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AN ENERGY INITIATIVE — TO INFORM THE PUBLIC

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Abstract

This paper discusses the formulation and implementation of an Energy Initiative Program whose purpose is to inform and educate the public. The program is supported by the efforts of the Coordinating Committee on Energy (CCE) of the Association for Cooperation in Engineering (ACE) composed of representatives from 22 national engineering societies.

1. BACKGROUND

This paper discusses the formulation and implementation of the Energy Initiative Program whose purpose is to inform and educate the public concerning the energy issues. The program has been developed by the Energy Initiative Sub-Committee of the Coordinating Committee on Energy (CCE) of the Association for Cooperation in Engineering (ACE). As a working committee of the ACE, the CCE is composed of representatives of 22 major engineering societies whose membership of over 700,000 comprises the bulk of the nation's engineering capability. The CCE was born out of the crisis conditions of early 1974 during the OPEC embargo and began work October 24, 1974, its organizational formalities concluded. Mr. R. T. Jaske⁽¹⁾ of the American Society of Civil Engineers recently provided an excellent discussion on the role of the CCE, and he introduced the initial concept of the Energy Initiative Program. Although the program has changed somewhat since Mr. Jaske's introduction, the overall goal of the program has remained the same.

In the early part of 1976 the CCE found itself extremely concerned with the lack of public awareness on the basic energy issues to the point that, after the lifting of the OPEC embargo, the public no longer felt the threat of on-coming energy crises. In the Spring of 1976 a formal proposal was presented to the presidents of the societies — a proposal which became

the foundation of the Energy Initiative Program. Following review by the society presidents, the CCE was encouraged to proceed with a plan to increase the public's awareness which would make good use of the engineering society structure. In September, 1976, the CCE officially formed the Energy Initiative Sub-Committee, chaired by Mr. E. K. Riddick, Jr., of the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air Conditioning Engineers, to begin detailed formulation and implementation of the new adopted Energy Initiative Program.

2. THE PROGRAM

The Sub-Committee began working on the program immediately and focused on the issue of conservation, responding to the CCE direction that conservation should be the first phase of the program. During the Winter of 1976-1977 the basic formulation of the Energy Initiative Program and a position paper on conservation had been prepared by the Sub-Committee and accepted by the CCE. Also, during this same time period, the urgent need for the public to become more aware of the energy issues was exemplified by the nation's second energy crisis — the natural gas shortage.

The formulation of the Energy Initiative Program resulted in six categories of major effort to inform and educate the public on the basic issues of energy:

- (1) Six position papers shall be prepared on:
 - a) conservation, b) coal and other solid fuels, c) nuclear, d) oil and gas, e) shale,

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and f) long-range planning to include, but not limited to, solar, geothermal, and fusion.

- (2) A grass-roots campaign primarily consisting of a speaker's bureau shall be set up in order to achieve a face-to-face rapport between the engineer and the public.
- (3) Public service announcements shall be prepared for airing on national and local TV.
- (4) Thirty-minute movie presentations shall be prepared on the various energy issues.
- (5) A TV documentary shall be prepared for national viewing which summarizes the CCE's overall position on energy.
- (6) Energy conferences and workshops shall be held.

The position papers are to be carried forward to the technical and professional societies of the CCE by publication in their respective journals and/or magazines. The positions shall serve as the foundation for the basic energy message to be taken to the public. Thus, all engineers participating in the program at the grass-roots level will know the CCE positions and can respond accordingly.

The grass-roots campaign is a major inter-society organizational, voluntary effort on the part of all those who participate, and it has the potential for being the most effective of all the Energy Initiative Program efforts. The major effort of the grass-roots campaign is the establishment of an effective nationwide speakers' bureau set up to provide qualified engineers as speakers on the issues of energy to all types of civic and fraternal organizations. However, to make the program more effective, the participating engineers must also get involved in local community activities, participate on local and national television and radio shows, and publish articles for local and national newspapers and magazines. These additional grass-roots activities can play a tremendous role in further informing and educating the public.

To carry out the activities planned for further informing and educating the public (preparation and distribution of public service announcements, 30-min. movies, a television documentary, and energy conferences and workshops), a major dedicated effort will be required with respect to large amounts of funding and staff time. A proposal for such funding is now being considered by the Department of Energy.

However, because funding has not yet been approved and because the grass-roots campaign is a major inter-society effort alone, the Energy Initiative Sub-Committee has been focusing on the implementation of the grass-roots campaign.

Following the CCE acceptance of the position paper on conservation, as was published in Jaske's report⁽¹⁾ and during the Sub-Committee's deliberation on the contents of the grass-roots campaign implementation plan, the nation was besieged by its third energy crisis — the coal strike during the Winter of 1977-1978, further emphasizing the importance of the CCE's Energy Initiative Program.

The first position paper completed, the remaining position papers are expected to be prepared and approved by the time this paper is published. Copies of these papers may be obtained from Dr. Jerry Grey of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics, present Chairman of the CCE.

3. GRASS-ROOTS IMPLEMENTATION

The plan includes a dual-level organization to fully involve member societies of the CCE and to allow coordination of the program with state energy offices. A simplified organization flow chart is shown in Fig. 1. The state and national society coordinators

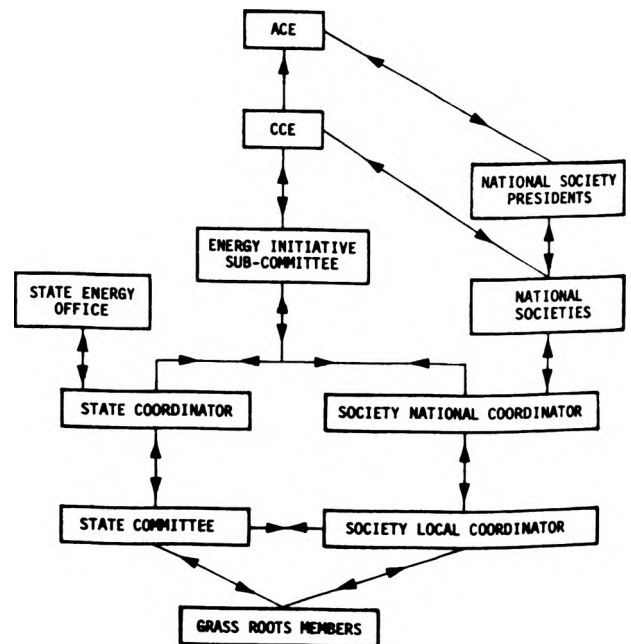


Fig. 1. Organizational Flow Chart.

shown in Fig. 1 are the key elements in making sure the Energy Initiative Program is a successful one. The state coordinator is a member of a CCE society, and assumes the responsibility of coordinating a statewide energy initiative effort and of coordinating the energy initiative activities with his/her state's energy office. The national society coordinator is an individual chosen from each member society of the CCE who assumes the responsibility that his/her society is fully participating in the program.

To set the Energy Initiative Program in motion, this author,⁽²⁾ representing the American Society of Civil Engineers, issued an "Outline and Guide," describing the method of program implementation as developed by the Sub-Committee, to all CCE members and national coordinators. The content of the "Outline and Guide" is discussed below.

Referring to Fig. 1 and beginning on the left side of the flow chart with the state coordinator, the implementation of the program is as follows:

- (1) To get the program in motion, the CCE has asked the National Society of Professional Engineers (NSPE) to appoint "acting state coordinators" in each state (NSPE is the only member society that is state organized) to initiate the formation of State Energy Initiative Committees. These appointees may be chairmen or members of an existing NSPE state energy committee.
 - (2) The acting state coordinator shall report to the chairman of the Sub-Committee.
 - (3) The acting state coordinator shall convene the first State Energy Initiative's Committee meeting.
 - (4) Upon convening the first State Energy Initiative's Committee, the committee shall begin proceedings by appointing a permanent state coordinator for whatever term the committee deems appropriate.
 - (5) It is the responsibility of the state coordinator to initiate and coordinate the activities of his committee to see that the committee proceeds with an active and effective Energy Initiative Program at the grass-roots level for that state, based on the positions of the CCE.
 - (6) It is the state coordinator's responsibility to coordinate the State Energy Initiative Committee activities with the state's own energy office, and to offer the assistance of the committee to the state office as it proceeds with its own energy programs.
 - (7) The state coordinator shall report semi-annually to the Sub-Committee on the progress of the activities of the State Energy Initiative Program.
 - (8) At all times, guidance and assistance will be provided to the state coordinator by the Sub-Committee.
- Moving over to the right side of Fig. 1, the functions to be carried out within each member society of CCE are as follows:
- (1) The president of each member society of CCE is to appoint a national coordinator to represent that society in implementing the Energy Initiative Program.
 - (2) It is the responsibility of each society's national coordinator to actively involve his society in the Energy Initiative Program.
 - (3) In cooperation with the society president, it is the national coordinator's responsibility to assure that interested and qualified society members are appointed at the local level to participate as the grass-roots individuals — those individuals who will be taking the Energy Initiative message to the public.
 - (4) It will be the national coordinator's responsibility to see that one of the individuals appointed at the local level will represent that society as a member of the State Energy Initiative Committee.
 - (5) Where local societies' jurisdictions overlap in various states, it will be the national coordinator's responsibility to coordinate the society's effort so that there is no conflict between or within states.

The individuals appointed at the local level to represent the society and the CCE efforts in the Energy Initiative Program are the most important link in the effectiveness of the program. It is recommended that a minimum of two people be appointed at the local

level. This is so that one appointee can act as the promoter of the program (e.g., contacting civic and fraternal groups, high schools, churches, etc.) and the other can act as the speaker, and vice versa. One local appointee would not be effective because he/she would have to promote themselves. By maintaining active and effective appointees at the local level, meeting face-to-face with various civic groups, newspaper reporters, television news reporters, etc., the Energy Initiative Program will become a successful endeavor. The prime responsibilities of the local appointees are:

- (1) Set up a local speaker's bureau to offer energy speakers to civic and fraternal groups, high schools, etc.
- (2) Establish contacts with the news media to further promote the Energy Initiative Program.
- (3) Seek guidance from the society's member representative on the State Energy Initiative Committee.
- (4) Utilize existing local energy conference activities, public awareness programs, Engineers Week activities, etc., which would be ready to respond and assist in promoting the Energy Initiative Program. Existing local activities represent a viable source for obtaining additional energy information in the form of slide programs, position statements, etc., as the local appointees develop their own Energy Initiative Program.

4. CURRENT STATUS

Over the past six months the Energy Initiative Program has been moving at a very good pace in the area of position papers and the grass-roots effort. The NSPE has appointed approximately 90 percent of the state coordinators, and the appointed individuals have begun to plan their activities. Each national society will have their national coordinators and many of the local coordinators selected by the time this paper is published. The American Institute of Chemical Engineers have moved forward under the direction of Mr. John Shacter, Vice-Chairman of the Energy Initiative Sub-Committee, and presently have active speakers bureaus in various locations at the local level. Local society designees and state coordinators are beginning to get together and formulate their activities. All of the position papers prepared by the CCE should soon be in the hands of everyone participating in the

program. At their June 1978 meeting in Washington, the members of CCE voted to request \$1000 from each member society to support a staff person half-time, whose responsibility would be to continue to motivate the Energy Initiative Program participants and to see that they receive the proper guidance from the CCE and the Sub-Committee.

The progress of the remaining portions of the Energy Initiative Program, as formulated by the Sub-Committee and earlier described, have been less successful and await further funding.

5. SUMMARY

The need for the Energy Initiative Program is quite apparent when an individual observes what is happening in this country, and the world today. It is quite evident that the public needs to become more aware when 95 percent of the public does not really understand the energy situation or realize the consequences if something is not done. The overall effectiveness of the Energy Initiative Program lies with the ingenuity of each engineer participating in the program — from the members of the CCE to the grass-roots individuals. It is the desire of the CCE to aid any local volunteer who requires additional guidance or assistance in developing his or her program. As the CCE develops further information at the national level, such information will be funneled down to the local appointees so that they can better carry forward the Energy Initiative Program.

The Energy Initiative Program is one of the few times in the history of engineering that the engineering community has attempted to band together to accomplish a major goal. If engineers do not accomplish this goal, they as engineers, as individuals, and as members of the public will suffer as a result. It is time for the country to stop responding to the energy situation on a crisis-by-crisis basis.

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BIOGRAPHY

Dr. James E. Beavers has been a member of the Energy Initiative Sub-Committee since its inception in September of 1976. He is a member of nine technical and professional societies, and presently holds the position of Manager of the Structural Engineering and Architectural Department of the Oak Ridge Y-12 Plant, operated by Union Carbide Corp., Nuclear Division, for the Department of Energy. Dr. Beavers was recently presented the 1977 Outstanding Young Engineer of the Year Award by the National Society of Professional Engineers.