

**Task Group on Mobile Food Units
Teleconference Meeting Summary
July 18, 2023**

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Participating Members:

Mike Kohler (NSF)
Derick Taylor (Kona Ice)
Thomas Jumalon (NC Dept of HHS)
Bob Corrao (Gordon Foodservice)

Tony Gagliardi (Consultant)
Tom Vyles (Town of Flower Mound, TX)
Richard Gomez (AA Cater Truck)
Jonathan Brania (UL Solutions)

Absent Members:

Beth Glynn (Starbucks)
Marianne Miranda (Prime Design Food Trucks)
Stephen Schaefer (Hoshizaki America)

Tom Ramsey (Snappy Snacks)
Daniele Nanni (Carpigiani)

Participating observers:

Emily Richardson (NSF)
Michelle Longbons (Kona Ice)
Brenda King (Kona Ice)

Michael Perez (Baring Industries)
Tony (Kona Ice)
Salina Tobias (Kona Ice)

Supplemental Materials Referenced

- 1) [Agenda - Mobile Food Units - TG - 2023-07-18](#)
- 2) [JCFE Meeting Summary - 2022-10-05 – Mobile Food Units](#)
- 3) [174i1r4-0-with-comments.doc](#)

Discussion

M.Kohler is the TG Chair and welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order. After the anti-trust statement was read attendance was taken and Eight of the 13 voting members were present which represented a quorum (62%).

M.Kohler presented the agenda indicating the intent was to hold this first kick off meeting and opened the floor for a motion to accept the agenda.

Motion, T.Vyles:	Accept today's agenda
Second:	Jonathan
Discussion:	None
Vote:	Eight in favor, zero opposed, zero abstentions
Motion:	Carries

M.Kohler confirmed that although many people on the call were veterans to TG work, there were some new members on this group, and he first wanted to spend a moment going over the process.

He explained the online application called the NSF Online Workspace (NOW) and how the JC and TG make up the various rosters there. This includes names as well as roles indicating whether a member is an observer or a voting member. Within the context of a TG meeting, the difference here is that voting members can make and vote on motions put to the floor during the meeting. Observers will certainly contribute to the conversation and provide input; they simply cannot vote on motions.

M.Kohler confirmed that this TG was a subgroup to the main Joint Committee for NSF/ANSI Food Equipment Standards. This JC is made up of select manufacturers of commercial food service equipment, various users of the equipment and public health officials that regulate the equipment that is used in commercial food establishment. He

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confirmed there are currently 21 different NSF FE Standards under this committee that cover the gamut of different types of equipment that would be used in food establishment in developing and maintaining those standards. Due to the size and scope, we often need to break activities out into a subgroup that's more focused on a specific task at hand or a specific type of equipment or types of equipment. These are referred to as Task Groups and their charge is to discuss issues that arise. These TGs meet and work to draft and propose language that would ultimately go back to the main joint committee in the form of an approval ballot.

M.Kohler confirmed that this is what this group is. It was initially formed long ago to take on the task of coming up with a brand-new standard, Standard 174, which would ultimately add to the 21 FE Standards covered by the JC.

In the end we will propose language for a new Standard which will cover Mobile food trucks and trailers. We had an initial title called Mobile Food units and so we are going to focus on and talk about what we think this Standard should require and to the best of our ability what language it should contain and how it should be structured.

Ultimately, we will do some voting at this level within the task group itself by the voting Members, which is called a straw ballot. The idea here is to get some agreement on this proposal amongst ourselves as experts and then send that on to the Joint Committee on Food Equipment for balloting and ultimate approval. This often requires some back and forth because the JC might not vote affirmatively the first time. If that happens, the comments will be sent back to this TG to discuss further.

He asked if there were any questions; there were none and he asked everyone to introduce themselves.

After introductions M.Kohler focused on the agenda, reiterating that the goal is to talk about reintroducing the project in general, outlining the various elements of the process and gauge the speed of how long this may take.

M.Kohler confirmed this was initially started, and an initial draft completed, nearly 20 years ago. Much process was made, and a few drafts written, then priorities changed for the FE JC so focus on other areas occurred, so this Standard was never completed. Work on this Standard was put on the back burner but not forgotten. During the most recent JC Face to Face meeting, this project was resurrected.

M.Kohler suggested that although there was a reasonably complete Standard originally written, this will still be a lot of work and take some time.

M.Kohler indicated that this group is still a bit light on Manufacturers and asked those on the call here today that if they knew of any others which might be interested to contact himself or A.Rose.

M.Kohler then turned attention to the draft. He indicated this was written long ago and had gone through a handful of ballots receiving numerous comments. He confirmed this wasn't the most recent draft document, in fact there were 2 beyond this, however the group lost some focus suggesting various name and scope changes at this point. A completely separate issue paper was submitted for Manufactured Food Facilities and the two were conflated.

Manufactured food facilities get transported to a site, dropped and left there more or less permanently. Thus, these are not mobile in the sense that this original effort was intended to be. Shortly thereafter the JC decided to refocus on Mobile Food Units and that's when work on this Standard stopped.

M.Kohler confirmed that based on this feedback, we are starting with the draft that was still titled mobile food units and it's intended to more or less focus on trucks and vans and trailers.

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M.Kohler suggested before diving into the Standard, the group step back and generally talk about a few focus points before putting a lot of time and energy into getting into the nitty gritty of various requirements. For instance, we should think about revisiting the overall title of the document.

M.Kohler opened the floor for discussion.

B.Corrao said he's seen a lot of recent activity using shipping containers that have been converted and asked M.Kohler where these might fall in the category. He added that while at Smuckers they activated these "kitchens" that would be dropped off for a month or so, then moved to a new location. So, they are not Mobile in the spirit mentioned thus far, but they are also not permanent. They are not on wheels, but they do get moved around somewhat.

M.Kohler said he wasn't aware of this topic being discussed before, but that this is something the group could talk about. M.Kohler added that the very last page of the draft document, there were some original definitions proposed. These were broken into two categories where there was a true mobile catering unit that would be more like a truck that was mobile every day. Then there were the special temporary event unit where it was mobile and placed on site for not more than 14 to 21 days. Seems like these modified containers like you're talking about would fall into a category like that, but that's something we can talk about.

T.Vyles then suggested that as far as definitions are concerned, this group should be at least working to harmonize with FDA food code, and they're set definitions of what is and what is not a mobile food unit. M.Kohler agreed stating that the FE JC always tries to keep those in alignment as much as possible. Sometimes we tend to get even more specific, but always stay in alignment.

T.Jumalon confirmed he too has seen some converted containers where he's at in North Carolina and they do not treat these as mobile food units. These are considered temporary facilities for sure, and that's how the permit reads. He added there are basically 2 types of permits which are essentially related to the temporary or more permanent nature of each. M.Kohler asked if this is based on a time duration and T.Jumalon said no. he described an example currently happening at a university kitchen severely damaged by a hurricane. Four seemingly temporary units have been erected for different uses, all former containers. They've been in operation now for 3 years waiting for the completion of the new permanent kitchen.

M.Kohler suggested the thought when we created the definition for the temporary special event unit is that it would be more temporary than 3 years. The thought was more like carnival trailers or something like that where you had at a County Fair or something where it was going to be taking place over the course of a week or two. For whatever reason those discussing wanted some different requirements for those types of units that had something to do with the countertop materials that they wanted to use. Laminated countertops in some of those in contrast to commercial food service applications in a true permanent kitchen. That type of material would not be acceptable in that application and was teased out in discussions many years ago when the original drafts were written. And that's when the discussion split off.

T.Jumalon indicated that in NC they use a term to help us differentiate between the two. One is a concessions trailer that you would see at a lot of these festivals and state fairs and things like that, and the other is the mobile food unit, which actually complies with state rule regarding the construction of equipment is concerned.

M.Kohler said this was very good discussion to kick things off. We have some written material from long ago and this helps to gather a new place to start.

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One approach might be to simply start looking at the material and working through it. Another option would be to first make sure we're all level set to some degree before doing that. That is begin by stepping back and revisiting the title and scope and agree on those. Then based on that, we might dig into the definitions before the actual language.

It also seems like we need some kind of boundaries on the equipment as far as what we want these requirements or areas of the equipment to focus on. We normally look at things by zone type, whether it's a food zone or splash zone or a nonfood zone in any exposed surface. These might be subject to manual cleaning requirements within a commercial food establishment.

We may want to target certain areas like the areas which would only apply to and not those like evaluating tires or the undercarriage. The standard should focus on the interior preparation areas for the most part.

J.Brania confirmed his agreement in principle with how to set up the discussion, what types of units and limitations proposed in the old draft. This started out to be a document for the internal space itself, and then it kind of started wobbling into the equipment and duplicating things that might be covered elsewhere in other standards. In the end he found himself going back and forth between standards. We need to keep this in mind when working on this new standard.

M.Kohler agreed adding reiterating the point of putting some kind of boundaries on what we want the areas where the requirements are to be focused on. For instance, there were comments on the old ballot regarding toilet and sleeping rooms, which may be present, but may not have requirements. Some have suggested not to focus on the areas themselves but the equipment as long as the areas are segregated.

B.Corrao added another thing to consider is that many of these units are custom fabricated. He said he doesn't propose this group try to think of every possible piece of equipment that might be used, but there must be enough flexibility in the standard to cover that aspect when there isn't an off the shelf option.

M.Kohler indicated there was a little section in the draft indicating some language on custom equipment and is essentially saying that it needed to comply with all the other relevant requirements of the standard. But we certainly can expand on that concept.

After this starting discussion M.Kohler said he was hoping to entice a voting member to make some kind of a motion regarding the points here to focus on for the discussion. on, and maybe even start on one or two of them today.

M.Kohler added yet another approach with this general understanding in place would be to have run this old draft through the Standards Staff, have them modernize it with current boilerplate language, figures etc. and in the near future start digging into the language.

I think those might be some suggestions for good starting points and I'll, leave it open to anyone else that may want to make a motion or talk further on that or have any other ideas, I don't know.

R.Gomez suggested the group first focus on understanding what the industry is doing now because back in 2001 when this was written, most of the manufacturers were actually manufacturing their own equipment. Today the health departments are asking for equipment to be listed through NSF. As a manufacture, now we are starting with a listed piece of equipment and then having to modify it to install it properly. In the end, there are some things required by the health department that the standard itself doesn't cover, for instance lids on French fries.

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We should understand what the industry is doing versus 20 years ago and how the standard will most benefit the industry itself. If we really want to make a change on the industry, we have to focus on what the industry needs. Understanding what the difficulties are and then come up with solutions.

B.Corrao agreed and added he's thinking there may be a parallel path. While others are working cleaning up the boiler plate stuff and diagrams, we can this TG can start from the top. When complete these can be merged. He also felt it a great idea that while this cleanup is occurring, we have some manufacturers review this draft and find out from them what's missing, what are the challenges, etc.

T.Jumalon indicated agreement regarding the industry familiarization and what's happening with the trend, but felt the formalities need to be addressed first before the group dives into what the industry is needing. Starting with the boilerplate cleanup makes better sense so we don't start writing then backtrack and rewrite. He added the first piece should also be the title and scope of the standard. Is the mobile food unit going to encompass mobile food units and push carts or is it just going to strictly be a mobile food unit and then make sure that we're together with all of that. Standard 59 is about carts and we need to establish the possible overlap.

M.Kohler indicated the intention here was to differentiate between the two and maintain 2 standards, at least two standards for now. The proposed 174 would cover non carts but be mobile in a different sense where you drive it or pull it, but you basically work inside of it. T.Jumalon suggested if that's the case the nomenclature should distinguish the differences. This will help us establish how we need to work and proceed forward.

M.Kohler confirmed the group could have different things going on simultaneously as that wasn't unusual. In this case have the manufacturers weigh in on the state of the industry and industry needs. Whether that has changed or not over the last several years the information will be valuable eventually.

Side note from M.Kohler that this standard is kind of blurring equipment in that a mobile food unit is a type of equipment in and of itself. The structure inside for instance is going to have wall coverings and panels and cabinetry and shelving and countertops with sinks built into them. All of this and then we get into things like waste holding tanks and water supplies. So there are equipment requirements that are going to be built into the draft itself, and then pieces of equipment that are purchased separately.

Aside from the actual structure of the truck, certain equipment will already align with existing NSF standards, but they may need some modification to adapt to the space limitations. If that's the case, then we need to address that as part of the overall project to ensure that the end result complies.

At this point M.Kohler indicated there were several hands raised, but he suggested somebody first put a motion on the floor to decide where to go.

Motion, T.Vyles:	The group first focus on a title, a solid scope for the standard and a purpose.
Second:	T.Jumalon
Discussion:	None
Vote:	Eight in favor, zero opposed, zero abstentions
Motion:	Carries

M.Kohler opened the floor for discussion.

J.Brania indicated another major topic point when we move on is the personal safety side. We get asked to help out with

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the officials that are out in the field that are trying to site the various language. To this end it would be worthwhile walking through Standard 59. There are pushcarts and towable trailers that users don't physically enter but rather walk around. There's no ceiling and no floor. All the prep is elsewhere, you back up your vehicle and drive away. So, there's a couple different types of products that are already in 59, related to what we've been talking about. Then there are non-motorized, equipment you can walk in and enter. It sounds like those are the ones that we want to also include in this 174.

It sounds like we're gravitating towards those couple items, and this isn't the to say I'll be all on this point, but I don't see anywhere in the draft that this is defined as to what the boundaries are.

J.Brania added with these in mind it seems we can confirm the whole scope, purpose, the definitions, and the title and we can rally around that.

J.Brania confirmed before the motion he had another comment regarding the equipment which is part of the discussion that we were on.

For example, let's say somebody wants to make pizzas out of a food truck. They're getting a pizza oven which is already prefabricated although there may be an instance where something custom is needed. There are ways to deal with custom equipment but they're bringing a pizza oven on to the truck, and they've been doing this for decades.

J.Brania said he's never gotten a call from a health department or official that saying a pizza oven is really not suitable for food trucks or it's not specially certified for being on a food truck. Nevertheless, that kind of call may happen.

You know what this standard is and that will be part of the discussion, but to what extent that we wish to discuss the equipment and where it is used is something to consider.

J.Brania finished with the example of using an NSF 7 certified refrigerator in a food truck. Unless there's something that's different about putting that refrigerator in the food truck that makes it important to evaluate differently it will not be considered. Things like vibration, might bring up other concerns. With full understanding that duplication of similar language between standards is crucial to get correct.

M.Kohler agreed adding if there were a special need beyond what the existing equipment standard would cover for that particular type of equipment being in a conventional food establishment versus being in a food truck or trailer, it would be good to have a list of those special needs.

T.Jumalon asked if the language here in 174 would then be unique versus a general requirement for other related mobile units like those in standard 59. In other words, are the general requirements considered covered in other boilerplate standards. M.Kohler said yes adding 174 would be all requirements applicable to other mobile food units that are not carts and not covered by the scope of standard 59.

M.Kohler said a major goal is the segregation of these equipment that's something we'll have to keep in mind starting with the scope and purpose. We may even need to change the scope in 59 to sort this out clearly.

M.Kohler confirmed he would discuss modernizing the draft with A.Rose in the near future. He added that the annual JC F2F meeting was coming up on August 9th and 10th and this would keep us busy, so we'll discuss next meeting steps shortly after that.

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With a bit of time left, M.Kohler asked if there were any questions or comments.

R.Gomez pointed out to the group that most of the different U.S. states recognize food trucks or mobile food units as mobile food facilities. This is specifically how they differentiate between a restaurant and a Food Cart. Said he did the same work with the National Fire Protection program, and we are calling them mobile food facilities.

M.Kohler said in light of this information and since standard 59 is specifically called mobile food carts, what do we think about 174 being call mobile food trucks and trailers or would that be too limiting. B.Corrao thought this would be a bit limiting. He said it's nice and specific, but maybe like the fire standards we could open up the name slightly to mobile food facility.

M.Kohler said tend to keep the FE standards focused on specific equipment types and that term doesn't fit the historical mold. Doesn't mean we can't use that term, but we'll have to be careful to clearly focus the scope.

T.Vyles indicated the FDA calls them mobile food establishments. Said he would be fine with either facilities or establishments, and agreed the scope should be where the specificity is located.

B.Corrao asked the group if there was an issue with the original working title of the document and the TG, which is mobile food unit. T.Jumalon indicated he did indeed like that term because a unit can be a facility, an establishment, a truck, a trailer.

B.Corrao added that this seems to be generally understandable by people and again we could state specificity in the scope about what it is and isn't. In the end this could encompass whatever we put in the scope minus the exceptions.

T.Vyles said his only challenge with that term is that pushcarts might be confused within this category. The terms establishments or facilities avoids that. R.Gomez agreed adding the term facilities suggested the ability to occupy the space as well.

M.Kohler confirmed there seemed to be roughly equal numbers of people preferring the term unit, and other preferring facility or establishment. Unit is more broad, establishment is used in the Food Code, and facility by local and states. This is an important topic and great that there is some detailed discussion already today.

With time running out, M.Kohler suggested that rather try to force a decision today, it might be good to capture some of these discussions, give it some further thought and circle back during our next call (date TBD). When the next call takes place, we can pick up right here where we left off. Then continue with the scope and purpose to capture the boundaries of the standard.

J.Brania asked if there was any time devoted on the upcoming F2F agenda for this topic. Said he would love to ask G.Liggins his opinion on the title. M.Kohler said he didn't think there was specific time devoted to this topic, but the group could certainly have conversations with the FDA members during lunch or the reception. J.Brania agreed adding this could be a giant rabbit hole at this point too.

M.Kohler asked if there were any other comments; there were none. He thanked everyone for the time and discussion and the meeting adjourned.