

Background: The USWAG 2.0 Process

Over the course of the second half of 2022 and the first half of 2023, USWAG undertook a member-led initiative to review its existing value proposition and organizational sustainability. The process, which was dubbed *USWAG 2.0*, looked at issues including USWAG’s foundational strengths, future program focus, and member retention.

The USWAG 2.0 Task Force was Chaired by John Pugh, Southern Company, with JR Register, Consumer Energy, serving as Vice Chair. General members of the Task Force included:

- David Bacher, NRG
- Ian Carstensen, TEP
- Roger Clarke, Xcel
- Pete Harley, National Grid
- Shirley Harmon, PEPCO
- Susana Hildebrand, Vistra
- Claudette Horn, PNM
- David Miller, AEP
- Kate Willeford, Tri-State
- Jamie Williams, DTE

USWAG Staff and Counsel supported the USWAG 2.0 Task Force.

The Task Force divided itself into 2 workgroups. Workgroup 1 focused on issues related to the value proposition, looking at issues including identifying USWAG’s core strengths and potential future issues that USWAG may need to cover. Workgroup 2 focused on issues including reviewing the existing structure of the member and affiliate programs, development of expertise for, and future dues revenue scenarios. Over the course of approximately 5 months the workgroups met both independently and in joint session with the end goal being to “develop a forward-looking vision and implementation plan to better position USWAG to meet the evolving needs of member companies and the industry.”

Key takeaways identified by the USWAG 2.0 Task Force, which were presented to USWAG’s Membership at the Spring 2023 Policy Committee meeting, are summarized below:¹

| Must maintain a strong, member-led foundation: | Must quickly pivot to emerging issues: | Must dive in further on potentially sensitive issues: |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The most important assets are the people, our relationships and institutional knowledge. •This leads to effective issue-spotting, committee leadership, counsel, shared knowledge and political savvy. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Strong need to incorporate emerging waste issue discussion and learnings into our existing vehicles (training, workshops, committees, etc.). •Explore partnerships with organizations like EPRI. •Evaluate suitability of <i>existing</i> regs for emerging issues. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •What issues/activities are membership deterrents (branding, litigation, coal ash, etc.)? •Can all issues successfully coexist into the future? |

These key takeaways, other observations from the USWAG 2.0 process, and feedback gathered from an online poll shared with the USWAG Membership, have been incorporated into the updated USWAG 5 Year Plan for the period from 2024 through 2028 that follows.

¹ The complete PowerPoint presentation delivered to the USWAG Membership by the USWAG 2.0 Task Force is available [here](#).

As the electric power industry continues to transition its generation fleet to cleaner resources, USWAG must continue to evolve to meet the changing needs and interests of its membership by sustaining its commitment to be the premier provider of regulatory compliance support, issue management, and advocacy for the utility industry on solid and hazardous waste, toxic substances, and chemical management issues. Being responsive to member needs will drive member retention in USWAG.

USWAG will implement this mission through the activities described below.

Support the Transition to a Cleaner Energy Future

The industry is moving to reduce emissions related to power generation, transitioning from older, fossil-based generation to cleaner forms of energy production. USWAG will continue to provide regulatory compliance assistance to members regarding legacy environmental issues and utility power generation and energy delivery, expand activities regarding issues related to decommissioning of utility generating facilities, and increase attention on issues associated with reducing their corporate environmental footprint and transitioning to cleaner forms of generation including renewable energy, cleaner natural gas, hydrogen, and energy storage.

To support member's regulatory compliance and environmental protection, USWAG will develop compliance tools including issue papers, regulatory analyses and guidance documents that address the following issues:

- Management of waste streams from decommissioning and demolition of legacy electric generation sites.
- Waste management issues associated with facility transition (e.g., repowering).
- Storage and disposal options for PCB equipment removed from service and PCB wastes generated in connection with decommissioning activities.
- Characterization and management of waste from renewables (e.g., solar, wind) and battery energy storage systems (BESS).
- Waste management issues associated with the installation and operation of CO₂ and hydrogen pipelines.

Issue Spotting

Committee members, Chairs, Staff and Counsel are expected to identify new or trending issues of concern in which USWAG has a role. Each Technical Committee Chair will continue to solicit, on an annual basis, input from members regarding new and emerging issues. These issues will be addressed, as appropriate and practical, within existing budgets and incorporated into future budgets.

As new issues of concern are identified, the Steering and Policy Committee are responsible to ensure that new issues are addressed (e.g., tracking, analysis, comments) by one of the existing USWAG Technical Committees, or that a new Committee, Task Force or Workgroup is formed to address any issue that does not fit within an existing Committees' areas of authority or jurisdiction.

Identification of issues will be accomplished through formal and informal surveys of the membership and in Committee Roundtables at Technical and Policy Committee meetings.

Issue spotting should include outreach to companies *not* currently members of USWAG, state and federal regulators, and other research (e.g., EPRI) and policy organizations (e.g., ASTWMO, ACAA, NMA, etc.).

Workforce Transition

As member companies' workforce age and retire, they are typically replaced with new employees that may not have extensive experience or familiarity with certain regulatory compliance issues. Since USWAG maintains extensive information in the form of issue papers, memoranda interpreting regulatory requirements, and letters of interpretation from federal agencies, this information provides institutional memory and regulatory knowledge to those new employees. As part of its efforts to assist with workforce transition, USWAG will:

- Provide regulatory analysis and interpretation.
- Provide members with compliance counseling.
- Develop and present compliance training seminars, workshops, and webinars.
- Ensure that information is available on the USWAG website to new employees in appropriate and easy to access formats (e.g., on demand streaming of recorded webinars.)

USWAG will also encourage and promote roles for growing the volunteer leadership within each of its technical committees. Examples include actively recruiting individuals as technical committee vice-chairs and soliciting individuals for limited-term leadership opportunities such as chairing a workshop program committee or a special issue task force.

Information Exchange & Member Engagement

USWAG will maintain a robust schedule of training opportunities. Policy and Technical Committee meetings, seminars, workshops, and conferences allow members to share information through formal presentations and discussions as well as informal networking. Individual members can also solicit input or responses from the USWAG Membership by sending inquiries through the appropriate technical committee.

To support members' information exchange, USWAG will:

- Continue to maintain, and update as necessary, issue papers, interpretative analyses and interpretative letters.
- Ensure ease of access to such information on the USWAG website.
- Ensure that all meetings of the organization provide ample opportunity for informal networking between members.
- Incorporate site visits/field trips into technical committee meetings when feasible.
- Incorporate industry–regulator interaction as part of committee meetings, technical symposia, etc.
- Encourage and incorporate member-led presentations on issues of concern, case studies, etc. in meetings, symposia, workshops, and conferences.