



**MEP • MANUFACTURING  
EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP**

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF  
STANDARDS AND TECHNOLOGY

# Charge to MEP Advisory Board from the NIST Director

June 24, 2013

Denver, Colorado

United States Department of Commerce  
National Institute of Standards and Technology  
Office of the Director

Memorandum For: Denny Dotson, Chair,  
Manufacturing Extension Partnership Advisory Board  
Vickie Wessel, Vice Chair,  
Manufacturing Extension Partnership Advisory Board

CC: Phillip Singerman, Acting Director,  
Manufacturing Extension Partnership

FROM: Patrick Gallagher, Under Secretary of Commerce for  
Standards and Technology and NIST Director

DATE: June 24, 2013

SUBJECT: Charge to the MEP Advisory Board for 2013

## Mandate of MEP Advisory Board

The MEP Advisory Board is authorized under Section 3003(d) of the American COMPETES Act of 2007 (P.L. 110-69) in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) of 1972 (P.L.92-463) as amended.

The Advisory Board is appointed by the NIST Director to provide:

- Advice on Manufacturing Extension Partnership programs, plans and policies;
- Assessments of the soundness of Manufacturing Extension Partnership plans and strategies; and
- Assessments of current performance against Manufacturing Extension Partnership program plans

As the primary private sector advisory board for the National Institute of Standards and Technology Hollings Manufacturing Extension Partnership Program (MEP), the Board is best positioned to provide recommendations on several high priority operational and programmatic issues of major importance to MEP. I would like to request that the Board focus on the following areas:

## Areas of Interest:

- Review of management response to MEP Board recommendations
- Recommendations on cost share requirement
- Advice on criteria for MEP Director selection
- Guidance on development of strategic planning process
- Response to report by the National Academy of Sciences
- Comment on NIST 3-Year Programmatic Plan

## MEP Board Recommendations: 2010-2012

- MEP Board is required to transmit an annual report through the NIST Director to the Secretary for transmittal to the Congress
- The Board presents recommendations in each of its annual reports
- MEP has not formally responded to all of the recommendations
- MEP has prepared a summary of the recommendations for the Board's review

Pursuant to guidance on priorities from the Board, management will prepare responses to the recommendations

## Recommendations on cost share requirements of the MEP program

- In the American COMPETES Reauthorization Act of 2010, Congress directed the Comptroller General (GAO) to submit to Congress a report on cost share requirements of the MEP program with recommendations to provide for long term sustainability of the program
- GAO submitted a report in April, 2011, but did not provide recommendations that would allow the Secretary of Commerce to alter the cost share structure
- In the Report on the Appropriations Bill, 2012 (July 20, 2011), Congress directed the Secretary of Commerce to draft criteria for establishing specific cost share for the MEP program. A report is currently under review by the Department

## Recommendations on cost share requirements of the MEP program

The Board is requested to immediately initiate a review of the cost share structure and by September 30, 2013 and provide recommendations to the NIST Director.

# Guidance on development of an MEP system strategic planning process

- Current “strategic plan” is the Next Generation Strategy, published in 2006 and updated in 2008
- A new strategic plan is necessary to respond to the current challenges of the manufacturing sector and address the priorities of the Administration and other stakeholders
- MEP began development of a strategic planning process in fall, 2012, and has developed a Strategic Framework

The Board is requested to provide guidance to MEP on the process of developing a system-wide strategic planning process that would engage all stakeholders in the process, and participate in the planning process

## Advice on criteria for MEP Director selection

- NIST will be initiating a selection process for the MEP Director this summer
- Selection process generally takes 4-6 months from inception to selection

The Board is requested to provide advice on the qualities that are important for the MEP Director

# Response to Report by National Academy of Sciences

- MEP commissioned the National Academy of Sciences to conduct an independent evaluation of the MEP Program: “21<sup>st</sup> Century Manufacturing: The Role of the Manufacturing Extension Partnership Program of NIST”
- The National Academy formed a committee of experts to prepare the evaluation , which has advanced to its final stage with two reports now in the National Academies Report Review Process
  - One, an overview of the operation of the MEP including a comprehensive review of MEP evaluation literature
    - Regional workshops in 2012 in Akron and Atlanta
    - Visits to MEP centers

# Response to Report by National Academy of Sciences

- Two, a series of substantive analyses of overseas program that support manufacturing
  - International forum which brought together representatives from ITRI in Taiwan, German Fraunhofer, French Carnot program, and Canadian IRAP program
  - Committee consultations, in-country site visits, and commissioned research on programs in the United Kingdom, Canada, Germany, France, and Taiwan
- The final report will be presented to the MEP Board at its September 27<sup>th</sup> meeting

[The Board is requested to review and prepare a response to the report by its January, 2014 meeting](#)