

31st ANNUAL

MOST NATIONAL TRIPARTITE ALLIANCE CONFERENCE

MOST[®]
The Boilermaker Advantage

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Alliance partners use innovative approach to caucus sessions

New format encourages solution-based outcomes

To enhance the problem-solving efforts of the National Tripartite Alliance, the NTA has adopted a new approach to caucus sessions – one that will involve forming working groups to focus on specific issues and offer solutions. MOST Administrator Dale “Skipper” Branscum said the working groups will meet throughout the coming year and report on their progress.

“Some of the feedback we get is that we address the same issues every year.” said Branscum. “Now we have a process that will accelerate and enhance our problem-solving efforts. This process will improve our understanding of the issues we face and help us tackle those issues more aggressively.”

In preparation for the conference, MOST staff reviewed their programs and evaluated the top issues from the past three MOST Tripartite conferences. After these were compiled, the same topics were

given to the Owner, Contractor and Labor caucuses to discuss and rank according to importance.

Caucuses gather data through polling

Caucus sessions employed a new approach this year – live polling – using a smartphone app to collect opinions about various topics. Individuals in all three caucuses ranked topics (listed below) in order of importance. Attendees also drilled down to answer specific questions on the importance and relevance of MOST programs, which included: OSHA 10/30, Substance Abuse, Common Arc, Leadership, Boilermaker Delivery System and Boilermaker Code Training.

During the caucus sessions, chairmen collected names of volunteers willing to participate in year-long working groups.

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PHOTO: **OWNER CAUCUS CHAIRMAN JERRY PAYTON** leads the morning session on Monday



David Zach, Nooter Construction Company
Contractor Caucus Chairman

The topics ranked and discussed included the following:

- **Get more owners to attend the National Tripartite Alliance Conference**
- **Expand the use of regional tripartite conferences**
- **Report on regional tripartite performance and issues being worked on**
- **Expand the use of Field Leadership & Project Management Programs**
- **Expand the acceptance by owners of MOST Drug Screening & the Common Arc Program**
 - Expand the use of Random Drug Screening
- **Add human performance tools to the current MOST programs, especially safety training**
- **Address skilled labor shortages, including welders**
 - Better utilize mechanics for non-welding activities
 - Recruitment and retention of skilled welders and apprentices
 - Utilize proper apprentice ratios
 - Expand the use of the Helper classification
 - Expand the use of retirees during shortages
- **Expand the use of outage tracking and manpower forecasting tools**
- **Outage scheduling - better communication between parties**
- **Address Common Arc Program related issues**
 - Common Arc Updates
 - Increase percentage of welders certified through Common Arc
 - Prequalify welders prior to Common Arc testing
 - Increase contractor participation at Common Arc testing

- **Ensure proper craft assignments**
 - Owners – scrutinize low bids from non-Boilermaker contractors
 - Contractors – review work scope with Local Lodge prior to pre-job mark-ups
 - Boilermakers – provide sound and sufficient documentation for all claims to any work scope
- **Expand work opportunities outside of coal-fired power generation**

Caucus chairs confer on future direction

Following the caucus sessions, the three chairmen met to determine which of the topics warranted a working group. The chairs include Jerry Payton, Tennessee Valley Authority (Owners); Dave Zach, Nooter Construction Company (Contractor Chair); Kyle Evenson, ED-CSO (Labor Chair); Skipper Branscum, MOST Administrator; and Marty Stanton, AD-CSO.

Three topics were chosen based on the highest combined rankings across the Owner, Contractor and Labor caucuses. The caucus chairmen formed working groups made up of participants identified during the caucus sessions. Working group topics and participants will be announced during the Tuesday plenary meeting.

Following the conference, conveners in each of the three groups will schedule their first meeting, at which time the group chairs will be selected. Throughout the year, working group participants will upload notes and share ideas through a web portal.

According to Branscum, the end goal for these groups is to formulate recommendations on effective approaches to solving the key issues. These recommendations will be central to the 2017 MOST Tripartite Conference. ▲



Kyle Evenson, Boilermakers
Labor Caucus Chairman