

Network Service Provider Reliability Council Equipment Vendor's Guide to Participation

1 Purpose of this Guide

The purpose of this guide is to familiarize an Equipment Vendor who will be participating in NSPRC Conferences with the mission of NSPRC, its membership and organization, how it functions and what NSPRC expects of a participating vendor.

2 Mission of NSPRC

The purpose of NSPRC is to ensure reliable and cost effective telecommunications service for all end users. NSPRC provides a forum for active participation in the resolution of common problems identified in the operation and maintenance of telecommunications equipment.

3 NSPRC Membership

The membership of NSPRC is restricted to the Network Technical Support Director Level Manager(s), or equivalent of each Network Service Provider.

A Network Technical Support Organization is defined as one which, at a minimum:

1. Is responsible for proactively improving the reliability, maintainability and cost effectiveness of its company's telecommunication network elements.
2. Works directly and cooperatively with equipment vendors to achieve function 1 above.
3. Provides trouble resolution and other technical support to its company's operations people maintaining and administering its network elements.
4. Interfaces with vendors and escalates trouble reports.
5. Manages trouble resolution from the time a trouble report is opened with a vendor until it is resolved and an Official Fix is made available by the vendor.

4 Organization

4.1 Officers

NSPRC has three elected officers

- Chairperson - who is responsible for presiding at NSPRC Conferences and providing overall leadership to NSPRC.
- Vice-Chairperson - who supports the Chairperson and is available to assume the Chairperson's duties if required.
- Secretary - who takes minutes at meetings and Conferences, prepares and distributes meeting notices, and cares for all logistic details associated with the Conferences.

4.2 Vendor Facilitators

Each Equipment Vendor that is invited to participate in the NSPRC Conference has a NSPRC Member appointed as Vendor Facilitator. It is the Vendor Facilitator's responsibility to notify the Equipment Vendor of meeting logistics and help the Equipment Vendor plan an appropriate presentation. In this regard, the Vendor Facilitator solicits issues and concerns from the NSPRC Members in sufficient time to allow the Equipment Vendor to prepare appropriate responses. The Vendor Facilitator reviews the Equipment Vendor's presentation material and advises the Vendor on applicability or upgrades required before the scheduled presentation. The "dry run" copy of the presentation is to be forwarded to the membership at least one week in advance of the meeting.

5 Action Register

Issues that are discussed at the NSPRC Conference, and that require further effort to resolve, are placed on an action register. The action register is maintained by the NSPRC Secretary and is included in the Conference Minutes. Items on the action register have only two statuses - Open or Closed. Action Items are opened or closed by mutual agreement of the NSPRC Members. Closed Action Items remain on the Action Register for one cycle.

6 NSPRC Conferences

6.1 Purpose

The purpose of NSPRC Conferences is to provide a forum where NSPRC Members can discuss common operations and maintenance concerns among themselves and with

Equipment Vendors. Procurement contract provisions or pricing is never discussed at NSPRC Conferences. All NSPRC Members respect the confidentiality of the information they receive from Equipment Vendors. In order to facilitate the free exchange of important operations and maintenance information, the Members do not require Equipment Vendors to disguise the identity of a company involved in an outage when discussing the details of the outage.

6.2 Format

Each Equipment Vendor will have a segment of the NSPRC Conference assigned to them. The only persons present at the Vendor's session will be the NSPRC Members and the Equipment Vendor. No other Equipment Vendor will be present. All NSPRC Members may attend the Equipment Vendors session, even though they may not currently have the Equipment Vendor's products deployed. As previously stated, all NSPRC Members respect the confidentiality of the information they receive from Equipment Vendors. NSPRC places no limitations on the number of representatives an Equipment Vendor may send to the NSPRC Conference. In fact, Equipment Vendors are strongly encouraged to provide sufficient representation to adequately respond to questions that may be raised at the Conference. Presentation by conference phone is not allowed and their use is discouraged. After a brief introduction by the Vendor Facilitator, the Vendor will run the session.

6.3 Schedule

NSPRC Conferences are scheduled twice each year, usually in May and November. There may be some variation to this depending on Conference Facility availability and other factors. The conference lasts two and one half days. The particular segment of the conference assigned to an Equipment Vendor is determined by the NSPRC Members during their meeting that occurs in the preceding March or September. Based on the issues that need to be resolved, a Vendor may not always be asked to participate at both the May and November Conference.

6.4 Location

NSPRC Conferences are held in commercial facilities selected for their value and ability to provide an environment conducive to a professionally managed conference.

6.5 Dress Code

"Business casual" is the normal dress code.

6.6 Registration

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Equipment Vendors will receive an official meeting notice from the Secretary. The meeting notice will provide registration information.

6.7 Audio/Visual Equipment at the Conference

NSPRC will arrange for the availability of a projector and projection screen.

If the Vendor requires the use of a speakerphone so people who are not able to attend in person may participate, the Vendor should arrange that with the hotel. The Vendor is responsible for arranging for toll free access to a conference bridge or for the remote person to dial into the speakerphone so that NSPRC does not have to deal with hotel toll charges. Presentations by speakerphone are not allowed. (Note: Vendors should use the speakerphone approach only as a last resort. It has not, in the past, been found to be very effective.)

6.8 NSPRC's Expectations of Equipment Vendors

6.8.1 Agenda

Equipment Vendors are responsible for preparing an agenda for their session at the NSPRC Conference. However, during the meeting that is convened three months prior to the Conference, the NSPRC Members will determine specific items that they expect the Vendor to include in the agenda. The Vendor Facilitator will convey this information to the Vendor. Beyond this, the Vendor is free to add additional presentation material as time allows. However, the Vendor should keep the operations and maintenance focus of NSPRC well in mind.

6.8.2 Pre-Conference Review with Facilitator

The Equipment Vendor should review their agenda with the Vendor Facilitator prior to the Conference. Vendors will send draft copies of their presentation material to the Vendor Facilitator and invite him or her to a “dry run”.

6.8.3 Agenda “Musts”

Every agenda must include the following items:

6.8.3.1 System Performance Review - TL-9000 Results

Although all TL 9000 measurements are important, the NSPRC has identified a subset of key measurements for each product type, identifying those measurements that are most relevant to the Members’ work responsibilities. An Excel workbook that contains templates for reporting TL 9000 results is available at

- <http://tl9000.org/nsprc/overview.html>. Suppliers are required to report on products that are deployed in two NSPRC Member networks.

Objectives

Each measurement included in a NSPRC System Performance Review has an objective. Any performance which is below objective requires a corrective action plan to be developed and presented at the NSPRC meeting. The objectives are based on product categories and are available on the website above.

Exceptions to TL 9000

In general, the language in TL 9000 will provide guidance on the measurements used to create a NSPRC System Performance Review; however, there are some exceptions. One is the definition of product life. The product lifecycle differs between RQMS and TL. RQMS covers the period that a product is in service (FOA to last cutout), while TL 9000 covers the period while a product is being manufactured (FOA to Manufacture Discontinued). NSPRC performance reviews must continue for the entire in service product life cycle and must not end at 4

MD.

Limited to NSPRC Member Data

The data used to create the System Performance Review shall be limited to the data from NSPRC member companies. The members expect that the current results for each measurement in the NSPRC subset will be presented. They then want to see an analysis of those measurements that are not meeting the NSPRC objective. The analysis must include root causes and action plans to bring the measurement into the objective range.

Data Window

The time span for TL9000 measurements except 'by release' is the most recent 4 quarters. The time span for TL9000 measurements by release are 2 years since General Availability (GA).

Measurement Presentation

The overall NSPRC System Performance Review presentation shall be in a table format. Charts and/or graphs are only required for measurements that are not meeting the NSPRC objective. A supplier may wish to prepare a chart or graph to bring attention to a measurement that is performing at or above the NSPRC objective.

Release Aligned

Some measurements that are categorized by release are "Release-Aligned". Month "1" refers to the first month of GA and shows only the three (3) most recent software releases for up to 24 months.

Distribution of Outage Time

The following guidelines should be followed whenever it is deemed appropriate to split the total duration of an outage between Supplier

Attributable and Service Provider Attributable. These guidelines are to be used by both service providers (in the distribution of duration time on SOTS records that are provided to suppliers) and by suppliers (in the distribution of duration time on outages from “case” records, ASRs, CSRs, “calls in TAC”, etc.).

Delays in contacting supplier technical support, after the onset of an outage, may be labeled as Service Provider Attributable time if that delay is beyond what would be considered as “reasonable”. It is not, however, reasonable to expect that supplier technical support would be contacted immediately upon the start of an outage as internal service providers processes need to be followed prior to escalation to the supplier technical support organization. For this reason, any time in excess of 45 minutes between the onset of an outage and initial contact with supplier technical support (or the supplier’s “front door” call taking organization) may be marked as Service Provider Attributable time. [Initial contact may be the logging of an issue on-line if that is the approved method for initial contact with the supplier to request technical support.] If the time between the onset of an outage and initial contact with supplier technical support is less than 45 minutes, then no time may be marked as Service Provider Attributable (unless, of course, the service provider is responsible for causing the outage).

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Delays in outage restoration resulting from the service providers, inability to provide either hardware (circuit packs, test sets, etc.) or personnel onsite within a reasonable amount of time may be labeled as Service Provider Attributable time. For this reason, any time in excess of 90 minutes between the time the supplier’s technical support requests either a specific piece of hardware or service provider personnel to be on-site and the time that hardware or personnel arrives on-site may be marked as Service Provider Attributable time. The ‘clock’ on this 90 minute interval does not start until the supplier’s technical support requests specific hardware (a particular circuit pack, for example) or personnel.

6.8.3.2 Action Register Review

The status of every open Action Item must be discussed in the vendor presentation. The discussion must include reference to the Action Item number.

6.8.3.3 “Hot Issues”

Prior to the Conference, the Vendor Facilitator will solicit “Hot Issues” from the NSPRC Members and forward them to the Vendor. The Vendor is expected to respond to each of the “Hot Issues” at the Conference. The Members may decide, at the Conference, to elevate “Hot Issues” to Action Items.

6.8.3.4 Top 5 Long Duration Outages

Each Vendor is expected to review the Top 5 Outages for their company. The maximum number of outages covered for each Supplier is five.

Your supplier facilitator may request that specific outages be included within your Top Five Outage Presentation (these may or may not be an outage that the Supplier identified). If so, this request will come a minimum of 30 days before your presentation. The maximum number of outages to be covered remains five – the NSPRC requested outages are not in addition to the five that would be presented had no specific outages been requested.

Outages eligible for inclusion would be all outages which have occurred since the supplier’s last presentation at NSPRC.

Only outages which have incurred with the network of a NSPRC member

company are to be considered. The Top 5 Outages are only Severity 1 outages referred to your Technical Support Organization. The Top 5 Outages are identified and prioritized based on total impact. Total impact is the amount of bandwidth or customers affected times the outage duration. Suppliers with both event types should report the highest total impact of three bandwidth and two customer outages. NSPRC would only like the Suppliers to report on Supplier Attributable outages unless specifically requested to report on an outage that is not Supplier Attributable. Listed below is a template the Supplier should follow to ensure all of the data is captured:

Customer	Location	Product Line	Outage Start Date & Time	Outage End Date & Time	Duration In Hours and Minutes	Bandwidth or Customer Impact	Explanation of Long Duration & High Impact

6.8.4 Presentation Material

6.8.4.1 Format

As previously mentioned, NSPRC assumes that computer driven projector which the Vendor must provide.

6.8.4.2 Handouts are no longer required at NSPRC. Vendors are requested to bring the presentation on memory sticks. At least 5 of these should be provided.

6.8.5 Conference Minutes

The NSPRC Secretary is responsible for writing and distributing NSPRC Conference Minutes. A copy of only his or her session's minutes will be sent to the prime Vendor contact for distribution within the company.

7 Meetings outside of the Normal Conference Schedule

Occasionally, it is useful for the NSPRC Members to meet with an Equipment Vendor outside of the normal NSPRC Conference schedule. This usually occurs to resolve some pressing issue that could not be adequately covered during the Conference or to hear a presentation on a specific issue. This occurs very infrequently because of the scheduling difficulties involved.