

TO: MTC Strategic Planning Steering Committee
FROM: Elizabeth Harchenko
SUBJECT: November Meeting Objectives – MTC Strategic Planning Steering Committee
DATE: October 25, 2011

This memo covers meeting objectives for the next three meetings of the steering committee. The objectives for November 1 are reasonably firm. Depending upon discussion on November 1, November 17 and November 30 will be adjustable.

Following the meeting objectives, you will find a more detailed description of my understanding of the four process options you have identified. Please consider them thoughtfully. If you have questions about details, please plan to share them on November 1.

As you know, my strong belief is that planning is important. If you have concerns about option 3 or option 4, each of those options can be managed within existing resources by creation of a reasonable time line and by taking each step in turn, rather than trying to do everything at once or in a compressed time frame.

November 1, 2011 – Meeting Objectives: Identify options for further strategic planning efforts and discuss criteria you want to use to develop recommendations for the Executive Committee. Agenda items:

1. Review and discuss description of strategic planning process options (see below). Is each description clear? Is there anything missing?
2. Why should we do planning, anyway?
 - a. What is the compelling reason for planning in the first place?
 - b. Why is it important to integrate planning into the work of the commission?
 - c. What are the concerns or assumptions that influence your perspective?
3. What criteria do you want to use to evaluate the options and to serve as a basis for recommending future action? Examples:
 - a. Ability to address issues identified in environmental scan
 - b. Potential benefits to MTC and the states
 - c. Potential costs (staff time; other resources) to MTC and the states
 - d. Potential risks that would remain
 - e. Possible time frames for the option
 - f. Other criteria you want to use
4. Narrow options for further consideration – are there a couple of options you want to flesh out further? Are there any you feel you can eliminate immediately? Is there an opportunity to mix and match components of the options?
5. Begin discussion of core values of MTC – what are the guiding principles that reflect the culture of the Commission?
6. Review “to do” list for November 17 meeting.

November 17, 2011 – Meeting Objective: Make tentative decisions on options and possible recommendations for strategic planning process to the Executive Committee. Possible agenda items:

1. Using the criteria identified on November 1, tentatively decide on what process option or options the Steering Committee wants to present to the Executive Committee on December 1.
2. Decide whether to recommend a specific option or options. If so, which and why.
3. Discuss and tentatively decide on statement of organizational values.
4. Discuss and decide what information to share with the states (including time line) in advance of the December 1 Executive committee meeting.
 - a. Do you want to ask for preliminary feedback from Executive Committee members before November 30?
 - b. Are there any other people from whom you would like feedback to consider at your November 30 meeting?
5. Review “to do” list for November 30.

November 30, 2011 – Meeting objectives: Make final decision on option(s) and recommendation(s) for the MTC Executive Committee, and plan the presentation. Possible agenda items:

1. Review tentative decisions made on November 17.
2. Consider any feedback (if requested) from Executive Committee members or others.
3. Make final decision on option(s) and recommendation(s).
4. Develop your plan for discussing options and recommendations with the Executive Committee.
 - a. Who will lead discussion for the options and recommendations?
 - b. What guidance do you want from the Executive Committee?

December 1, 2011 – present options and recommendations to the MTC Executive Committee. Obtain direction for future action from the MTC Executive Committee.

Strategic Planning Process Options – for consideration by Steering Committee

Here is a more detailed description of the four process options the committee identified for consideration during the October 12 teleconference.

1. No further planning work – start one or two projects that address results from one or more dimensions of the environmental scan that are of interest and pursue immediate implementation. (What could MTC do now to: capitalize on key strengths; shore up serious weaknesses; take advantage of ripe opportunities; address serious threats?)
 - a. Example: Executive Committee members identify new commissioners to contact and invite to participate in MTC activities. This activity builds on the strength of state-to-state relationships; can remedy the weakness of variable participation by states; could take advantage of the opportunity to enhance relationships with other tax administration organizations; and addresses the threat of lack of engagement by the states.
 - b. Example: The Executive Committee could form a group to look at today’s compliance challenges, and charge the group to come back with suggestions to strengthen each compliance program and take advantage of potential synergy between them. As a part of this, ask for a report from the Audit Committee on progress they are making. This activity would build on the strength of the audit and nexus programs; it could address the weakness of resource limitations for the audit program; it might take advantage of the opportunities to enhance the programs through different use of technology or specialization; and could address the threat of state audit staff viewing the programs as a threat to their own work.
 - c. Example: follow through on use of web-based technology to support document sharing in committee meetings conducted by telephone; explore use of web-based conferencing technology to augment telephone meetings. Build on strengths of relationships; address weakness of variable participation by states; take advantage of opportunities offered by new technology; address threat of lack of engagement.
2. Review current MTC Mission and purpose statements and make tactical plans based on the environmental scan; do not continue structured planning process (“fix what is broken; build on strengths”).
 - a. Are the current mission and purpose statements sufficient for the current direction of the MTC, or do they need to be changed?
 - b. Focus on responding to one or two current threats and opportunities tactically, by identifying activities needed to fix what is broken and take advantage of one or two key opportunities.
 - c. Flesh out tactical plans - who does what and when; what resources will be needed; how success will be measured.
 - d. Implement tactical plan.
 - e. Evaluate results.

3. Limited scope planning process (Environmental scan themes will inform these steps)
 - a. Review current mission and purpose of MTC and affirm or modify as appropriate.
 - b. Develop statements of values and vision, and identify key goal areas.
 - c. Select one or two goal areas (examples: compliance; training) and develop two or three strategic objectives that will help MTC achieve the stated goals.
 - d. Select one or two strategic objectives (one from each goal area) and identify potential tactical plans that will help the MTC begin to achieve those strategic objectives.
 - e. Ideally, a tactical plan will support more than one strategic objective.
 - f. Select a tactical plan to pursue, flesh out the plan – who does what and when; what resources will be needed; how success will be measured.
 - g. Implement tactical plan.
 - h. Upon completion, evaluate results and go back to the strategic objectives and repeat steps e, f, g and h.
4. Full-blown planning process (environmental scan will inform these steps)
 - a. Review and affirm or modify current mission and purpose of MTC.
 - b. Develop statements of vision and values, and identify key goal areas (no more than five).
 - c. For each goal area develop two or three strategic objectives.
 - d. Look for strategic objectives that support more than one key goal area if possible.
 - e. For each strategic objective develop identify potential tactical plans that will help MTC begin to achieve those strategic objectives.
 - f. Ideally, a tactical plan will support more than one strategic objective.
 - g. Select tactical plan(s) to pursue, flesh out the plan(s) – who does what and when; what resources will be needed; how success will be measured.
 - h. Implement tactical plan.
 - i. Upon completion of a tactical plan, evaluate the results and go back to the strategic objectives and repeat steps e, f, g and h.

The MTC's working mission statement is the following:

The Multistate Tax Commission is an intergovernmental state tax agency working on behalf of states and taxpayers to administer, equitably and efficiently, tax laws that apply to multistate and multinational enterprises.

The purposes are enumerated in Article 1 of the Multistate Tax Compact:

Article I: Purpose - The purposes of this compact are to:

1. Facilitate proper determination of State and local tax liability of multistate taxpayers, including the equitable apportionment of tax bases and settlement of apportionment disputes.
2. Promote uniformity or compatibility in significant components of tax systems.
3. Facilitate taxpayer convenience and compliance in the filing of tax returns and in other phases of tax administration.
4. Avoid duplicative taxation.