



BSC Committee Report – December 13, 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. Below are updates for some of the ongoing initiatives.

Sales & Employment: There are 4 BVI vacancies. Over the last month, one BSC operator had a vacancy created when an employee left for medical reasons. The longest vacancy is 4 months. There are currently 24 managers, 210 direct labor positions, and 30 off-site BSC support positions, totaling 264 positions within the BSC Program that are filled by employees who are blind, visually impaired, or have a disability.

Sales by Category YTD FY24:

- AbilityOne sales were down 4.3% over FY23.
- Commercial sales were up 15.7% over FY23. For analysis, COCESS and COPARS sales are rolled into Commercial sales.
- HAZMAT sales were up 19.8% over FY23.
- IEE sales were down 9.9% over FY23.
- Total sales were relatively flat at positive 0.33% over FY23.

AbilityOne Ratio: The overall AbilityOne ratio is 22.6%. Sales reported as HAZMAT, IEE, COCESS, and COPARS are not included in this calculation.

- 8 of 19 operators had AbilityOne ratios above 25%.
- 69 of 161 BSC stores had ratios over 25%.
- 21 of 161 BSC stores had a ratio in the single digits.

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. 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. This was discussed with GSA during the NIB Conference and follow-up occurred November 27, with the request for further discussion.

AAFES Clothing Sales: On December 4, NIB BSC virtually met with the VP of Hardlines for AAFES Clothing Sales. They are open to cooperation and asked for specific examples of items and frequency. AAFES uniforms come directly from DLA and thus the BSC would be unable to procure unless on hand inventory exists. Teams to regroup to share data in January.

U.S. Patriot Stores: On November 16, NIB BSC virtually met with a VP at AAFES that oversees concessions. Photos were shared of clothing items that were made in China available at various U.S. Patriot Stores. The team expressed concern about the non-Berry and non-TAA compliant items, and they will address it with the vendors.



Air Force First Look: Air Force representatives met with BSC Operators and CEOs during the NIB Conference. AF 'artifacts' were distributed to BSC operators. The recommended Air Force BSC FAQ document was sent for AF review on 11/30. NIB to follow up at the end of December.

Army First Stop: Army's GPC Program Manager confirmed that 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. NIB is scheduling a meeting with Megan Dake, Army ABOR, to discuss and obtain further information about implementation as well as how we can help promote the AbilityOne program as well as the BSCs.

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 Director/Program Manager Visits: The BSC Program Director and Program Manager visited Fort Belvoir BSC along with an NIB Communications team member.

New BSC Locations: Lakehurst COPARS, NJW, addition package is at the Commission. There are 4 other projects in active development within the FY 2024 pipeline.

Compliance Audit FY23 Summary: To be updated in January.



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

NAEPB Marketing Committee Board Report

December 14, 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 moving into FY2024. The Marketing Committee and NIB met on Dec 6th to review.

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:

The campaign ended November 30. NIB reviewed the final campaign metrics with the NAEPB Marketing Committee on December 6.

Campaign Insights:

- The campaign surpassed the pledge signature goal by 7%.
- Progressive ads outperformed conservative ads in part one of the campaign.
- During part two, conservative ads outperformed progressive ads.
- Overall, conservative ads drove 48% of total signatures and progressive ads drove 52% of total signatures.
- Google was the leading driver of pledge signatures, accounting for 63% of signatures collected.
- The ads on Facebook were shared 210 times, which helped spread awareness organically.

Ads continued to run on Google, Facebook, LinkedIn, Taboola, *The Washington Post*, and other premium outlets. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) included signatures, social shares, and clicks to “find an agency.”

KPIs through November 30:

- 537 pledge signatures (107% of goal)
- 607 Find an Agency clicks (81%)
- 219 Clicks to Agency site (88%)

NIB sent monthly emails to Congressional staffers supporting the Empower Employment campaign through November. Monthly themes included economic independence, visiting an agency during congressional recess, what your pledge means, NDEAM, and Veterans Day. 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:

- 14,686 impressions
- 920 clicks
- 35% average CTR

Initiative #2: SKILCRAFT Marketing

NIB continues to update legacy packaging with the updated logo. To date, 98.9% has 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: Federal procurement workers, manufacturing procurement professionals, and Government Purchase Card holders.

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: Part one of the SKILCRAFT products campaign launched August 1. All product ads had unified messaging: "Procure with Purpose. Choose SKILCRAFT." Ad copy emphasized end-of-year budgets for procurement officers and positioned SKILCRAFT as a solution to maximize those budgets and spend them before year end.

Part two of the SKILCRAFT products campaign launched October 6. While it still highlights the range of products, ad copy shifted to focus on making procurement easy and the high quality of SKILCRAFT products.

Tactics include a dedicated landing page and ads on Google, social media, Taboola, premium publications, and Federal News Network email sponsorships. KPIs include form fills and click to shop.

KPIs to date:

Part One

- 148 form fills (148% of goal)
- 1,884 clicks to shop (376% of goal)

Part Two

- 34 form fills (32% of goal)
- 3,120 clicks to shop (148% of goal)

(2) SKILCRAFT Services Advertising Campaign

Audiences: Government customers in need of fulfilling service requirements.

Goal: Strengthen awareness of the SKILCRAFT brand's various service offerings and capture contact information for prospective service purchasers. Messaging focuses on SKILCRAFT's Call Center, CMS, Manufacturing, and Kitting offerings, and the benefits of procuring SKILCRAFT.

Status: The SKILCRAFT services campaign launched October 20. Tactics include a dedicated landing page and ads on Google, Bing, and Taboola. KPIs include Form Fills (to request more information) and Service Link Clicks.

KPIs to date:

- 142 Form Fills (142% of goal)
- 2,208 Service Link Clicks (126% of goal)

(3) SKILCRAFT Product Marketing Activities

NIB continues to update product ads quarterly, refreshing messaging and design to focus on priority products for the quarter

Initiative #3: Social Media

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

- Supported NIB's 85th anniversary campaign.
- Sourced employee photos and testimonials and posted using #MyNIBStory.
 - Participation from 14 agencies.
 - Will continue to run the campaign until each agency has been featured.

Initiative #4: NAEPB Infographic

Background: 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.

- Refreshed and elevated the NAEPB infographic design.
- Updated numbers for 2022.
- Expanded the "More than Jobs" section to reflect training, benefits, and certifications.
- Added a year-over-year comparison.

Additional Work

- 1. A small team from NAEPB Marketing and NPAs 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.**
- 2. A discussion has been started regarding refreshing the Skilcraft brand awareness campaign that was performed previously. Initial step is that NIB is reaching out to potential vendors with RFP for brand research, though no commitment on pursuing at this stage.**



The National Association for the Employment of People who are Blind

NAEPB/NIB Operations Subcommittee Updates as of December 6, 2023

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

Major Challenge or Accomplishments:

1. We are still having issues with gaining interest in the subcommittee.

Significant Updates:

2. At recent NAEPB meetings, Brian expressed the benefits of the quarterly subcommittee meetings and why it is so critical for our NPAs.

Action Items:

1. Distribute survey after New Year to identify what NPA/Staff want to get out of the subcommittee.
2. Subcommittee meeting to be held upon completion of survey.

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: Began 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 was 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
- Quarterly SA NPA training sessions as well as contract specific Q & A Sessions
- On-going compliance monitoring and sales reporting
- On-going Distributor training and engagement of sales teams
- ABOR Training
- Future marketing/educational tools for Federal Contracting

TAG: George Tobler and Gary Colello

Major Challenge or Accomplishments:

- The Textile Apparel Group (TAG) met December 5th and 6th.
- The meeting was hosted by Lions Services Inc. Charlotte, NC.
- A total of eighteen agencies registered and attended.
- As opposed to the large TAG held in Philadelphia each year (attended by DLA, the Services, Industry Partners, and Source America) this version consists of only NIB and associated agencies.
- Best practices, NIB Engineering Support, CPI, Contracting, Grants, and delinquencies highlighted the discussion topics.
- The immediate feedback on the meeting was very positive.

Significant Updates:

- Delinquency totals reflected no improvement through the end of FY2023.
 - October 23: \$25M.
- Monthly reporting transitioning to Sisense starting FY2024.

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 24 sales through November plus 5.07%.
- DeCA FY 24 savings standard 25.6%
- 2024 NDAA – language restricting products made in China is out of the bill!
- 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. Reviewing option of transition to produce house distribution.
 - Produce house alternative test going well. Eliminates slow mover.
 - Considering other alternative solution
 - Current and forthcoming new items will need to take into consideration supply chain constraints and costs associated with slowing moving inventory.
 - Reducing duplications and slow-moving items.

MAG: No report

Pricing Subcommittee: Jim Kerlin

Major Challenge or Accomplishments:

- Training on the FMP Tool in preparation for GSA R7 APCs was completed.
- GSA R7 APCs were submitted to NIB at the beginning of November and are due to GSA R7 1/1/24.
- A meeting of the Subcommittee was conducted 9/28 to review recent activities.

Significant Updates:

- None

Action Items

- NIB will be re-engage the U.S. AbilityOne Commission to:
 - Verify that the not-to-exceed price point was incorporated in development of PLIMS 2.0 (we have early indications it was).
 - Discuss a realistic timeline for launch of the not-to-exceed price point if it is integrated in the PLIMS development effort.
 - Discuss a schedule for supporting activities such as policy revisions/development.
 - Anticipated engagement by end of 2023 calendar year.

Service Level Working Group: Dan Carson and Annelie Eyre

Major Challenge or Accomplishments:

- NPAs have maintained an average of 85% or greater for the past 6 months for non-PE NSNs.
- Year-over-year service levels for the past 3 months improved by 15-20%.

Report Month	On-Time %	Report Month	On-Time %
Sep-23	88.11%	Sep-22	69.56%
Oct-23	85.69%	Oct-22	67.51%
Nov-23	86.73%	Nov-22	66.75%

Significant Updates:

- In November, 41 out of 43 NIB and all SA (28) NPAs provided monthly KPI reports.
- In November, the group executed reason codes standardization to identify root causes for shipping delays.
- There is a slight increase of NIB time to support NPAs' accurate submissions due to the template change.
- In December, the group provided an update on the reason codes implementation to the CPI group.
- NPA template checklist is delivered to each NPA as part of the monthly email to remind the NPAs of the report due date.

Action Items:

- Develop a process to analyze reason code data to reduce shipping delays.
- Development of a mentoring program.
- Enhance the monthly scorecard format based on NPA feedback.



The National Association for the Employment of People who are Blind

NAEPB Treasurer's Report
For activity through November 30, 2023
NAEPB Board Meeting – December 14, 2023

This report is the first report of the 2024 fiscal year and does not include financial statements given the low activity level year to date. The following are highlighted activities:

- Membership dues invoices are in process but were delayed due to an Outlook issue. That issue has been resolved
- The Vision Serve Alliance commitment for the big data project for 18-64 has been paid in full
- The 2023 tax preparations and filings are underway
- We can achieve a 5% CD return for 6-to-11-month terms. I am requesting board approval to initiate the first 2 CD's. I am proposing an 11 month for \$50,000 and a 6 month for \$50,000. The start date would be roughly December 20 for both.
 - With a \$169,000 cash balance before 2024 dues collections, we can invest the first \$100,000 leaving \$69,000 of readily available funds. I anticipate at least 75% or 90,000 of dues will be collected before the end of January 2024 and we can assess the rates of return and cash needs of NAEPB during Q2 of FY24. With full dues collections, we have roughly \$190,000 in cash on hand and the 2 CD's maturing in June and November

Respectfully Submitted

Eric Stueckrath

2024 Priority Issues/Activities for NIB/NAEPB (as discussed at November 28, 2023 meeting at NIB Headquarters)

Objective 1: Secure the 1% Goal for the Department of Defense

We will work to pass a legislative provision that includes a 1% goal for procurement of AbilityOne products at the Department of Defense. Our focus will be to include an amendment to the Fiscal Year 20245 National Defense Authorization Bill.

- **Alignment with Source America (2023):** Ensure that both NIB/NAEPB and Source America/NCSE are aligned around a 1% goal.
- **AL / WA Strategy (2023):** Connect with agencies in Washington and Alabama to build an aggressive outreach campaign to both Rep. Smith (D-WA) and Rep. Rogers (R-AL) in support of advancing the 1% goal. This should be paired with messaging around the urgency of the goal and an acknowledgment that both policymakers are best-positioned to ensure its inclusion.
- **House Amendment Sponsor (Q1 2024):** Identify 5-10 potential sponsors and provide outreach through NIB and relevant agencies to secure a sponsor for an NDAA Amendment.
- **House and Senate Individual Office NDAA Requests (February):** Leverage agencies to request that their policymakers submit requests for the AbilityOne goal. NIB to help fill out forms and develop the appropriate language.
- **Monthly Documents Sent to Capitol Hill (all of 2024):** Produce documents every month in support of the 1% goal (letters, op-eds, infographics, etc.) that will be sent to Capitol Hill by both NIB/NAEPB and individually by agency.
- **Fly In Focus (May):** Leverage the fly-in to exclusively focus on the 1% goal.

Objective 2: Secure Report Language in FY 2025 Appropriations Bills in Support of CMS Expansion and Enforcement

We will work with agencies to request language in all FY 2025 appropriations bills to (1) encourage agencies to expand their use of AbilityOne agencies for CMS or (2) encourage enforcement around the AbilityOne Program and request they provide information to Congress on the mechanisms they are using to ensure enforcement of the program.

We will need to coordinate with SourceAmerica on CMS promotion as there are a handful of their agencies also involved in that line of work.

- **NIB Briefing to Agencies (Q1 of 2024):** NIB will provide a briefing to all agencies about the language we are requesting and the submission process to make appropriations requests through Members of Congress.
- **NIB Advocacy to Committees:** NIB directly lobbies the Appropriations Committees to secure the language.