The stated purpose of the Products & Services (P&S) testbed is...

"The purpose of the Products and Services Testbed is to provide an environment where innovations in prototype standards, services, protocols, and best practices can be explored and evaluated. The testbed serves as a forum for innovative collaboration across all sectors of the Federation to improve availability and access to our member's products and services for mutual benefit."

Over the last few years, this purpose has been embodied in the form of the ESIP Testbed. The Testbed evolved into a valuable asset and has supported the development and testing of several well accepted applications and technologies, such as the Discovery Standards/Metadata/Services/Validation (need a name) Portal, the ESIP Ontology Portal, the new Testbed Portal, Data Stewardship project, Skills Database/Application, and others. Some of these experiments are well on their way to becoming production level tools within the ESIP environment, and we are continuing to get requests to host new ideas and projects. The Testbed has subsequently been a driver for ESIP to begin testing the waters of providing ESIP administered technology services, such as web hosting, cloud resources, drupal hosting, etc., to support the Testbed activities. Active expansion and refinement of these offerings are ongoing efforts.

To administer the selection of projects for the Testbed as fairly as possible, a somewhat *ad hoc* configuration board was assembled. This board meets either by telecon or through email threads to review proposed Testbed tasks and activities for feasibility and value to ESIP. The board is comprised of representative from several of the ESIP clusters and committees who have good overall vision and knowledge of ESIP priorities, as well as administrative representatives. Decisions and feedback from the board have been valuable in shaping Testbed projects, before funding and development, into efforts that highlight the best value for the ESIP community. The origins of the board grew out of the recognition that decisions on some of these projects would be laying the groundwork for some fundamental capabilities for the Federation community and that it would important to have informed and well reasoned consensus on the topics. It was agreed that the selection and recommendation of the Testbed projects and technologies could be better accomplished with the smaller and more focused configuration board than the committee at large. As a result of the *ad hoc* board's existence, it called into question what the purpose of the Products & Services Committee was given that the configuration board would be making the decisions and recommendations for Testbed projects, the central focus of the committee.

At the same time, as ESIP has evolved into a larger organization, demand has risen for the ESIP Federation to begin procuring and supporting more technology solutions (e.g. portal, Commons and other computing resources.) These are directly related to the evolving suite of benefits afforded to ESIP members. Currently the staff has been admirably organizing and administering the Federation's technology capabilities, but the resources may be starting to outpace their efforts and may be outside their scope of their primary focus or organizing and promoting ESIP across the Earth science community.

This has led to a conclusion that the Testbed Configuration Board might evolve into being a more administrative version of the Products & Services Committee, as opposed to the current open membership standing committee. In this type of role, members of the committee would be selected/appointed based on some algorithm involving representation from current committees and clusters, keeping the P&S committee membership at a smaller and more focused level. The Federation could then decide what role and responsibility the P&S committee would have, beyond the current Testbed activities, that would be useful in providing ongoing technological products and services for the community.

The recommendation would then be to change the Products & Service Committee from a standing committee to an administrative committee, with a more focused charge to oversee the review, selection, implementation, and maintenance of technological products and services to support ongoing and future needs of the ESIP Federation and it's members.

Current Products & Services Mission:

Section 2 – Standing Committee for Earth Science Products and Services

V.2.1 The ESIP Federation shall include a Standing Committee on Earth Science Products and Services. Its roles are:

a. To encourage the development, use and improvement of best science practices to ensure the quality, usability, and breadth of data and resultant information, products, and services;

b. To provide a Federation-wide forum for defining, developing and evaluating requirements for Federation Earth science products; and

c. To provide a Federation-wide forum for defining, developing and evaluating requirements for product services and user services.