGOs. Brad Miller stated that through the partnership with NSF, interest could be stimulated. The stakeholder group also suggested additional representation from supply chain people and dealers.

John Shank questioned how much time is expected for a company to be able to implement a program such as the one being created. A few meetings ago, it was felt that the group was not far enough down the road of completion to properly assess that issue. Once the work groups are firm on the design of their section, they can run through and document how it works. The task group agreed that credit dispersal would need to be an agenda item at a future meeting. The stakeholder group was envisioning the following point dispersal

- Social Responsibility- 15 points
- Energy Efficiency and Renewable energy- 25 points
- Water and Natural Resources- 30 points
- Human and Ecosystem Health- 30 points

Bill Stough stated that he would work on drafting formal standards language to address this.

Gabe Wing stated that as the task group draft requirements while economics is important ensuring the credibility and integrity of the document is the first and foremost concern. The stakeholders agreed that this was an important point.

The stakeholders asked when the next revision of the draft standard would be issued. Bill Stough responded that it will be issued periodically and housed on the BIFMA website in time for the next meeting.

Michael Zimmerman suggested having more microphones available for those who are participating via conference call. BIFMA stated that they would supply a phone for the next meeting.

### **VIII. Adjournment**

Jaelyn Bowen stated that she would incorporate the action items into the meeting summary.

Action items include:

- The next meeting will have Work Group sessions
  - BIFMA will provide NSF with a generic outline to use
- Work Groups 1 and 3 are to work together to ensure they are not duplicating efforts. ○ The task group chairs agreed that they would each need separate rooms and separate call-in information for the face-to-face work group sessions.
- Bill Stough is to look to consolidate BIFMA/NSF categories and to think about how we may be duplicating government resources.
- Send Paul Chalmers information if available
- Clinton Boyd and Paul Chalmers are to discuss the chemical assessment approach to ecosystem and human health approach.
- Bill Stough is to issue a new version of BIFMA/NSF standard by the next meeting.
- NSF to send out applications

## **Attendees:**

### **In Person:**

Bowen, Jaclyn- *NSF International*  
Bren, Craig- *Tuohy Furniture*  
Carter, Randy- *Steelcase Inc.*  
Chalmer, Paul- *National Center for Manufacturing Sciences*  
Driscoll, Dick- *BIFMA International*  
Dykhuis, Larry- *Herman Miller Inc.*  
Foley, Bill- *Interface Fabrics*  
Kozminski, Jim- *Haworth*  
LaCroix, Mark- *Interface Fabrics*  
Mika, Mary Ellen- *Steelcase Inc.*  
Miller, Brad- *BIFMA International*  
Newett, Lou- *Knoll Inc.*  
Rauwerda, Laura- *State of Michigan DEQ*  
Reardon, Tom- *BIFMA International*  
Saliers, Anne- *izzydesign*  
Shank, John- *Kimball International*  
Stevens, Fred- *Group Dekko*  
Stough, Bill- *Sustainable Research Group*  
Taube, Benjamin- *GEI*  
Van Valkenburg, Denise- *Steelcase Inc.*  
Wilson, Jane- *NSF International*  
Wing, Gabe- *Herman Miller Inc.*  
Zimmerman, Michael- *Sauder Woodworking*

### **Via Conference Call:**

Earnest, Matt- *Interface Fabrics*  
Jenkins, Peggy- *CA Air Resources Board*  
Lesnet, Scott- *HNI Corporation*  
Lindsay, Clare- *USEPA*  
Rabiah, Janan- *ACT*  
Radulovic, Verena- *USEPA*  
Rinard, David- *Steelcase Inc.*  
Ritchie, Kirsten- *SCS*  
Steady, Scott- *Air Quality Sciences, Inc.*  
Syed, Sharmin- *USEPA*  
Vokes, Kathleen- *USEPA*  
Worthy, Karen- *Global Contract Inc.*