Review

• Why does the Biomass R&D Initiative Technical Advisory Committee (“TAC”) exist?
• Who makes up the TAC?
• What does the TAC actually do?
• To whom are we directing our advice and recommendations?
• How do we go about evaluating, advising and making recommendations?
• What else do we need to be reminded of?
Why have a “TAC”? 

• Because Congress said so, twice 
• Congress thought it was important for:  
  – The proper conduct of BRDI programs  
  – Getting farther, faster, given resource constraints  
  – Breaking open silos
What does the TAC actually do?

• Statutory requirements

• Reports back to BRDI Board
  – Delivers quarterly and annual reports
  – Participates in BRDI Board meetings (quarterly or as scheduled)

• Periodic interaction with agencies through RFIs

• Evolving activities / focus
Other TAC reminders

• TAC functions under FACA rules
• TAC meetings are public meetings
  – Meeting notices appear in the Federal Register
  – Opportunity for non-Committee attendees (general public, special interest, agencies, etc.)
• Subcommittee meetings are not public meetings
• Elevate public service and collective benefits over personal/private interests and objectives
• Role of the Designated Federal Officer (DFO)
• Role of the TAC support staff
Who makes up the TAC?

• Diverse group:
  – Perspective: academia, government, private industry, NGO (missing finance)
  – Objective: R&D, commercialization, policy
  – Interest/Expertise: biomass, conversion technologies, products, markets (upstream, midstream, downstream)
  – Stage/Phase: from early ideas to steady/growth stage
  – Regional Interests: diverse geographies

• With commonalities:
  – “Enlightened” about the potential benefits that can be realized with a robust and smart bioeconomy
  – Well seasoned in our respective fields, industries, perspectives
  – Willing to “donate” valuable time to the work of the TAC

• All members are selected, vetted and appointed
Who is our audience?

• Statutorily: DOE and USDA
  – Specifically, BRDI program leadership and staff

• Other federal agencies
  – Specifically, Biomass IWG and OpsCo

• Congress
  – Considering reauthorization and/or funding

• Administration
  – Particularly a new Administration
HOW do we conduct TAC business?

• Within FACA guidelines & requirements

• It’s up to the Committee to determine

• Evolves over time
  – Have moved from an annual report to a set of quarterly topical reports
  – Provides more interaction with BRDI Board and more in-depth focus on timely, specific topics

• Precedent for holding quarterly meetings in D.C.
  – In most years, have held one quarterly meeting outside D.C., at a location facilitating hands-on exploration of specific sites, programs, facilities, technologies, etc.
Quarterly Focus Topics

• Committee staff and leadership will use each Quarterly Focus Topic (QFT) to plan the Committee’s quarterly meeting agenda.
  – Invite agency staff and outside experts to help the Committee collectively understand, frame, and discuss each QFT.

• During each quarterly Committee meeting, the Committee will break out into more focused sub-groups (e.g., Feedstocks, Conversion, Products/ Markets/ Systems) to discuss the QFT in more granular detail or from a particular perspective.

• Collectively, the Committee develops a framework and key themes/ideas on each QFT for preparation and dissemination of a written brief on each QFT.
  – Reports synthesize the Committee’s discussion in an issue brief, ideally 2 pages or less.
  – All Committee members review and comment and adopt the QFT issue brief.
Committee Process

Phase

Prior to or at Q1 Meeting
- Sub-committees & full committee discuss issues, needs, priorities & resources → Committee consensus on annual QFTs → Establish annual Quarterly Focus Topics

Prior to Quarterly Meeting
- Committee co-chairs, staff, DFO plan agenda around QFT → Identify & solicit topical experts & resources → Finalize quarterly meeting agenda, publish public notice

Quarterly Meeting
- Committee ratifies prior Qtr. Report → Final quarterly report issued → Federal program/agency updates → Industry, academia, agency subject matter experts, Committee discussion, refinement & framing of QFT → Subcommittee reports & initial Committee discussion & prioritization → Committee co-chairs prepare initial report outline/ framework

Subcommittees
- Conversion
- Feedstock
- Products, Markets & Services

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Post-Quarterly Meeting
- Committee co-chairs, staff, DFO – review & technical editing → Complete, edited report circulated to Committee membership → Quarterly Report Finalized for Committee Ratification

Committee discussion, prioritization, drafting → Approve draft report/ structure
QFT Topic Selection

• General:
  – The topic should be highly relevant for our stakeholders.
  – The topic should be balanced in depth and scope.
  – The topic should lend itself to timely distillation into an external communication.
  – Ideally, at least some of the QFTs should be actionable.

• Current QFT:
  – *Opportunities & Challenges for Biobased Plastics R&D*
Best Practices for Full Committee Meetings

• Remember that all full Committee meetings are open, public meetings

• Sub-Committee Co-Chairs generally synthesize and present the sub-committee’s input to the larger group

• Professional staff assist with note taking & synthesis

• Cooperative efforts to hold organized, respectful, open discussion appreciated
  – Recognition by a Co-Chair to speak
  – Raise placard sign
  – Co-Chairs keep a running list of requests to speak/ comment
  – Try to observe the “rule of thirds”