



CALIFORNIA
TECHNICAL FORUM

Operations Manual

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1.0 Purpose

This Manual of Operations is intended for use by Cal TF staff, TF and PAC members, and TF subcommittee participants. It can also be used for edification purposes of the general public. The manual describes how the Cal TF is structured, funded, and managed. The manual also details how Cal TF meetings are designed and run and how the organization's work is selected, tracked, approved, and shared with the public. This document was developed in accordance with the Cal TF's commitment to transparency and to ensure consistency in the collaborative's operations.

2.0 Cal TF Organization, Roles, and Terms

2.1 The Cal TF

The California Technical Forum (Cal TF) is a collaborative of experts who use independent professional judgment and a transparent, technically robust process to review and issue technical information related to California's integrated demand side management portfolio. The Cal TF was created in 2014 by a broad group of stakeholders and is funded by participating program administrators.

The Cal TF performs its work through the:

- Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) consisting of statewide energy efficiency stakeholders, who determine the Cal TF vision, mission, guiding principles, and approve the annual Work Plan. The PAC also reviews and monitors Cal TF progress towards goals.
- Technical Forum (TF) of independent subject matter experts that peer review methodologies, data, assumptions, and values.
- Cal TF staff who facilitate an open, transparent technical review process and maintain a website of Cal TF materials and TF recommendations.

Vision

A respected source of California energy efficiency savings estimates and other technical information related to California's integrated demand-side management (IDSM) portfolio.

Mission

To support the growth and success of energy efficiency and IDSM through a technically rigorous, independent, transparent peer review of California energy efficiency values and other related technical information.

The Cal TF advances its mission by issuing technical information and documents, as the TF deems necessary, including:

- Ex ante measure workpapers and savings estimates.
- Guidelines, templates, and protocols to support statewide measure development and updates.

- An easily accessible and searchable website that documents the values, underlying methodologies, and decision-making of the Cal TF.

Guiding Principles

The Cal TF produces work that is:

- Technically rigorous
- Based on best available data
- Timely

The Cal TF accomplishes this through a process that is:

- Cost-efficient
- Transparent and well-documented
- Inclusive and collaborative
- Strikes a reasonable balance between accuracy, precision, and timeliness; cost and certainty
- Provides meaningful, independent, and expert peer review
- Includes opportunity for regional and national input

2.2 Cal TF Staff

The Cal TF staff is hired through a contract with the Sponsoring Entity. The Sponsoring Entity also manages co-funding agreements with other funding entities.

The Cal TF staff are responsible for managing the Cal TF process. Cal TF responsibilities include meeting preparation, meeting facilitation and meeting follow-up for the PAC and TF meetings. Cal TF staff communicate with Cal TF and external stakeholders about Cal TF work and process, including maintaining the Cal TF website. Cal TF staff also oversees the development and review of workpapers, guidelines, and other tools for new measure development through the Cal TF.

2.3 Technical Forum Members

TF Members review, comment on and seek to reach consensus, where possible, on energy efficiency measure-level savings and other measure-level parameters to produce timely, well-documented, unbiased and technically-rigorous information that can be used statewide in California's energy efficiency portfolio by all California administrators and implementers. The measure-level parameters include energy and peak demand impacts, expected useful lives, net-to-gross ratios, incremental measure costs, and data sources and/or methodologies.

2.6 Technical Forum Request for Qualifications and Appointment Schedule

TF members are selected through a competitive Request for Qualifications (RFQ) process. Cal TF staff draft the RFQ and application review form, and manage the RFP process. A committee of PAC members and/or their designees evaluates responses to the RFQ and recommends a group of 30-35 candidates for selection by the PAC. The applicants selected by the PAC who choose to accept the position make up the TF. Initial TF appointments are for one (1) year.

3.0 Cal TF Funding and Annual Budget and Work Plan

3.1 Cal TF Funding Sources

The Cal TF is funded yearly by participating program administrators. First year funding was provided by the Investor Owned Utilities (IOUs). Publically-owned utilities (POUs) will be asked to fund Cal TF activities after the first year.

3.2 Development of Cal TF Annual Business and Work Plans

Cal TF staff consults with PAC members for the purposes of developing the annual Cal TF Work Plan. This process may take the form of in-person communications or a formal written survey. The PAC approves the annual Work Plan by December of each year.

3.3 Work Plan Progress Reporting

Staff makes update presentations to the PAC at each quarterly meeting. Cal TF staff also highlights major Work Plan milestones met by the organization in their monthly communications with the PAC.

3.5 Work Plan Approval Process

Cal TF staff develop a draft Work Plan for review and approval by the PAC no later than December each year. The Work Plan will reflect input from regulatory staff, PAC members and TF members. Work will be commensurate with the annual budget.

4.0 Cal TF Meetings

4.1 Scheduling

TF meetings occur on the fourth Thursday of every month, except for August and December. Meetings are moved to the third Thursday of the month if the fourth Thursday conflicts with a holiday. TF meeting begin at 9:30 am and end by 3:30 pm.

PAC meetings are held quarterly.

4.2 Cal TF Meeting Agendas

Cal TF staff prepares meeting agendas, to reflect ongoing guidance from the PAC and TF and to ensure that work flows according to projected timelines. Meeting agendas are circulated along with other meeting materials ten business days before the scheduled day of the meeting.

4.3 Cal TF Meeting Minutes and Records

Cal TF staff takes detailed meeting minutes during all TF and PAC meetings. Notes are circulated to meeting attendees within ten business days of the meeting, amended as needed, and posted on the Cal TF website in a timely fashion. All meeting materials and agendas are also available on the Cal TF website.

4.4 Meeting Procedures and Consensus-Based Decision-Making

Both bodies of the Cal TF utilize consensus-based decision making, with areas of non-consensus documented through a comparison exhibit. Cal TF Staff strives to drive the group towards consensus whenever possible. When consensus cannot be reached, minority opinions are memorialized in an official comparison exhibit. The majority and minority documents note which meeting attendees support each opinion.

4.5 Post Cal TF Meeting Staff Responsibilities

In addition to the note-related duties detailed in section 4.3, Cal TF staff is responsible for communicating TF recommendations to applicable workpaper developers after all meetings. Cal TF staff also schedules any subcommittee or other meetings necessary to follow up on TF recommendations, actions, or open items. These communications are essential for keeping work flowing through the Cal TF process according to the desired timelines.

5.0 Cal TF Work Management

5.1 Cal TF Work Tracking

Tracking the work of the TF is one of the chief responsibilities of Cal TF staff. Cal TF staff maintains a tracking tool for all measures submitted, updates the tool as measures move through the TF process, and ensures that the latest version is available on the public Cal TF website.

5.2 Work Prioritization

Cal TF staff uses pre-established selection criteria to screen measures submitted for TF review and prioritize which are put through the process first. The selection criteria are developed by the TF. Through discussions with measure sponsors, staff also decides which measures need further development at the subcommittee level before a formal abstract can be reviewed by the full TF.

5.3 Work Quality Control

Maintaining an excellent quality of workpapers submitted to California decision-makers is of utmost importance to Cal TF stakeholders. The peer review provided by the TF members is the highest quality control mechanism and is thus central to the organization's model. Templates and checklists have also been created to ensure the desired quality and consistency. Cal TF staff is responsible for reviewing materials for completeness before they are submitted to the TF. The CPUC ex ante team also provides feedback on applicable DEER requirements and previous work done on each measure submitted.

6.0 Document Management

Any materials presented to the TF at official meetings are posted on the Cal TF website. These include agendas, presentations, measure abstracts or workpapers, as well as the subsequent meeting notes. Cal TF templates, checklists, and other tools related to developing savings estimates are also maintained on the website. Other documents submitted to the Cal TF by TF and PAC members, program administrator staff, other stakeholders, and the general public are maintained by the Cal TF staff. These items may include e-mail memorandums, preliminary measure analyses, and working drafts of documents.

8.0 Subcommittees

8.1 Subcommittee Participants

Subcommittee participants are drawn from TF members who volunteer to serve on standing or one-off subcommittees, respondents to the TF RFQ who were selected to make up a roster of qualified subcommittee participants, and other qualified individuals recommended by TF members or identified by TF staff.

8.2 Membership

Cal TF staff strives to have at least two TF members as active participants of each subcommittee.

8.3 Cal TF Staff Role

Cal TF staff is responsible for tracking open items that need to be addressed by subcommittees and managing the logistics of the subcommittee process. Technical Cal TF staff also reviews measure documents for completion as they move through the process.

8.4 Meeting Scheduling

If staff and workpaper sponsors deem any given measure to need more discussion and development before a formal abstract can be submitted to the TF, a subcommittee can be convened to aid in this process. In addition, if review by the full TF of an abstract or workpaper cannot lead to approval for the measure to

move to the next step in the process, staff can also be asked to convene a subcommittee.

Subcommittee meetings are held via teleconference and last no longer than two hours.

8.5 Meeting Minutes and Materials

Given the considerable resources required for detailed minute preparation, staff only takes notes of action and open items during subcommittee meetings. These notes always memorialize recommendations, suggested methodologies and data sources, differences in opinions, and action items agreed upon by meeting attendees. Notes are circulated to subcommittee members within ten business days and posted to the Cal TF website in a timely fashion.

9.0 Communications

9.1 Communications with the Policy Advisory Committee

Staff updates the PAC during quarterly meetings on progress towards goals, and also communicates to PAC members as needed in between PAC meetings. These updates may include information on measures currently under review or just approved by the TF, progress on the annual Work Plan, and other developments related to Cal TF's mission and Work Plan.

9.2 Communications with the Technical Forum

Cal TF staff sends emails notifying TF members when meeting materials are posted on the Cal TF website; these emails are distributed at least ten business days before each TF meeting. Cal TF staff also communicates on a one-on-one basis with TF members as individual needs arise.

9.3 Communications with the Public

Cal TF staff maintains a mailing list of members of the general public who express interest in the organization's activities. The mailing list is notified of upcoming TF meetings.

10. Data Confidentiality

The Cal TF adheres to all data confidentiality rules set forth by the California Public Utilities Commission and any further guidelines required by participating program administrators.

The Cal TF is committed to increasing the transparency and accessibility of California's ex ante process. For that reason all documents considered by the TF are promptly posted on the Cal TF website.

11.0 Measure Development, Review, and Revision

11.1 Presentations to the Cal TF

As with measure workpapers and abstracts, other items to be presented in front of the TF are made available ten business days before the meeting during which they will be discussed. All materials must be submitted for staff review five business days before they will be shared with the TF.

11.2 Measure Review

New measure abstracts and/or final workpapers must be submitted to Cal TF staff 15 business days before the TF meeting during which they are to be reviewed. Staff reviews submissions for completeness and alignment with Cal TF guidelines and requirements. In the case of measures that have already been discussed by the TF or subcommittees, staff also ensures that developers have been responsive to all feedback, including comments from CPUC Staff and contractors.

11.3 CPUC Staff input on Abstracts/Workpapers

Cal TF staff will maintain close and ongoing communication with CPUC staff to keep staff apprised of Cal TF work and give staff the opportunity to guide Cal TF and/or provide input on workpapers and other Cal TF work. Cal TF staff will seek CPUC staff feedback at the beginning of new measure development on whether DEER requirements and prior work has been correctly identified. Cal TF will also seek CPUC staff input on draft workpapers prior to the workpapers being finalized by the TF.

11.4 Measure Posting to the Cal TF Website

Measures approved by the TF are to be posted to the Cal TF website. TF approval of a measure and the subsequent posting to the website does not necessarily mean that the measure has been approved for inclusion in California's energy efficiency portfolios. Program Administrators must still submit the measure to the applicable decision-making entity: the California Public Utilities Commission for IOUs and individual Governing Boards for POUs.

11.5 DEER Requirements

Cal TF staff has worked with CPUC Staff to identify and memorialize DEER requirements and Commission expectations so as to ensure that measures approved by the Cal TF are consistent with DEER requirements. This very important work is ongoing, but the most current results are available on the Cal TF website. All measures submitted for TF review are expected to abide by the requirements outlined in Cal TF DEER-related documents.