

# TNI Board of Directors Meeting Summary

## July 14, 2010

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### 1. Roll Call and Approval of June Minutes

Directors	Present
Joe Aiello	X
Aaren Alger	X
Steve Arms	X
Susan Boutros	X
Judith Duncan	X
Robert DiRienzo	
Zonetta English	X
Jack Farrell	X
Ken Jackson	X
Sharon Mertens	X
Judy Morgan	X
Matt Sica	X
Alfredo Sotomayor	X
Dave Speis	X
Elizabeth Turner	X
Curtis Wood	
Bob Wyeth	
Ex-Officio Directors	
Brenda Bettencourt	X
Brooke Connor	X
George Detsis	
Edward Hartzog	X
Staff	
Carol Batterton	
Jerry Parr	X
Ilona Taunton	X
Jane Wilson	X
Janice Wlodarski	X

#### Approval of June 2010 Meeting Minutes:

Motion to Approve: Sharon Mertens  
 Second: Ken Jackson  
 Approved: Unanimous

Notes: Remove Attachments 1 & 3 from the Minutes.

### 2. Memo from NELAP Accreditation Council

See email from 7/7 that contained a memo from the NELAP Accreditation Council to the TNI Board along with two other background documents. This information is not included in the agenda due to the length of the material.

Aaren provided background to the thought processes that were behind the response. There are a number of action items that the council is working on and have asked the ABs to work on. Will set deadlines on next call and put a subcommittee together to review each item. Maybe the Task Force

could help with this. Also include recommendations that other groups are responsible for that could assist with.

*Questions/General Comments:*

(Steve/Jack) Root/Cause Analysis – was complete in some instances but perhaps not others.

(Aaren) Not formally reviewed with a root/cause analysis in mind. But most of the problem was that they were new activities. Mistakes, not the intent to try to get away with something or intentional errors.

(Steve) Process caused us to change the SOP for secondary evaluations – a good thing, process improvement.

(Alfredo) Appreciate the level of effort that was put into the response, even though it was long. Can we take what happened and put it in the light of what is going to happen? More useful to see how the new Standards may change the situation instead of continuing to analyze what happened and why.

(Steve) Several actions in the memo – tried to put a fire under ourselves to begin responding to those action items so we can have some things actually done by the meeting next month (Mike Shapiro).

(Aaren) Action items – have everything from PA but request was only a week ago – good to check because I can send out a reminder. Next call scheduled for Monday, July 19<sup>th</sup>. Can set deadlines then and put together a report for the August meeting. Did not get a lot of response when asked for a subcommittee.

(Aaren) What we need are a few people to review the documents that come in: most recent internal audit, resolution policy / how complaints are handled, asked for application to change – maybe ask instead how everyone is doing.

(Jerry) Maybe staff can help with reviews and summaries.

(Aaren) Need help with anything highlighted in red and noted as “Action Item”.

(Jerry) Can assign Lynn, Paul, or both – is Board okay with that? Yes. Jerry will contact Paul and Lynn and set a direction for how to handle.

(Sharon) A table of action items and who’s responsible, column for Complete – would be helpful.

(Jerry) Will put this table together. Can also use for the meeting with Michael Shapiro next month.

(Jerry) Task Force: Sharon, Lynn, Joe, plus someone from EPA Regions (Art). Tasks for Task Force: The 2 actions out of memo. Not to craft language but to make recommendations on the policy.

Goal: SOP to be presented in Washington. If Task Force is not finished with their job by Washington, input can be solicited and it can be completed in Washington. Meet with 3 key groups in Washington (Monday at lunch) to work on the SOP. The three groups to be invited to lunch are: AB Committee, Regional Evaluators, and NELAP Board. Will also include LAS ExC.

### **3. Renewal of NELAP Accreditation Bodies (Attachment 1)**

On June 21, the TNI Executive Director sent a memo to the NELAP Accreditation Council outlining a strategy for renewal of the current NELAP ABs. See Attachment 1. In their call of July 6, the NELAP Board was in agreement with this approach, pending concurrence of the TNI Board and the

Laboratory Accreditation System Executive Committee (LASEC). Although this issue has not yet been discussed by the LASEC, it seems appropriate to include this on the TNI Board agenda due to the August deadline for moving forward.

NELAP Council wanted vote of confidence from TNI BOD that we are in agreement with this direction.

**Motion for TNI BOD to Endorse This Recommended Time Cycle for Re-evaluation of ABs:**

Motion: Judy Duncan  
Second: Alfredo Sotomayor  
Approved: Unanimous

**4. Policy 1-107 Membership Code of Ethics (Attachment 2)**

**Motion for Endorse This Recommended Time Cycle for Re-evaluation of ABs:**

Motion: Jack Farrell  
Second: Sharon Mertens  
Approved: Unanimous

When someone renews, they will receive a checkbox to indicate that they agree with this policy.

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**Corporate Governance Document**

Document has been cleaned up and sent to Lynn Bradley to include in the Quality Plan.

**5. DC Meeting**

- The meeting in August is coming along well. Some discussion may be needed relative to the following sessions that will not be announced, and which will require some Board participation:
  - Date not set: Lunch meeting with Mike Shapiro relative to TNI's progress towards EPA Concerns, and other topics; likely to be Wednesday pm after the break. *Potential participants: Aaren, Steve, Jerry, Matt, Sharon*
  - Date not set: Meeting with Carrie Williams on EPA OW *cryptosporium* program. *Potential participants: Curtis Wood, Eric Smith, Sharon Mertens, Susan Boutros, Judy Morgan, Judy Duncan.*
  - Thursday, August 12; lunch with Water Laboratory Alliance representatives; Ken Jackson and Susan Boutros confirmed. *Also include Elizabeth Turner, Brenda Bettencourt, Jack Farrell.*

Jerry will finalize and send out information.

- TNI Board and Chairs meeting on Friday, 8/13, 8:30 – 12:00.
- If you do not have a hotel room, must get a reservation this week.

(Jack) Can we get a schedule of meetings that are not on the agenda? (Jerry) Yes. Everyone will have notecards with the meetings on them.

**6. NEFAP SOPs**

As discussed in the program reports, one SOP relating to TNI recognition of ABs has not been endorsed by the Policy Committee. All of the NEFAP SOPs will be provided to the Board for approval before August 1.

**7. Strategic Planning**

Thank you to everyone who participated in our June meeting in Orlando. Thanks to Carol's leadership, we have a draft plan of Strategies and Objectives. Using this document, all of the objectives have been organized into a table showing the responsible group, and a proposed deadline. **This table will need review and approval.** After approval by the Board, this table will be forwarded to the appropriate committees for their input, as well as to develop specific tasks.

Need to devote a specific meeting to review this information.

**8. Program Reports**

See Attachment 3. In reviewing the Program Reports, the TNI Board directed the Executive Director to inform Betsy Kent that all presentations at the mentor sessions and assessment forum that relate to the new standard in DC should only be provided by individuals who have actively participated in the TNI regional workshops as a presenter.

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**Attachment 1**  
**2011-2013 NELAP Evaluations**

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Most of the current AB certificates have arbitrary expiration dates of 6/30/2011 or 6/30/2012. Only Virginia has a date that is equal to 3 years from the date of recognition. (Note: Date of Recognition is not defined in the current evaluation SOP. This term is defined in this memo as the date the NELAP Board voted to recognize the AB. Alternate Dates could be two weeks after this date due to the email clause in SOP 3-100, or the date the letter was sent to the AB.)

These arbitrary dates have created two problems. First, with 6 ABs expiring on 6/30/2011 and 6 expiring on 6/30/2012, there is little flexibility in being able to manage the workload over a 3-year period. Second, and more importantly, the six expiring on 6/30/2011 would need to be evaluated to the 2003 NELAC standard since the new TNI standard does not go into effect for 24 hours, on July 1, 2011.

Certificates could be reissued with an expiration date of 3 years from the date of recognition, as currently allowed by the 2003 NELAC standard. This would allow all ABs to move to the new TNI standard later next year, and would provide more flexibility in conducting the evaluations. See the table below.

The evaluation SOP should be revised to include a definition of date of recognition and as well maybe some discussion about what 3 years means. As in the new standard for labs, 3 years could be plus or minus 6 months.

The advantages of making this move would be to spread out the evaluations over a three-year cycle and as well allow us to move to the new standard. The earliest any AB would need to be evaluated (KS, LA DHH, NH) would be September 2011. This could be possibly shifted a little later if 3 years is defined as +/- six months.

The plan would be as follows:

1. Issue new certificates this August at the meeting (and allow for a little recognition).
2. Conduct AB training on the new standard in August (with webinar follow-up).
3. Revise and finalize evaluation SOP 3-103 by October.
4. Conduct evaluator training in Savannah next January.
5. Implement new program on July 1, 2011, but let ABs know by December 19, 2010, 270 days from the date of when 2011 renewal letters would need to go out.

|               | <b>Application</b> | <b>NELAP<br/>Recognition</b> | <b>Expiration<br/>Date<sup>1</sup></b> | <b>3 Years from<br/>Recognition<sup>2</sup></b> |
|---------------|--------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| California    | 2/28/2008          | 5/4/2009                     | 6/30/2011                              | 5/3/2012                                        |
| Florida       | 2/4/2008           | 3/16/2009                    | 6/30/2011                              | 3/15/2012                                       |
| Kansas        | 2/29/2008          | 9/15/2008                    | 6/30/2011                              | 9/15/2011                                       |
| Illinois      | 11/21/2008         | 4/19/2010                    |                                        | 4/18/2013                                       |
| Louisiana DEQ | 11/24/2008         | 11/16/2009                   | 6/30/2012                              | 11/15/2012                                      |
| Louisiana DHH | 2/29/2008          | 9/15/2008                    | 6/30/2011                              | 9/15/2011                                       |
| New Hampshire | 2/8/2008           | 9/15/2008                    | 6/30/2011                              | 9/15/2011                                       |
| New York      | 2/25/2008          | 11/3/2008                    | 6/30/2012                              | 11/3/2011                                       |
| New Jersey    | 3/3/2008           | 2/23/2009                    | 6/30/2012                              | 2/23/2012                                       |
| Oregon        |                    | 12/10/2009                   | 6/30/2012                              | 12/9/2012                                       |
| Pennsylvania  | 2/28/2008          | 10/20/2008                   | 6/30/2011                              | 10/20/2011                                      |
| Texas         | 11/19/2008         | 9/8/2009                     | 6/30/2012                              | 9/7/2012                                        |
| Utah          | 3/4/2008           | 10/20/2008                   | 6/30/2012                              | 10/20/2011                                      |
| Virginia      | 3/23/2009          | 11/16/2009                   | 11/16/2012                             | 11/15/2012                                      |
| Minnesota     | 12/22/2009         |                              |                                        |                                                 |

1. Date included with letter/certificate
2. 3 years from Date of Recognition

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**Attachment 2**  
**Policy 1-107 Membership Code of Ethics**

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**1.0 Purpose and Applicability**

This policy describes the conditions by which individuals may serve as members of TNI or members of a TNI committee. This policy applies to all TNI members.

**2.0 Policy**

All members of The NELAC Institute shall agree to the following code of ethics:

No member shall:

- a. Authorize the use of, or use for the benefit or advantage of, any person, the name, logos, marks, endorsement, services, or property of TNI, except in conformance with TNI policy.
- b. Publicly use any TNI affiliation in connection with the promotion of partisan politics, religious matters, or positions on any issue not in conformity with TNI's mission or the official position of TNI.
- c. Within the restrictions that may be imposed by government bodies, disclose or use any information that is classified as confidential and/or protected that is available solely as a result of the member's affiliation with TNI to any person not authorized to receive such information, or use to the disadvantage of TNI any such confidential information, without the express authorization of TNI.
- d. Knowingly take any action or make any statement intended to influence the conduct of TNI in such a way as to confer any financial benefit on any person, corporation, or entity in which the individual has a significant interest or affiliation.
- e. Operate or act in any manner that is contrary to the best interests of TNI.

Failure to abide by this Code of Ethics may result in suspension or termination by the TNI Board of Directors of membership in TNI in general, or participation on TNI committees. Any affected individual will be notified in writing of any such suspension or termination.

Note: Policy 1-102 sets from the criteria for ethical behavior for individuals acting on behalf of TNI.

**3.0 Implementation of Policy**

This membership Code of Ethics will be implemented through the membership application process with a procedure requiring any prospective member to agree to the following statement: "I have read and agree to abide by the TNI Membership Code of Ethics."

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**Attachment 3**  
**Program Reports**

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**CONSENSUS STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT**

Unfortunately CSDB has not had a full meeting since March 2010. Chair Bob Wyeth had to step away temporarily during May and June, and April and July meetings did not have sufficient attendance to conduct business. Bob is attempting to reschedule a meeting for late July so CSDB can be back up to speed prior to the upcoming TNI/NEMC meeting.

Specific Expert Committee activities:

- Quality Systems completed drafting of Working Draft Standards for all their modules which should be posted on the TNI site shortly for comment and will be presented and discussed at the TNI/NEMC meeting. This is to incorporate a TIA and to clarify (but not change) requirements in a few areas. QS also recently completed responses to several SRIs. They are also reviewing a section of the draft QAM related to their modules.
- PT continues to work on development of TIAs for WET, micro and radiochemistry. These should be completed in time for posting before the TNI/NEMC meeting and will be discussed there as well. The TIAs still need review and approval by the CSDB prior to posting.
- SSAS continues to refine the central database for housing sample information. An outreach letter was sent through the EPA office to notify contacts about the process for registering as a database user which has received a good response. A subcommittee has completed an update of the SSAS table for inorganic constituents for the full expert committee review and is working on the organic portion. EPA timeline for release of new regulation is now end of July 2010.
- Other expert committees continue to work on items related to the implementation plan and preparation for their sessions at the TNI/NEMC meeting.

**NEFAP (including Field Activities Committee)**

- A presentation was made to the TNI Board in Orlando on June 25 to update them on NEFAP objectives and goals. The Board provided a strong endorsement of the planned activities for this program.
- All comments on the NEFAP SOPs have been addressed and final copies of the procedures have been forwarded to the Policy Committee. The Evaluation SOP required deletion of the definition for "Finding" in Section 4, but the remainder of the SOP is similar to the procedure distributed at the meeting in Orlando.
- The audit checklists, application and certificate will be complete before the end of the month. The budget will be worked on at the 6/16/10 meeting and then a meeting will be set-up with Dave Speis to prepare a Final DRAFT for TNI Board consideration. The Board is also preparing an overview document to accompany the finalized SOPs, documentation and budget. This should give the TNI Board background information to consider when approving all the new documents.
- NEFAP would still like to be accepting applications from ABs by August 2010.



- The agenda for the DC meeting is being planned. The morning will be set aside for NEFAP Board and FAC meetings and then the afternoon will be devoted to updates and training. Justin Brown is coordinating the day.

#### **Field Activities Committee**

- Bob and Marlene have been meeting with a newly established policy review sub-group to evaluate Lead PTs and details of the lead program. Future meeting will be held as part of the FAC meetings.

### **NELAP**

#### **Accreditation Council**

- The following ABs have paid recognition fees: VA, NJ, CA, and UT.
- The report on the MN onsite evaluation and lab observation has been sent to MN and a response is due this week.
- The NELAP AC has forwarded a detailed action plan in response to the memo from the TNI Board. The NELAP AC is requesting a joint TNI Board/AC task force on several items.
- The NELAP AC has agreed to identify in assessment reports the particular version of SW 846 methods being used by labs in order to simplify the mutual recognition issue.
- The NELAP AC has voted to accept in principle the modified renewal schedule proposed by Jerry Parr for the next round of AB recognitions. The revised schedule will put everyone under the new standards for the next round of AB renewals. However, the AC had concerns about their authority to adopt the revised schedule and will be requesting that the LAS EC and the TNI Board also review and adopt the schedule.
- The NELAP AC and the PT EC will meet jointly on July 15 to resolve some issues related to modifications to the DW FoPT and NPW FoPT tables.

#### **Technical Assistance Committee**

- TAC is continuing to plan sessions for the summer meeting. The Mentor session will include Part I "An introduction and Review of the ISO Changes Incorporated in the TNI Standard" (Betsy Kent) and Part II "Method Validation and DOC" (Maurice Downer). The afternoon session will include a Methods Panel with speakers from EPA.
- Jack Farrell and Alfredo Sotomayor are coordinating on elements of the CITF projects that will be included in the Assessment Forum as well as an overview of new EPA regulations.
- Special sessions for the ABs and EPA evaluators will include an overview of the accreditation body requirements in the new TNI standards and an enforcement workshop.
- TAC will meet over lunch at the DC meeting to review the draft training delivery SOP with training providers.
- SLAG is reviewing the "NELAP Simplified: A Handbook for Small Laboratories" which is in development to assist labs with implementation.
- The Quality Assurance Manual (QAM) Template workgroup met in Riverside, CA to work on the template face-to-face and to help with the TNI Standard training the next day. All sections of the manual have been started and many are just about completed. A DRAFT will be available at DC for the Monday morning

QAM Template meeting. The face-to-face meeting made a tremendous difference in people's understanding of what is needed. Once the sections are completed, Ilona will review it for consistency and content. The manual will then be forwarded to Jan for clean-up. The group is starting a list of what documents/forms/examples are needed to help laboratories prepare a manual – this will be part of an on-line tool. A new document sharing program is now being used to help with the preparation of the manual. Each section has a cover sheet for comments and recommended text additions. The target is August for an initial DRAFT of the template and then the team will work on finalization and tools with an effective date in December 2011.

- Additional regional workshops on the new standards are planned for the following locations:

| <b>Date/Location</b>           | <b>Lead</b> | <b>Other Speakers</b> | <b>Lead organization</b> |
|--------------------------------|-------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| July 20: Lancaster, PA         | Jack        | Aaren                 | PAAEL                    |
| August 13: Washington, DC      | Jerry       | Jim, Michael, Scott   | TNI                      |
| September 20: Houston, TX      | Carol       | Tom/Michael/Linda     | TNI                      |
| September 21: San Antonio, TX  | Carol       | Tom/Michael           | TNI                      |
| September 24: Seattle, WA      | Jerry       | Jack/Gary             | TNI                      |
| December 3: Chicago, IL        | Jerry       |                       | IAETL                    |
| February 3, 2011: Savannah, GA | TBD         |                       | TNI                      |
| Fall 2010: St. Paul, MN        | Jerry       | Susan                 | TNI                      |
| Fall 2010: Las Vegas, NV       | Jack        |                       | TNI                      |
| Fall 2010: Baton Rouge, LA     | Linda       |                       | TNI                      |
| Fall 2010: Miami, FL           | Silky       |                       | FSEA                     |
| Fall 2010: Northern California | Jack        | Diane                 | TNI                      |
| Fall 2010: Knoxville, TN       | Ilona       |                       | TNI                      |
| Fall 2010: Cincinnati, OH      | Jerry       |                       | TNI                      |
| Spring 2011: Des Moines, IA    |             |                       | Iowa group               |

**Laboratory Accreditation System Executive Committee**

- Standards Interpretation Request (SIR) process:
  - 1 request was received in June and it was determined that it was not a standard interpretation request. It was an AB and laboratory dispute. The inquirer has been notified.
  - June has finished reviewing 12 of the 36 SIRs being prepared for the NELAP Board's review. Aaren is also working on 12 responses. Ilona will get together with William to put new review and approval instructions in place and we will begin posting these responses next week for the NELAP Board vote. These actions are being taken due to the concerns raised about the original responses: grammatical errors and opinions were added to the response beyond the interpretation requested.
  - Ilona will prepare an initial Draft SOP for the Standards Interpretation Request process by the end of August.
- The DRAFT Implementation Project Summary will be distributed to all the committee and board chairs for one last review this week. William has been contacted to look at options of where and how to post to the website. This should be up before the end of the month and can be mentioned as an additional tool during one of the TAC trainings in DC.
- A subcommittee has been formed to review the DRAFT Quality Systems checklist that was forwarded to LASC by the QS Expert Committee. The group will be looking at the results of a recent survey of the ABs asking how they currently use the checklist and what suggestions for improvement they have. The group will be providing a list of recommendations to the QS Expert Committee.

### **Consistency Improvement Task Force**

- The CITF has developed an outline for the white paper: **Establishing Realistic Expectations about Consistency**.
- The **On-Site Assessments of Laboratories** workgroup is developing a blue print for onsite assessment reports, keeping in mind points of major inconsistency in current reports.
- The **Evaluations of Accreditation Bodies** workgroup is developing the elements of a consistency plan for ABs.
- The **Laboratories and Users of Laboratory Services** workgroup is focusing on a Bill of Rights for labs.
- CITF will be presenting their progress and work products to date at the summer meeting during the Assessment Forum.

### **PT PROGRAM**

- The Chem FoPT Subcommittee is continuing to work on limit updates. The subcommittee just completed the experimental analytes for the Solids and Chemical Wastes FoPT table. The table is expected to be turned into the PT Board before their next meeting. The subcommittee will begin work on the remaining drinking water analytes that were not experimental.
- The Field PT Subcommittee is continuing to analyze the data they have received. Questions are being raised regarding the ability of the field instruments to hit required limits that are being met in fixed based labs. The group plans to do a 20 minutes presentation in DC to update members on progress.
- The PT Board finalized an update to the PTPA Evaluation SOP. This SOP has been updated to include a new checklist based on the new standards. New language has been added to allow non-PT Board members to participate in the audits. The update has been sent to the Policy Committee for review. All other SOPs were forwarded to Board members present at the Orlando meeting.
- A tentative team has been selected to perform A2LA's audit – both members of the team are PT Expert Committee members.
- A joint meeting with the NELAP Board has been scheduled for this Thursday to discuss FoPT tables. There are a number of analytes on the table that failed more than one criteria recommended in the Limit Update SOP. The NELAP Board has raised some concerns regarding this issue. They will also discuss the issue of data for Mid-level PTs, but no Low Level data.
- The PT Board provided a DRAFT letter to the TNI Board recommending that A2LA be approved as a TNI PTPA related to the SSAS program.

### **ADMINISTRATION**

#### **Advocacy Committee**

- Advocacy will meet with stakeholder organizations during the TNI meeting in Washington, DC, in August. Organizations that have been invited are WEF, AWWA and NACWA. NACWA has indicated they will participate.

- New areas of focus for Advocacy in the coming year will be increasing awareness of data users and quantifying the assimilation of NELAP standards and procedures into non-NELAP state programs.
- Advocacy is seeking new members.

**Policy Committee**

- The Policy Committee is continuing to define the needed elements for a global TNI compliant SOP.
- The Policy Committee approved the following policies and SOPs for the NEFAP program: SOP 10-101-General Operations, 102-Voting, 103-Nominations, and SOP 10-104-Dispute Resolution. NEFAP 10-105 Evaluation Procedure is currently being reviewed and discussed. The Policy Committee recommends that the TNI Board approve these SOPs until after the planning meeting in Orlando.
- The Policy Committee is discussing levels of approval needed for guidance and will be proposing a Guidance SOP soon.

**Membership Report: June 2010**

Active Members: 672