

Summary of Advocacy Committee Meeting
January 16, 2013

1. Call to order

Jerry Parr called the meeting to order in Denver, CO, at 1:15 PM MST January 16, 2013. Attendance is recorded in Attachment 1.

2. Highlights of the Denver meeting

The committee reviewed highlights and requests for outreach from the Denver meeting. These topics included:

- NEFAP has requested additional focus on outreach from the Advocacy Committee. It was noted that TNI could increase membership by actively marketing to FMSOs.
- The Laboratory Accreditation Body (LAB) committee has made a proposal to the Board on the use of third party assessors. They are recommending a 4 part process and would like an article in the next newsletter.
- Committee membership and terms needs some attention. Many current committee members will reach their term limits during 2013. This is an opportunity to reach out for new blood on committees. Policy Committee may want to revise SOP to allow a waiver to term limits if certain members are need on administrative committees for their expertise.

3. Next Newsletter

The committee suggested the following topics for the next newsletter:

- LAB third party assessors – Lynn B. and Jeff Flowers
- Status of progress on standards
- NEFAP has recognized an AB
- Summary of cryptosporidium meeting
- Save the date for San Antonio
- Re-cap of Denver meeting
- TNI Board elections coming up
- NEFAP EC Board elections coming up
- Chemistry Committee report?
- NELAP-current status of 2009 standards implementation
- Summary of EDS training courses 2012-Jerry
- Regulatory update – Jerry
- Common audit deficiencies and how to address –Carl Kircher with Steve Gibson and Stephanie Drier
- Ask WEF for article about national lab accreditation survey
- Member profile – Gary Dechant –by Stephanie Drier

It was suggested that the TNI newsletter be sent to the state assessors group. Stephanie chairs that group and could facilitate. We can also cut out relevant articles and just send those.

Editor for the next newsletter is Michael Wichman. Volunteers (or volunteered) for upcoming newsletters are Steve Arms (Summer) and Martina McGarvey (Fall).

4. New Newsletter Formats

Comments on the two example versions of the new newsletter formats included:

- Some favored the Example # 1 with the green header. It was noted that Jan can change the header color on either format.
- The TNI logo needs to be added somewhere.
- Quick links to presentations from this meeting could be added.
- We will still need a pdf version of the newsletter to archive on the website.

5. Position Statements

The committee reviewed the position statement on quality systems for small laboratories. Members asked that staff go back to SLAG to see if they intended to target utility labs or small labs in general. It was also noted that EPA may be changing their terminology regarding quality systems and we should be consistent with EPA in our position statements. It was agreed that this position statement will be revised by the Advocacy Committee. Additional comments regarding position statements included:

- We need to have a process to notify the TNI membership when a position statement has been approved.
- We need to devise catchy, descriptive titles for position statements.
- We should re-visit the format and the SOP.

The committee agreed to address these issues at the next regular meeting.

6. Strategic planning

The committee reviewed “Strategy 2: Increase participation” from the most recent TNI strategic plan.

With respect to **Goal 2.1**, “Develop an effective system for states and federal agencies to participate in a national program without having to become Accreditation Bodies”, the committee agreed that TNI has done about all that can be done on this strategy. The NELAP AC has initiated calls including the non-NELAP states, but it does not appear that there is any interest in an affiliate/associate program for non-NELAP states within TNI.

Members agreed that almost all of the objectives under **Goal 2.2**, “Develop materials and provide assistance to accreditation stakeholders to make it easier for them to participate” had been accomplished. We have not pursued options for ISO 17024 certification (relates to assessor certification) but the general feeling is that it is not needed at this time. We should advise Elizabeth Turner to communicate to WEF that TNI will commit to 2 articles per year for the WE&T magazine.

Members agreed that some additional activity is needed under **Goal 2.3**, “Promote the benefits of accreditation to stakeholders, advocate for stronger support of accreditation from data users, and persuade data users to make accreditation mandatory”. Suggested additional actions under this goal included:

- Focus on marketing the NEFAP accreditation.
- Develop a half day targeted outreach program for organizations that rely on measurement data. We have an image problem in that we are still thought of as a laboratory organization. We should focus more on state and trade associations and measurement organizations.
- We should reach out to the Interstate Technology and Regulatory Council (ITRC).
- We should follow up with NIST and let them know that we are now doing accreditation of sampling organizations. Let them know we have consensus standards. Invite NIS to do a presentation about their activities at a TNI meeting. Gordon Gillerman is the contact.
- We should consider setting up meetings with EPA program offices and federal facilities to provide an update on TNI activities and FMSO accreditation. Other specific topics for discussion could include revisions to the method update rule. How can we help them implement the Field Operations Group (FOG) guidelines?
- We should design some promotional activities at NEMC for FMSO accreditation.
- We should consider social media for FMSO and other outreach, e.g. Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn.

7. Other

The Advocacy Committee will review committee membership at the next meeting and decide if additional representation from NEFAP is needed.

Jerry reported that ELAB had sent a letter to EPA (the FEM) that may have some misconceptions about TNI and lab accreditation. Jerry suggested that TNI needs to respond, but that we may not have time to do a complete response before the letter is considered by the FEM. Jerry will ask the Board to approve a letter from TNI asking that the FEM delay consideration until TNI has had an opportunity to review the letter and provide a complete response. Jerry suggested that the response should be drafted by the Advocacy Committee.

6. Next meeting

The next meeting of the Advocacy Committee will be on February 7, 2013, at 12 Noon CST.

Attachment 1

	Name	Stakeholder Group	Present/Absent
1.	Lara Phelps	EPA (Other)	Present
2.	Steve Arms	AB	Absent
3.	Lynn Bradley	Other	Present
4.	Judy Duncan	Other	Absent
5.	Kenneth Jackson	Other	Absent
6.	Martina McGarvey	AB	Present
7.	Susan Wyatt	AB	Absent
8.	Zonetta English	Lab	Absent
9.	Paula Hogg	Lab	Absent
10.	Elizabeth Turner	Lab	Absent
11.	Gary Ward	AB	Absent
12.	Michael Wichman	Lab	Absent
13.	Janice Willey	Federal	Present
14.	Keith Chapman	Small Lab Advocate	Absent
	Associate Members		
	Kirstin Daigle	Lab	Absent
	Judy Morgan	Lab	Absent
	Aurora Shields	Lab	Absent
	JoAnn Boyd	Lab and FAC	Absent
	Sharon Mertens	Utility lab	Present
	Stephanie Drier	AB	Present
	Staff		
	Jerry Parr	TNI ED	Present
	Carol Batterton	TNI PA	Present