

# MEMORANDUM

To: NFPA TC and TCC Members, and  
Participants in the NFPA Codes and Standards Making System

From: Casey Grant  
Secretary, NFPA Standards Council

Date: 19 March 2004

Subject: Consolidation of Fall Meeting into the World Safety Conference and Exposition®

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At its meeting earlier this month, the NFPA Board of Directors voted to approve the consolidation of the Fall Education Conference into the World Safety Conference & Exposition® (WSCE), starting in 2005. Meanwhile, NFPA's 2004 WSCE will take place May 23-26 in Salt Lake City, and the 2004 Fall Education Conference will take place November 13-17 in Miami Beach.

This move will allow Association business to be carried out in one primary membership meeting in 2005 and beyond, eliminating the need for attendance at two meetings. Most NFPA TC Projects will not notice significant change, since we will continue to have two revision cycles each year, although now with a single Technical Committee Report Session.

Also voted by the board was to change the annual meeting month from May to June, effective in 2005. This will allow more review time for the codes and standards-making process, and it provides more flexibility in selecting sites since May is traditionally a difficult month to schedule large conferences like the NFPA Annual Meeting.

The NFPA Board passed several motions and approved revisions to various NFPA procedures that directly relate to this initiative. In addition to moving the Annual Meeting from May to June starting in 2005, the Board also took the following actions affecting the codes and standards process:

- ? Approved a new revised version of the "Regulations Governing Committee Projects," to be effective for all NFPA documents entering the Fall 2005 and all subsequent revision cycles. The current "Regulations Governing Committee Projects" (approved by the Board October 1996 and amended November 2003) remains in effect for all NFPA documents being processed in the May 2005 and preceding revision cycles.
- ? Approved a new revised version of the "Convention Rules," to be effective for all NFPA documents entering the Fall 2005 and all subsequent revision cycles. The current "Convention Rules" (approved by the Board September 1993 and amended November 2002, and further amended below) remains in effect for all NFPA documents being processed in the May 2005 and preceding revision cycles.

- ? In the current “Convention Rules” (approved by the Board September 1993 and amended November 2002), make the following revision, effectively immediately:  
*“8. **Limit or Extend Debate.** Each speaker ~~is allowed ten minutes~~ shall be limited to five minutes, or such other time as the Presiding officer, in consideration of the available time, may designate, to present their arguments.”*

This memorandum is part of the process of communicating this information to all participants in the NFPA codes and standards making system. Numerous steps are being planned, including postings on the NFPA website, articles in NFPA Update & Journal, TC/TCC presentation materials prepared for staff liaisons, and presentations at upcoming Association meetings. Thus, further details will be forthcoming in these multiple venues.

In addition, the printed copy of the 2004 Annual Directory will be available this year in May, and was intentionally held pending the full consideration of this initiative. Meanwhile, however, the current and revised Regulations, current and revised Convention Rules, updated Revision Cycle Schedules, and other applicable information are now available on the NFPA website at <http://www.nfpa.org/Codes/NFPADirectory.asp>.

Thanks for all your continued interest and patience as we work toward presenting the details of these important changes.

c: M. Brodoff, C. Brown, M. Coloian, A. Cote, L. Nisbet, A. Sears, J. Shannon, R. Vondrasek,  
Staff Liaisons (Technical Staff & Technical Support Staff)

# NFPA Technical Meeting Convention Rules

APPROVED BY BOARD OF DIRECTORS SEPTEMBER 1993  
(AMMENDED NOVEMBER 2002, MARCH 2004)

The Association Technical Meetings are an important step in developing a complete record to assist the Standards Council in determining the degree of consensus achieved. These Convention Rules, or any part of same, may not be suspended. The transaction of business at Association Technical Meetings shall be governed, in order of precedence, by the Regulations Governing Committee Projects (see especially section 4-5) and these Convention Rules.

## 1.0 General.

### 1.1 Meeting Agenda.

(a) The Secretary of the Standards Council shall, in consultation with the Chair of the Standards Council, appoint a Presiding Officer and shall develop and publish in advance, an initial agenda for each Association Technical Meeting. Such agenda shall generally include those Technical Committee Reports due for presentation to the assembly in accordance with the schedules for reporting of NFPA documents that have been approved by the Standards Council.

(b) Following the certification of motions in accordance with 2.0, the Secretary shall publish an updated agenda reflecting the removal of Technical Committee Reports from the agenda in accordance with 4-5.7 of the Regulations.

1.2 Meeting Sessions. At the discretion of the Secretary, the meeting may take place in a single session or may be divided into more than one session. All items on the agenda scheduled for consideration at a session shall be completed before the adjournment of that session.

1.3 Distribution of Materials. All materials distributed within the Association Technical Meeting room shall have prior approval by the Secretary of the Standards Council. Only NFPA staff shall be permitted to distribute such materials.

1.4 Visual Aids and Physical Simulations. Visual aids and physical simulations of any kind are prohibited. Only verbal presentations are allowed.

1.5 Appeal. Decisions of the Presiding Officer can be appealed except as otherwise prohibited by these rules. The proper venue for appeal of these rules is by an Appeal filed with the Standards Council.

## 2.0 Certification of Amending Motions.

2.1 Appointment of a Motions Committee. Prior to each Association Technical Meeting, a Motions Committee shall be constituted for the purpose of reviewing all amending motions, which have been noticed according to 4-5 of the Regulations Governing Committee Projects, and to provide such other assistance as the Presiding Officer may request. The Motions Committee shall consist of a minimum of three members of the Standards Council, one of whom shall also generally be the Presiding Officer. Members of the Committee shall be appointed by the Chair of the Standards Council or his designee, and may be appointed, substituted, or replaced as necessary to ensure the fulfillment of the responsibilities of the Motions Committee.

2.2 Determination of Proper Motions. As to each Amending Motion submitted, the Motions Committee shall determine whether the motion is proper, i.e., is permitted under the Regulations, and has been submitted by a person entitled under the Regulations to make the motion.

2.3 Restating and Grouping of Motions. Upon request or on its own initiative, and in consultation with the mover(s), the Motions Committee may: (a) restate an Amending Motion to facilitate the making of a proper motion or to clarify the intent of the mover; and (b) group Amending Motions which are dependent on one another into a single Amending Motion. Dependent motions are motions that the mover(s) wish to be considered by the assembly and voted on as single up or down package. In addition to the foregoing the Motions Committee may take such other actions or make such other recommendations as will facilitate the fair and efficient consideration of motions within the available time.

2.4 Multiple Notices for a Single Motion. The Motions Committee shall generally treat any motion that has been noticed by more than one person as a single motion. In such a case, any of the persons giving notice, or their Designated Representative, may make the motion, subject to the requirements of 2.7.

2.5 Certification of Amending Motions and Motions Committee Report. The Motions Committee shall certify for presentation to the assembly all proper Amending Motions, either as submitted or as modified pursuant to 2.3. The Motions Committee shall publish a report in advance of the meeting. At a minimum, the Report shall set forth each Certified Amending Motion, the person(s) authorized to make such motion, and the recommended order in which motions should be entertained. In addition, the Report may include Motions Committee notes or comments aimed at assisting the Presiding Officer or facilitating the understanding of the assembly or the orderly and efficient consideration of motions.

**2.6 Permissible Amending Motions.** Only the following Amending Motions may be presented to the assembly: (a) Certified Amending Motions made by authorized persons or their Designated Representatives; and (b) Follow Up Motions pursuant to 3.4.4.

**2.7 Sign-in Requirement for Certified Motions Prior to Technical Session.** The person(s) authorized in the Motions Committee Report to make a Certified Amending Motion or his or her Designated Representative (see Regulations at 4-6.5(c)) shall appear in person and sign in at the designated location in the meeting registration area, as soon as possible after the opening of the registration for the meeting but no later than one hour before the beginning of the Technical Session at which a Certified Amending Motion is scheduled for consideration. Any motion, as to which an authorized maker of the motion has not signed in, may not be considered by the assembly as a Certified Amending Motion. A Final List of Certified Amending Motions shall be created reflecting the remaining Certified Amending Motions for consideration of the assembly. At the discretion of the Presiding Officer or his or her designee, the sign-in requirement may be waived or the failure to sign-in excused.

### **3.0 Conduct of the Session.**

**3.1 General.** In conducting the session, the Presiding Officer shall have discretion to manage the session so as to maintain an orderly debate and maximize broad participation within the available time limits. Where these rules do not govern, Roberts Rules shall serve as a guide but are not binding on the Presiding Officer in conducting the session.

**3.2 Call for Orders of the Day.** Any change to the published agenda is to be announced by the Presiding Officer at the commencement of the session.

**3.3 Voting on Motions.** Except as otherwise provided in these rules, the vote on motions shall be taken by a show of hands. If the Presiding Officer is uncertain of the result of the vote, he or she can order a counting of the vote. A motion that the vote be counted is allowed, and requires a majority vote of those present.

### **3.4 Debate of Main and Amending Motions.**

**3.4.1 General.** Subject to the broad discretion of the Presiding officer, the debate for each Main Motion and related Amending Motions shall generally be conducted according to this section.

**3.4.2 Main Motions.** Main motions shall be motions to adopt a Technical Committee Report on a proposed NFPA Document. All main motions shall have been placed on the agenda in advance of the Meeting in accordance with 1-1. Main motions do not require a seconder.

**3.4.3 Consideration of Certified Motions.** Following each Main Motion, the Presiding Officer shall open the floor to related motions from the final list of Certified Amending Motions, which, subject to the discretion of the Presiding Officer, shall generally be entertained in the order in which they appear on the List. A Certified Amending Motion shall require one seconder.

**3.4.4 Follow Up Amending Motions.** Upon completion of action on all certified motions related to an NFPA document, the Presiding Officer shall entertain any Follow -Up Motions. A Follow Up Motion is a motion that becomes necessary as a result of a previous successful Amending Motion. A motion to return a document or to return a portion of a document, affected by a previous successful amending motion, is always in order as a follow-up motion as long as it is not repetitious. The Presiding Officer shall make the determination whether a motion is a proper follow-up motion. A follow-up motion shall require two seconds.

### **3.4.5 Time to Debate Each Motion.**

**3.4.5.1 Amending Motions.** Following the making and seconding of the motion, the debate shall proceed in accordance with 3.5.5.2 unless the Presiding Officer authorizes a different procedure in accordance with section 3.5.6.

**3.4.5.2 Time Restrictions.** The maker of the motion shall have five minutes to speak in favor of the motion.

**3.4.5.3 Rebuttal.** Thereafter, the Presiding Officer shall recognize speakers alternating, to the extent practicable, between those against and those that favor the motion. Each speaker shall be limited to five minutes or such other time as the Presiding Officer, in consideration of the available time, may designate.

**3.4.6 Guidelines for the Presiding Officer.** The Presiding Officer shall have broad discretion in managing the debate to ensure that the issues are as fully debated as possible within the available time. Without limiting that discretion, the Presiding Officer should give consideration to implementing one or more of the following guidelines:

(a) The Presiding Officer should generally refrain from calling on the same person more than once unless it appears that no others are available to speak to a position.

(b) The maker of the motion and the presenter of the report or his designee shall generally be afforded three minutes each at the close of the debate for closing remarks.

(c) The Presiding Officer may limit or disallow debate that is repetitive or not relevant to the motion.

(d) Where appropriate, and in order to encourage debaters to coordinate their presentations or to ensure that both sides are afforded equal time without affording undue time to any one speaker, or to save time where it appears that many more wish to speak to one side of an issue than the other, the Presiding Officer may allocate time to each side in groups or allow a side wishing to make a presentation as a group to yield additional time to one speaker. Participants are encouraged to coordinate such requests with the Presiding Officer in advance of the session where appropriate.

3.5 Parliamentary Motions and Actions. The following shall govern the types of motions allowed:

(a) Adjournment. Adjournment of each session shall take place only upon completion of the scheduled agenda.

(b) Amending Motions. See Regulations Governing Committee Projects at Section 4-5 (especially 4-5.4 through 4-5.8).

(c) Commit or Refer. Not allowed.

(d) Division of Assembly. Not allowed (for rules on voting on motions, see 3.3).

(e) Division of Question. Allowable at the discretion of the Presiding Officer.

(f) Lay on the Table. Not allowed.

(g) Parliamentary Inquiry or Point of Information. Allowed.

(h) Point of Order. Allowed.

(i) Postpone Definitely. Not allowed.

(j) Postpone Indefinitely. Not allowed.

(k) Previous Question. Requires a second and two-thirds vote of those present. For informational purposes prior to the vote, the Presiding Officer has the authority to ask if there is anyone who wishes to speak who has not spoken and who has something new to add. A successful motion of the previous question will close debate on the pending motion and bring it to an immediate vote.

(l) Question of Privilege. Ruled on by the Presiding Officer.

(m) Recess. A session may be recessed at any time at the discretion of the Presiding Officer. A motion to recess shall also be allowed at the discretion of the Presiding Officer.

(n) Reconsider, Rescind, or Amend Something Previously Adopted. Applicable only within the period of discussion of the specific document and prior to the final vote.

(o) Suspend Rules. Not allowed.

(p) Take from the Table. Not allowed.

(q) Withdraw Motion. A motion can be withdrawn only by a majority vote of the members assembled.

~~1. Meetings. The Secretary of the Standards Council shall develop and publish in advance, an agenda for each Association Technical Meeting. At the discretion of the Secretary, the meeting may take place in a single session or may be divided into more than one session. All items on the agenda scheduled for consideration at a session shall be completed before the adjournment of that session.~~

~~2. Adjournment. Adjournment of each session shall take place only upon completion of the scheduled agenda.~~

~~3. Recess. A session may be recessed at any time at the discretion of the Chair. A motion to recess shall also be allowed at the discretion of the Chair.~~

~~4. Question of Privilege. Ruled on by the chair.~~

~~5. Call for Orders of the Day. Any change to the published agenda is to be announced by the chair at the commencement of the session.~~

~~6. Lay on the Table. Not allowed.~~

~~7. Previous Question. Requires a two-thirds vote of those present. For informational purposes prior to the vote, the Chair has the authority to ask if there is anyone who wishes to speak, who has not spoken, and who has something new to add. A successful motion of the previous question will close debate on the pending motion and bring it to an immediate vote.~~

~~8. Limit or Extend Debate. Each speaker is allowed ten minutes to present their arguments.~~

~~9. Postpone Definitely. Not allowed.~~

~~10. Commit or Refer. Not allowed.~~

~~11. Amending Motions. See Regulations Governing Committee Projects at Section 4-5 (especially 4-5.4 through 4-5.8).~~

~~12. Postpone Indefinitely. Not allowed.~~

~~13. Voting on Motions. Except as otherwise provided in these rules, the vote on motions shall be taken by a show of hands. If the Chair is uncertain of the result of the vote, he or she can order a counting of the vote. A motion that the vote be counted is allowed, and requires a majority vote of those present.~~

~~14. Main Motion (not applicable). All motions have been submitted prior to sessions as per bylaws and program.~~

~~15. Point of Order. Allowed.~~

~~16. Appeal. Decisions of the chair can be appealed except as otherwise prohibited by these rules. The proper venue for appeal of these rules is by an Appeal filed with the Standards Council.~~

~~17. Suspend Rules. Not allowed.~~

~~18. Division of Question. Allowable at the discretion of the chair.~~

~~19. Division of Assembly. Not allowed (for rules on voting on motions, see paragraph 14).~~

~~20. Parliamentary Inquiry or Point of Information. Allowed.~~

~~21. Withdraw Motion. A motion can be withdrawn only by a majority vote of the members assembled.~~

~~22. Take from the Table. Not allowed.~~

~~23. Visual Aids and Physical Simulations. Visual aids and physical simulations of any kind are prohibited. Only verbal presentations are allowed.~~

~~24. Distribution of Materials. All materials distributed within the Association Technical Meeting room shall have prior approval by the Secretary of the Standards Council. Only NFPA staff shall be permitted to distribute such materials.~~

~~25. Reconsider, Rescind, or Amend Something Previously Adopted. Applicable only within the period of discussion of the specific document and prior to the final vote.~~

~~26. Statements for the Record. Where a person intends to appeal to the Standards Council a Technical Committee action as to which no floor motion is available, a statement for the record shall, in the discretion of the Chair, be in order. The statement shall be solely for the purpose of informing the membership that an appeal will be filed and shall be limited to a statement of the proposal or comment number to be appealed and the action being sought (e.g., accept, reject a proposal). No argument or debate shall be permitted.~~