Meeting Minutes

Welcome and Introductions
Vickie Gunderson, Designated Federal Officer of the REEEAC, U.S. Department of Commerce

- Thanked the committee for their attendance and for the wealth of knowledge they bring across the Renewable energy & energy efficiency (RE&EE) industry.
- Discussed handout material given, including the agenda and bio book
- Highlighted that today’s meeting will discuss some essentials of the committee, how it functions, and how it relates to the Commerce Department (DOC) and related initiatives such as the Trade Promotion Coordinating Committee (TPCC).
- Noted that everything said today is on the record per the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA).

- REEEAC member introductions then proceeded with committee members briefly introducing themselves and their firms/organizations

REEEAC Operations: Briefing & Discussion
Vickie Gunderson, Designated Federal Officer of the REEEAC, U.S. Department of Commerce

- Through a PowerPoint presentation, Ms. Gunderson first presented an introduction to the DOC. Topics included a summary of DOC’s twelve bureaus; a breakdown of the International Trade Administration (ITA) and the work of its three business units (Global Markets, Industry & Analysis, and Enforcement & Compliance); and the workflow and reporting chain of the Office of Energy and Environmental Industries.
- Mr. Sklar noted that the Secretary of Commerce attended the final meeting of REEEAC’s previous charter (IV), which he saw as an important demonstration that the Secretary recognized the Committee’s work.
- Ms. Gunderson discussed the REEEAC’s demographics, previously committee structures, introduced REEEAC V’s four potential sub-committees (finance, market access, manufacturing, and trade promotion), and provided details on REEEAC workflow and recommendation process.
Ms. Gunderson presented twenty potential (strawman) workstreams—five per subcommittee—on which subcommittees could focus their work. She noted that much of the rest of the day’s proceedings would involve discussing and amending these workstreams within the subcommittees to reflect member interests.

She underscored that these workstreams are a proposal that reflects discussions with other offices in DOC and ITA as well as the TPCC-REEE. These are proposed based on where the USG could use REEEAC guidance and are not prescriptive to the type of advice that could be provided.

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Priority Workstream Breakouts, By Subsector
Committee members divided into four groups (two renewable energy groups and two energy efficiency groups) to discuss the proposed workstreams (amending and adding as applicable) and prioritize the top five workstreams for each subcommittee from their subsector perspective. A designated committee-member for each group prepared a readout to be presented to the full committee.

Priority Workstream Breakouts, By Market Segment
Committee members repeated this exercise in the following four groups based on the market segment served by their respective organizations.

- Association
- Financier/Legal
- Manufacturer
- Service Provider/Consultancy

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Welcome from U.S. Department of Commerce Senior Leadership
Bart Meroney, Senior Advisor to the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Manufacturing, I&A, ITA, DOC
Adam O’Malley, Director of OEEI, I&A, ITA, DOC

- Mr. Meroney thanked the committee for their service. He noted that this is among the most productive advisory committees with some of the best industry engagement.
- Historically the REEEAC has put together great recommendations, where 71 percent of the committee’s 56 recommendations have been fully or partially implemented to date.
- Mr. Meroney looks forward to seeing what comes of this committee’s work and plans to advocate for companies in this sector and help them grow and succeed.
- Mr. O’Malley welcomed the committee and thanked members for their participation. He highlighted several items of interest to the committee.
  - Trade barriers are a major issue for the U.S. industry and a priority area for DOC and all of USG.
  - Tracking trade in the RE sector is an ongoing challenge due to the dual-use nature of many of the products in the industry. Getting an improved perspective on trade in RE&EE products will help DOC serve your industry better.
The White House has renewed regional priorities in this industry, and there are numerous upcoming opportunities for regional engagement through initiatives such as Asia EDGE. DOC will seek this committee’s advice on how to best engage with the industry through these initiatives.

- Services are an important part of the industry’s export opportunities. Digital services are an area of increasing importance, and we hope to work together to better understand these opportunities and how DOC can engage.

- The floor was opened to questions from the committee.

Priority Workstream Breakouts, Readouts

- Ms. Derstine provided the readout for “Energy Efficiency Group 1.” She highlighted priorities and items discussed including:
  - Finance: Expand the workstream item on how DOC can best update U.S. businesses on the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation (USIDFC) to include the committee providing input on how the new agency operates.
  - Manufacturing: Identified the need to identify the best definition of services as they relate to manufactured goods.
  - Market Access: Expressed interest in identifying non-tariff barriers to trade that ITA can reduce, remove or prevent, as well as in advising DOC on market access challenges and USG programs included under regional/bilateral interagency energy initiatives.
  - Emphasized the group would like to better understand how the interagency communicates with DOC on market access issues and how DOC approaches market access issues as they pertain to energy security and other types of security.
  - Trade Promotion: Financing Internet of Things in developing markets. What can the committee do to ensure these markets are looking at these opportunities?

- Mr. Higgins provided the readout for “Energy Efficiency Group 2.” He highlighted priorities and items discussed including:
  - The industry has evolved since the first REEEAC charter, so the title “energy efficiency” may no longer reflect the convergence that has happened. While Energy Efficiency (EE) still represents an important subset of the overall industry and should be represented within the REEEAC, given the broad range of non-generation technologies represented within the EE category, perhaps it should be recategorized as “smart grid” or different term.
  - Finance: Suggested that the REEEAC recast USIDFC workflow as providing recommendations on how the industry can best harness USIDFC to advance tasks like reducing NTBS. On tech-neutral tenders, one of the most important roles is to consider these approaches and how to make US industries competitive with them at home and abroad.
  - Manufacturing: Advising on HTS codes was noted as important.
  - Market Access: Very much in support of identifying NTBs. Assess how to provide resources on tech-neutral regulations and procurement to help countries without resources in these areas deploy technologies. Advising on market access challenges and third-country initiatives are also important. Noted that the REEEAC can have a stronger voice on third-country initiatives if approached it as
helping countries modernize to keep up with global trends rather than doing it to promote U.S. exports, specifically.

- Trade promotion: Provide recommendations on improving the trade lead process and “deal team” documents, including finding ways to use the USIDFC to accomplish goals in this area. Supplemental to this priority, provide feedback on Top Market Reports and the Renewable Energy and Smart Grid Toolkits.
- What’s missing: Intellectual property protections can be put in with manufacturing or market access/NTBs; harmonization of standards to ensure U.S. products are compatible with international markets; and improving information access in non-anglophone markets.

- Mr. Gatchev provided the readout for “Renewable Energy Group 1.” He highlighted priorities and items discussed including:
  - Trade promotion: The group supported the TMR idea and would like to improve committee recommendations on TMRs
  - Market access: Expressed interest in having another session to talk about post-tariff issues with China, how post-negotiations are going, etc.
  - Finance: Noted the group would be interested in a listening session with USDFC to better understand their work. Harmonizing procurement language across countries and better defining key terms such as impact investment to make sure everyone is on the same page. Suggested a meeting with EXIM to understand how targets are put into international agreements and how the committee can help promote U.S. manufactured goods in international markets. Asked if there is there a way to tie in security issues to promoting U.S. products abroad.

- Mr. Smirnow provided the readout for “Renewable Energy Group 2.” He highlighted priorities and items discussed including:
  - The group focused on Finance and Manufacturing topics.
  - Manufacturing: Noted that in order to be a strong exporter, the domestic industry must be strong in general. Enforcement and monitoring of new tariffs should be added to the manufacturing sub-committee. The group was interested in working on improving HTS codes as another priority.
  - Noted it was important to coordinate between sub-committees.
  - Expressed the importance of focusing on how U.S. companies compete in specific overseas markets.
  - Finance: Noted advising on the USIDFC is important. Providing input as that agency takes shape and getting a timeline from commerce on when this input should be given to be useful. Noted that EXIM still does not have a board quorum, so it can’t lend more than 10 million dollars, as such underscored the group should redouble our efforts to emphasize EXIMs board situation.

- Mr. Smirnow provided the readout for “Trade Associations Group.” He highlighted priorities and items discussed including:
  - Revisiting charter to redefine associations as a group. Finance item four (tech-neutral tenders should be a priority topic: should there be tech-neutral tenders across the board?)
  - On services side, helping developers compete against foreign developers abroad.
  - Manufacturing: Need to be strong in the domestic market, so it’s important to advise on programs to stimulate domestic manufacturing.
Market access: Identify NTBs, including not just regulatory barriers but less-explicit practices that governments implement. Advise on future policy trends related to emerging technologies.

Trade promotion: Importance of education. Educating foreign service officers on emerging technologies and having the necessary resources to do so. Advise on improving the trade lead process; education will be a key factor.

- Mr. Gatchev provided the readout for “Financiers & Legal Providers.” He highlighted priorities and items discussed including:
  - Focus on several finance workstreams such as advising on IFC scaling programs, exploring the adoption of standard procurement language, and providing research on tech neutral tenders.
  - Two general themes emerged. Noted that procurement is less about equipment, more about contracting for electrons. Suggested the REEEAC focus on how the U.S. industry be more competitive in situations like IPP procurement and electricity as a service, rather than just equipment.
  - Noted the importance harmonizing standards and being involved with multilateral development lending procurement processes.

- Mr. Chiaravalle provided the readout for “Manufacturers.” He highlighted priorities and items discussed including:
  - The importance that subcommittee chairs share information to identify areas of overlap.
  - Trade negotiations and regulations: Provide guidance on negotiations with China and other countries to include protection of IP and services within scope of the committee’s work. Services is a big part of what this subcommittee’s members do, so its work shouldn’t be limited to manufacturing of goods.

- Mr. Ned Hoyt (Member of the Public) provided the readout for “Service Provider & Consultancy Group.” He highlighted priorities and items discussed including:
  - Non-tariff trade barriers (NTBs) often the result of outdated regulatory structures that don’t follow evolving technologies.
  - Market access can be tough in non-anglophone markets, such as where French and Portuguese are spoken.
  - Focus should be given to procurements that integrate a multitude of technologies.
  - Noted concern regarding lack of adequate staffing and funding of USG overseas and field offices, where better staffing or better technology could improve the timing of trade lead information reaching industry.
  - Improved engagement with green finance institutions, climate finance, etc. to better develop overseas markets.

**REEEAC Leadership Discussion and Appointments**

- Ms. Gunderson noted again that DOC had nominated Kramer for the position of committee chair and opened the floor to comments and nominations from the committee.
- Mr. Sklar, Ms. Thyfault, Mr. Haubenstock, Mr. Smirnow, and Ms. Soos spoke in favor of Kramer’s candidacy for committee chair.
- Mr. Kramer thanked the DOC for the nomination and his colleagues for seconding the motion. Mr. Kramer noted that this is his fourth charter as a REEEAC member, two of
which he served as a subcommittee chair, and that his time on the committee has been a valuable opportunity.

- Mr. Kramer stated that he looked forward to serving as chair and expects a productive two years as an experienced committee during its second charter under the current administration.
- Given no opposition, Mr. Kramer was officially appointed as chair by DOC.

Subcommittee Breakouts

REEEAC members then broke out into four subcommittee sessions. Committee members selected their subcommittees based on their interests. Each subcommittee suggested a chair and vice-chair and discussed their five priority workstreams.

Subcommittee Breakout Readouts

Each subcommittee provided a readout to the full committee.

- Finance
  - Chair: Slav Gatchev. Vice-Chair: Cindy Thyfault
  - Focuses/Priorities:
    - Expand the item about information on USIDFC to include the committee providing feedback and recommendations on shaping the new agency and how it engages with this industry.
    - Draft a formal recommendation that DOC advocates for the swift, full reauthorization of the Export-Import Bank.

- Manufacturing
  - Chair: Paula Soos. Vice-Chair: Jorge Sanchez
  - Focuses/Priorities:
    - Examine HTS codes and provide recommendations to DOC on improving the classifications to better capture industry needs.
    - Meet with Customs and Border Protection and USTR to discuss how the new tariffs are being enforced.
    - Examine the need to better prepare the U.S. workforce for future industry needs.
    - Find a measure of the value of services in the manufacturing sector.

- Market Access:
  - Chair: Mark Higgins. Vice-Chair: David Spira
  - Focuses/Priorities:
    - Fact-finding will be a major priority.
    - There are numerous questions on NTB issues such as what NTBs are faced and what proportion of NTBs are overt barriers versus simply the absence of appropriate conditions.
    - What programs and resources are available to help with market access?
    - Interest in working with the Finance subcommittee on the potential role of USIDFC on market access.
    - What partnerships exist with other countries to work with third-countries on energy issues, and what are their priorities and successes?
    - Interest in providing input on FTA negotiations, including a UK agreement
• Trade Promotion:
  o Chair: Jen Derstine. Vice-Chair: Laura Van Wie McGrory
  o Focuses/Priorities:
    ▪ Looking at training offerings and trade events, examining their priorities, and seeing if there’s room for engagement and repeated interactions to build relationships.
    ▪ Assessing the intersection of energy and cybersecurity.

TPCC-REEE Welcome: U.S. Department of State
Kent Logsdon, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of Energy Resources (ENR), U.S. Department of State
• Committee members gave brief individual introductions.
• Mr. Logsdon noted that REEEAC is an important partner for ENR. The bureau opens markets, reduces trade barriers, promotes energy exports, and attains universal energy access.
• He noted that energy is at the nexus of everything the State Department does.
• The deployment of renewables where appropriate and ensuring energy efficiency are priorities of ENR. Investment in clean energy has exceeded investment in all other sources combined. Energy efficiency standards have existed in the United States since the 1970s, and the energy efficiency sector has long been a major employer in the United States.
• Mr. Logsdon noted that ENR works to open markets and promote exports in this industry, and innovation in the U.S. industry allows this job to work well.
• He noted the private sector is a key partner of ENR, so the bureau is excited about the renewal of the REEEAC charter.
• The floor was opened to questions from the committee.

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TPCC-REEE Welcome: U.S. Department of Energy
Beth Urbanas, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Asia and the Americas, Office of International Affairs, U.S. Department of Energy
Alex Fitzsimmons, Chief of Staff, Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE), U.S. Department of Energy
• Ms. Urbanas gave an overview of the work of DOE’s Office of International Affairs.
  o The office serves a similar function to the Departments of State and Commerce on international energy issues, but with a focus on engagement with other countries’ energy ministries on a bilateral and multilateral basis.
  o She noted that DOE is more technically focused than other agencies.
  o She noted that the office works closely with the Energy Intelligence Administration and the Federal Electricity Regulatory Commission.
  o Ms. Urbanas underscored that DOE’s crown jewels are its seventeen laboratories, many of which are involved in providing technical expertise in support of international initiatives.
  o She noted that DOE staff are employed in U.S. embassies in 15 countries.
She noted that DOE is involved in multilateral organizations and bilateral memoranda of understanding with countries such as China, Canada, and Mexico regarding the joint development and deployment of energy technologies.

Ms. Urbanas highlighted DOE has also provided technical advice and support on the Section 201, 232, and 301 trade actions and served as the technical lead on energy issues in the NAFTA renegotiations.

Mr. Fitzsimons discussed the role of EERE

Her noted the office covers a variety of technologies across the industry. Its primary role is funding research and development.

Mr. Fitzsimons noted that approximately half of EERE funding is allocated to DOE’s national labs. The other half is allocated to the private sector through competitive grants.

He noted that EERE is engaged in a variety of initiatives to address critical challenges in energy security and industry competitiveness in areas such as renewable energy grid integration, energy storage, hydrogen as a storage mechanism, supply of critical materials (such as rare earth metals), and water security.

Mr. Fitzsimons highlighted that the administration has been focused on using challenges and prizes to spur private sector R&D in priority areas and maximize competition and results.

The floor was opened to questions from the committee.

Next Steps

Ms. Gunderson noted that a running list is being kept of upcoming subcommittee and committee meetings. She will circulate after this meeting.

Ms. Gunderson noted that all four quarterly meetings of the full committee have been scheduled for 2019. They will take place February 28, May 7, July 25, and October 17.

Mr. Kramer advised that as subcommittee conference calls are being planned, members should think about the direction and priorities that should be taken by their subcommittees.

Public Comment

Ned Hoyt, a contractor with USAID, noted that in May 2018 there was a meeting at the National Renewable Energy Laboratory. The conference featured 35 speakers from across the industry and multiple government agencies that showcased market opportunities in Africa, Southeast Asia, and Central America.

He noted there will be a reprise of this event on January 9, 2019 at USAID. Information on this half-day conference will be circulated by the DFO to committee members.

Furthermore, an upcoming webinar by the USAID climate team will showcase smart grid opportunities in Africa and will feature representatives from DOC, Power Africa, and the West Africa power sector to discuss developments in the region.

Meeting Adjourned
ATTENDEES

**REEEAC Members**

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