



BSC Committee Report – September 27, 2023

The BSC Team conducts monthly conference calls for all BSC Operators to review program sales and employment, performance metrics, marketing activities and discuss issues affecting the success of the BSC program.

Sales/Employment: The 6+6=12 employment proposal was approved by the NIB Board on 10/27/22 and has been distributed to the BSC Operators. Consequences for noncompliance began on 4/27/23. Since the beginning of FY23, vacancies at BSC locations have gone from 14 to 4. Since last month's report, one vacancy was filled and two employees left.

There are currently 21 managers, 205 direct labor positions, and 32 off-site BSC support positions, totaling 258 positions within the BSC Program that are filled by employees who are blind, visually impaired, or have a disability.

Sales by Category YTD FY23 (through end of August):

- AbilityOne sales were up 4.8% over FY22.
- Commercial sales were up 16.9% over FY22. For analysis, FY23 COCESS and COPARS sales are rolled into Commercial sales.
- HAZMAT sales were up 20.5% over FY22.
- IEE sales were down 5.8% over FY22.
- Total sales were up 7.3% over FY22.
- AbilityOne ratio is 23.8%. Sales reported as COCESS and COPARS are not included in this calculation.

GSA 4PL: NIB monitors the implementation of the GSA 4PL program, with the goal to avoid conflict with existing BSC locations, and that GSA either use the local BSC or avoid overlap in scope. In mid-August, upon Commission staff return to office, their Legal team will meet to review non-PL purchases above MPT and below SAT at BSCs. They then seek to reengage Carolyn Long (GSA) regarding the issuance of a letter limiting non-PL sales to below MPT at BSCs. NIB shared that upon legal review and interpretation, under FAR 8.713, the BSC should be considered and provided the opportunity to bid on non-PL purchases over MPT and under SAT, unless expressly forbidden in the executed BPA. Commission staff were out of office. This request was discussed on August 17 with action on the Commission to engage their legal teams for analysis and response.

Air Force First Look: NIB met with Air Force on August 7. Discussion focused on review of ETS enforcement, reevaluation of an updated Air Force purchasing guidance memo, and additional data sharing. Action on the Air Force to send an existing guidance document, provide data sharing detail, and availability for a follow up discussion at NIB Headquarters. Portal providers, VIT and NDVSB, are both performing block and sub for AbilityOne products. Further discussion to occur during the NIB Conference in October.



Army First Stop: Army's GPC Program Manager confirmed that cardholders are trained that they can shop for regular items from BSCs in addition to mandatory items. Cardholders do not have to shop only for mandatory items and then go elsewhere to finish up their purchase requirement (unless there is a mandatory source for the item - e.g. computer). Cardholder instruction is to first go to the brick-and-mortar BSC on base, then the BSC ecommerce site, then to NDVSB/AAFES First Stop eMarketplace, and lastly to open market sources. Cardholder education will be addressed during training sessions and GPC management reviews. Army GPC Program Manager asked that all BSC Operators enroll in the NDVSB First Stop portal. Roll out continues.

BSC Reporting Site Project: Item level analysis report is in development. Aim to share business intelligence with operators and to supply customers with requested aggregate spend data that many competitors already provide customers. BSC team continues outreach to operators that are manually entering data to onboard and assist in development of reporting extracts.

BSC Director/Program Manager Visits: The BSC Program Director visited Hanscom Air Force Base BSC for the Grand Opening on September 6.

New BSC Locations: The Forbes Field BSC addition was effective 10/30/23, Sierra Army Depot COPARS addition was effective 2/20/23, Malmstrom COCESS addition was effective 4/17/23, U.S. Naval Academy BSC was effective 5/7/23. Other projects in the pipeline will be FY 2024 additions. Hanscom AFB BSC grand openings was September 6.

Upcoming store openings include:

- BSC, U.S. Naval Academy, MD
- COPARS at Sierra Army Depot, CA
- COCESS, Malmstrom, MT

Compliance Audit FY23 Summary: TBD



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ETHICS COMMITTEE REPORT

SUBMITTED BY LAUREN BRANCH

OCTOBER 9, 2023

In August the NAEPB Code of Ethics and Conduct was sent to all member CEOs asking that they sign on page 6 and return to Ellen Najjar.

As of September 6, she has received signed acknowledgements from 48 of the 53 member agencies.

Thank you to those who signed and returned them. This must be on file for your agency to be in good standing.

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The National Association for the **Employment** of People who are Blind

NAEPB Marketing Committee Board Report

October 9, 2023, Board Meeting

The NAEPB marketing committee, including committee chair Joshua Gould and members of the NIB communications team, continue to execute four key strategic initiatives in FY23. The status and key activities for each initiative are provided below.

Initiative #1: Empower Employment

Audience: Members of Congress and their staff, key federal agency leadership, and other policy influencers.

Goal: Educate policymakers about the value of NIB and the work of its associated agencies; mitigate negative perceptions around the value of NIB and its associated agencies.

Status:

Reviewed campaign metrics with the NAEPB Marketing Committee including A/B testing results of “workforce” messaging. Campaign spending decreased during the month of August while Congress was on recess. This caused a slight decrease in engagements. Spending ramped back up in September and will be optimized for the last three months of the campaign to reach goals. Ads for October will be updated to incorporate NDEAM messaging.

Ads continue to run on Google, Facebook, LinkedIn, Taboola, Washington Post, and other premium outlets. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) include signatures, social shares, and clicks to “find an agency.” KPIs to date are as follows:

- 312 pledge signatures (62% of goal)
- 326 Find an Agency clicks (43%)
- 137 Clicks to Agency site (55%)

NIB also continues to send monthly emails supporting the Empower Employment campaign. Monthly themes included economic independence, visiting an agency during congressional recess, and what your pledge means. The congressional recess email had the highest open rate and CTR (click through rate) among both conservative and progressive audiences. Overall KPIs of all emails sent to date are:

- 12,600 impressions
- 785 clicks
- 6.23% CTR
- 12 conversions

Initiative #2: SKILCRAFT Marketing

NIB continues to update legacy packaging with the updated logo. To date, 96% have been updated to the new SKILCRAFT templates. The timeline for the updated SKILCRAFT licensing agreement has been adjusted.

In addition to ongoing packaging and licensing updates, NIB and the marketing committee are working on three ongoing SKILCRAFT promotional initiatives that drive program sales and employment:

(1) SKILCRAFT Products Advertising Campaign

Audiences: Procurement/contracting officers and government/military customers.

Goal: Strengthen SKILCRAFT brand awareness and its association with NIB and the AbilityOne Program. Messaging focuses on product offerings and the benefits of procuring SKILCRAFT.

Status: The SKILCRAFT products campaign launched on August 1st. Tactics include a dedicated landing page and ads on Google, social media, Taboola, premium publications, and Federal News Network email sponsorships. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) include form fills and click to shop. KPIs to date are as follows:

- 115 form fills (115% of goal)
- 1,895 click to shop (379%)

For the month of August, messaging focused on maximizing year-end spending. Going forward, ad creative and messaging will be updated to reflect new product launches and bolster ongoing organic marketing efforts such as constant contact emails and social media.

(2) SKILCRAFT Services Advertising Campaign

Audiences: Procurement/contracting officers and government/military customers.

Goal: Strengthen SKILCRAFT brand awareness and its association with NIB and the AbilityOne Program. Messaging focuses on service offerings and the benefits of procuring SKILCRAFT.

Status: The SKILCRAFT services campaign is scheduled to be launched on October 1st. Tactics will include a dedicated landing page and ads on Google, social media, Taboola, and premium publications. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are still being determined.

(3) SKILCRAFT Product Marketing Activities

NIB continues to collaborate with the marketing committee on ways to further enhance product marketing activities and increase the effectiveness of tactics employed. NIB's product marketing team continues to develop new product launch materials tailored to the specific audience type federal customers, Base Supply Centers, and wholesalers and distributors.

Initiative #3: Social Media

Background: The social media subcommittee continues to coordinate and amplify social media efforts across the NPA network.

- Coordinated with both the social media subcommittee and the larger marketing committee to source employee stories for the #MyNIBStory campaign in support of NIB's 85th anniversary.
- The campaign was initially sent to run on Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, and Instagram for one week, but we received so many submissions (14 agencies) that we continue to run the posts once a week until each agency is featured.

Initiative #4: NAEPB Enhanced Messaging

Background: Based on a desire to enhance the messaging we are conveying to our congress, people and other constituents, the NAEPB surveyed its members to gain additional insight into our organizations. The focus was to better understand how many people who are blind are in leadership positions or have been promoted, the diversity of our organizations, and the level of service/job placements provided. Given the negativity circulating from other disability organizations, the hope is that this can counter some of that messaging and provide our own narrative.

- Updated the infographic with 2022 numbers and elevated creative design.
- As with the previous infographic, once approved it will be made into multiple standalone graphics for a variety of uses and audiences.

Additionally, a small team from NAEPB Marketing is working with NIB to review the new SKILCRAFT licensing agreement that has been proposed. While that work is underway, the current agreement has been extended through the end of calendar 2023.



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NAEPB/NIB Operations Subcommittee Updates as of October 1, 2023

Joint Commodity: Brian Patchett (NPA), Amanda Alderson (NIB), Shawn Spengler (NIB)

Major Challenge or Accomplishments:

- We are still having issues with gaining interest in the subcommittee.
- Still unclear on if there will be any disruption with new GSA change with AbilityOne management moving to GSA Region 2.
- IT commodity items are in jeopardy and NIB is working with GSA on a resolution.

Significant Updates:

- Brian will express the benefits of the quarterly subcommittee meetings and why it is so critical for our NPAs.

Action Items:

- Creation of a survey to identify what NPA/Staff want to get out of the subcommittee.
- Create an NIB this week article on the interest of the survey to Commodity subcommittee members.

Jan/San Working Group: Blake Lohnes and Shelley Foust

Major Challenge or Accomplishments:

- Implementation of US AbilityOne Commission Policy 51.542. Nonprofit Agency Use of AbilityOne Products in the Performance of AbilityOne Service Contracts.
- Phase I: Began October 1, 2022
- Phase II: Begins October 1, 2023

Significant Updates:

- FY23 results:
 - 89 projects renewed
 - Total annual contract value of \$167 million. Estimated 2% of contract to be AbilityOne products. Annual forecast for AbilityOne is projected to be \$3.6 million.
 - 4 Lines of Business: Custodial, Food Service, Healthcare Environmental, Total Facilities Maintenance/Management.
- Phase II: FY24 Projections
 - Lower requirement from \$1 million to \$250,000.
 - Additional 9 lines of business added to 4 existing LOBs.
 - Approximately 220 projects to renew in FY24. Total estimated annual AbilityOne sales of \$8 million.

Action Items:

- On-going collaboration between NIB and SourceAmerica.
- Monthly training calls with SA staff and NPAs.
- On-going compliance monitoring and sales reporting.
- On-going Distributor training.

TAG: George Tobler and Gary Colello

Major Challenge or Accomplishments:

- With the departure of Jeff Papalia, George Tobler has been named TAG Co-Chair (by virtue of being the second highest vote getter in the previous election).
- NIB Textiles Team initiated monthly contract performance data call in January.
 - A roll-up of calendar year 2022 contract status reported total value of delinquencies was approximately \$20 million.

Significant Updates:

- Subsequent data call delinquency totals for FY2023:
 - January 23: \$21M
 - February 23: \$22M
 - March 23: \$22M
 - April 23: \$22M
 - May 23: \$22M
 - June 23: \$21M
 - July 23: \$22M
- As the numbers demonstrate, we still are not making the progress we hoped the increased surveillance might influence.
- This represents the second consecutive posting of this update. DLA-TS, Clothing and Textiles' FY23 is up from FY22 (\$1.62B vs \$1.55B). FY23 NIB obligations are expected to remain constant at roughly \$117M.
- If there is any hope of increased revenues across TAG, we simply must improve performance. DLA rewards good performance with added orders. Conversely, poor performance typically leads to contract/FPL minimum quantities. Especially when programs have multiple sources and we are being out-performed.

Action Items:

- Improved performance is vital to the future health of the NIB Textile Apparel Group.

Military Resale: Julie Cooper and Anne-Marie Wallace

Major Challenge or Accomplishments:

- DeCA FY 23 sales through September 10th plus 5.40%.
- Supply Chain constraints impacting competitive pricing for MR products.

Action Items:

- Supply chain constraints - need for alternative solutions and management of product assortment.
 - Test on moving selected SKILCRAFT items to cross docking distribution method started.
 - Current and forthcoming new items will need to take into consideration supply chain constraints and cost associated with slowing moving inventory.
 - Reducing duplications and slow-moving items.

MAG: No report

Pricing Subcommittee: Jim Kerlin and Andy Mueck

Major Challenge or Accomplishments:

- The Pricing Tool was successfully utilized for GSA R2 APCs.
- The Pricing Tool has also been used on an ad hoc basis for some (not all) PL Additions. Expansion of its use for this purpose will be addressed in the Strategic Price Subcommittee.
- The Pricing Tool will be utilized in native Excel format again for GSA Region 7 APCs.

- Training for use of the updated Tool was conducted September 8th through 15th in three separate sessions. There were also four follow up sessions September 18th through 29th.

Significant Updates:

- The Pricing Tool will be available in a web-based environment once NIB’s new PLP system launches (anticipated Q2 FY24).
- More information regarding the launch and training will be forthcoming.

Action Items:

- NIB and the NAEPB will be re-engaging the U.S. AbilityOne Commission to assess the timeline for their PL 2.0 initiative (replacing the current PLIMS system) and discuss next steps for establishing the two FMP system (Manufacturer to wholesaler and not to exceed to end customer) and integrating that into PLIMS 2.0 development.

Service Level Working Group: Dan Carson and Annelie Eyre

Major Challenge or Accomplishments:

- NPAs have maintained an average of 86% or greater for the past 6 months.
- Q4 year over year service level improved between 10-15 percent.

Report Month	On-Time %	Report Month	On-Time %
Jul-23	86.99%	Jul-22	74.62%
Aug-23	87.45%	Aug-22	73.31%
Sep-23	88.11%	Sep-22	69.56%

Significant Updates:

- In June, the group executed a survey to capture feedback from NIB and SA NPAs to assist in developing reason codes to help identify root causes for shipping delays and help with the implementation of creating a mentoring program among the NPAs. Based on the results, we determined that our focus would be the implementation of reason codes.
- In September, 42 out of 43 NIB and all SA (28) NPAs provided monthly KPI reports.
- There is a slight decrease of the utilization of the comment section. We expect this to improve once reason codes are implemented.
- NPA template checklist is delivered to each NPA as part of the monthly email to remind the NPAs of the report due date.
- NIB is still spending significant time supporting the NPAs monthly to get the template populated properly and complete.

Action Items:

- Reason code standardization to capture reason for delays. We are on schedule to roll this out in November.
- Meet with CPI group in December to provide an update on the reason codes.
- On-going individual training sessions with NPAs on reporting template including utilization of comments field for all orders/lines shipped late.
- Development of a mentoring program.
- Continue to enhance the monthly scorecard format based on NPA.



The National Association for the **Employment** of People who are Blind

**STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT
SUBMITTED BY LAUREN BRANCH
OCTOBER 9, 2023**

2023-24 NAEPB Strategic Planning

Members:

Jeff Mittman

Cindy Watson

Reinhard Mabry

Josh Gould

Kyle Johnson

Chris Lafollette

Lauren Branch

The strategic planning committee met in DC in September to review and update NAEPB's strategic initiatives around our main focus (combined Transformation with Employment Growth) areas:

Transformation/Employment Growth

Continue to focus on obtaining a statutory DOD 1% procurement goal

- Maximize alignment with SA/NCSE as they are the lead on this initiative.
 - o Influence SA/NCSE tactics
- Develop and present a public policy ask for DOD to implement in all their contracts to buy AB1 within their goals and to replicate how DOD considers AB1 as small business for their small business goals to all federal agencies

Strengthen influence with aligned policy message

- Continued investment in public policy? This needs further evaluation
 - o Lobbyist, etc.
 - o Develop limited and focused priority
 - o Explore NAEPB/NCSE collaboration for funding
- Explore amendment to NDAA
- Change messaging and tactics
 - o Strategy for countering false perceptions, allegations and detractors

- Change messaging: We represent “100,000+” people in the BVI community / \$1.3 Billion dollars...
- Continue to build upon survey data and collection that was started earlier this year
 - Continue surveying and distributing/marketing data
 - More direct/aggressive high frequency messaging raising our employees’ voices
- Demonstrate/publicize that we: review performance, goal setting, upward mobility, termination standards, etc. as solution to PCEP initiative
- Develop NPA Tool Kit for messaging
- Plan for influencing A1 Commission draft legislative efforts (rules, regs, policy, etc.)
- Address ratio issues:
 - Surge
 - Scale
 - Compensation as it relates to downward pricing pressures from DLA (textiles)
 - Can we get A1 to count more labor being performed that are currently not? If so, we can add to blind jobs numbers.
 - Potential: flex A1 policy to allow NIB NPAs to hire *other* disabilities – these individuals will not add to ratio, but also will not deduct (net zero).

Sustainability and Compliance

1. Continue to engage with the compliance council and provide feedback on AB1 policy initiatives
2. Develop our recommended list of performance/compliance indicators and framework for program compliance (and obtain consensus with NCSE and AB1) then, in conjunction with NIB, develop best practices to support program compliance.

Data tracking – NIB to provide for inclusion in scorecard:

 1. Delivery performance with goal to include DLA/DOD as well
 2. ETS totals (number and value)
 3. Sales stats
 - i. With agency detail
 4. New projects
 - i. NIB/NPA breakout
 5. Member engagement
 - i. Track attendance at agency level (i.e. one rep at every conference)
 - ii. Track attendance for CEO Retreat
 6. Labor hours growth
 - i. Direct
 - ii. Indirect
 - iii. Upward mobility
 7. Growth
 - i. Products
 - ii. Services
 - iii. BSC

iv. NPA: NPA project support

3. Develop an inventory/matrix of existing performance/compliance tools/assessments currently utilized within the government agencies to monitor/assess contractor performance and work with NIB to create a mechanism to proactively identify potential contract compliance/performance issues.

Align performance requirements with contract requirements – need alignment 4

4. (NIB)Continue to provide input/feedback to the compliance council.
5. Competition (decouple from contractor performance)

Operational Excellence

SLWG:

6. Establish additional criteria for “good standing” to include performance criteria
 - i. Gain NIB buy in and identify mechanisms NIB has or could implement to support some of the drivers of poor performance (ie capital limitations)
 - ii. Help create policy that is included in NIB definition of “good standing”
 1. Enforce corrective action plans as interventions which includes developing corrective action mechanism to include oversight and mentorship
 2. “Jobs in jeopardy” letter from NIB CEO to agency CEO and board chair
 3. NIB authorized to move a contract to a better performing NPA
 4. Potential: We can associate “good standing” with future contract acquisition; not being enforced (Good standing: ratio, loan, full wage)
7. NOT enough visibility beyond GSA
8. We’re not utilizing available data to police and institute consequences
9. Create visibility celebrating high-performers
10. Getting “our own houses in order” should be priority
11. Consider high-performing NPAs opening satellite locations in target areas (rather than new small agencies launching)
12. Prioritize keeping the contracts/jobs in the existing city to limit job loss in particular market

BSCs

13. Line level detail sales submitted monthly to NIB - all agencies - - **This is active**
14. Remote work at BSCs implemented - Optics of remote employees at BSCs are difficult for customers. Hybrid model? Virtual presence?
 - Awaiting response from Commission
 - Remote work introduced as intervention to counter recruiting challenges
 - This is an optics issue
 - Action: review/policy directives to NIB relating to having at least one blind person at stores