

# TNI Board of Directors Meeting Summary

## July 10, 2013

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### 1. Roll Call

Directors	Present
Joe Aiello	X
Aaren Alger	X
Steve Arms	
Judith Duncan	X
Zonetta English	
Jack Farrell	X
Keith Greenaway	
Sharon Mertens	X
Judy Morgan	X
Patsy Root	X
Scott Siders	X
Alfredo Sotomayor	
Dave Speis	
Elizabeth Turner	X
Susan Wyatt	
Ex-Officio Directors	
Brenda Bettencourt	X
Brooke Connor	X
George Detsis	X
Jordan Adelson	X
Staff	
Lynn Bradley	X
Carol Batterton	X
Ken Jackson	X
Jerry Parr	X
Ilona Taunton	X
Janice Wlodarski	X

### 2. Approval of June Minutes

Changes: Add Joe Aiello to roll call.

**Motion to Approve:** Patsy Root  
**Second:** Joe Aiello  
**Abstentions:** Aaren Alger  
**Approved:** Approved

### 3. Position Statement on Quality Systems

In 2011, the Advocacy Committee started an effort to develop Position Statements, and in February this year, the Board approved an SOP relating to this effort, SOP 1-118. Since that time, the Advocacy Committee has been working to finalize on such statement to use as a model for other in development. This first statement is focused on the importance of a quality system for a laboratory and was included as a separate file.

*Discussion:*

From position statement should flow the policies and procedures. We don't want them to contradict anything already established. Do we need a disclaimer "should not contradict... if it does, policies and procedures carry weight..."

We have the Policy committee review date... is that enough? Yes.

Regarding the text box – is that the position statement and do we need to label it as such? It is ok as is.

Why is it "small" laboratory quality systems – because it started in the SLAG. This seems contradictory to the position of TNI -- "regardless of size"... This was written for the small lab community but this is a good point. The title is misleading, but if we retitle it, then we have to rewrite it.

Slightly reword the title: "Quality Management Systems" to "Laboratory Quality Management Systems – Applicability to Small Labs"? The Advocacy Committee will tweak a little more.

This will be a controlled document.

Last sentence of background "However, EPA recognizes and accepts accreditation to the TNI Standard as equivalent to their certification..." We should have this letter in the references.

Should we tie the competency statement into this? Good idea but it is a separate thing. We can probably use another position statement. Add as a bullet and reference.

Status of the overall quality management position statement – Advocacy Committee is working on this.

Why is this written for labs and not for labs and field? This is designed for small labs. We will have another one that relates to field.

Next steps: Final changes, then final review and approval.

#### **4. Ex-Officio Members of the Board**

This topic was discussed in June with a request for Federal officials on the Board to seek additional information from their agencies.

There are no objections to giving ex-officio members the vote, except in financial matters. Brenda needs to hear yet from EPA that it's acceptable for her situation.

We would have to amend the Bylaws. Policy needs to start looking at the Bylaws for changes as well as explore the issue that the ex-officio members are appointed, not elected. We need to make sure that it is clear to the membership that ex-officio members are appointed but we are giving them the vote.

The Policy Committee needs to study to see what needs to be addressed. Some concerns can be covered by the provisions for any other board member. If they cannot be covered the same way, then maybe those things need to be changed.

How are ex-officio members appointed? We don't have this process documented anywhere and should put this in place.

The Policy Committee will continue the discussion on this and keep us up to date on findings and recommendations.

The Advocacy Committee is asked to do outreach to some of the other agencies – homeland security, FDA, Agriculture, etc.

**5. Program Reports (Attachment 1)**

## Attachment 1 PROGRAM REPORTS

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### CONSENSUS STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT

- The Consensus Standards Development Executive Committee (CSDEC) is putting the final touches to its revision of SOP 2-100 (Procedures Governing Standards Development). It will describe a major revision to the standards development process that will incorporate the recommendations of the Corrective Action *ad hoc* committee and input received during its discussion at the Denver meeting in January. When complete it will be forwarded to the Policy Committee.
- In conformance with ANSI requirements, a notice of proposed standards activity was published on the TNI website on June 24. It announced that the TNI Microbiology and Radiochemistry Expert Committees propose to revise Modules 5 (Microbiological Testing) and 6 (Radiochemical Testing) respectively of Volume 1 of the 2009 TNI Environmental Laboratory Sector Standard. The revisions will reflect changing needs in laboratory testing, quality assurance and quality control. The announcement invites all affected stakeholders to participate and comment on these activities. It also invites comments from anyone asserting that the proposed standards duplicate or conflict with existing consensus standards developed by another recognized organization.
- The Stationary Source Audit Sample Program, using the TNI standard, was officially implemented by EPA on June 16, 2013. There are now two approved audit sample providers.
- The Laboratory Proficiency Testing (PT) Expert Committee plans to host a webinar on July 18. The committee will present its Modified Working Draft Standard on the PT modules of the Laboratory and Accreditation Body volumes of the Environmental Sector standard. It is hoped in particular that representatives of the NELAP Accreditation Bodies will attend the webinar. The committee has decided to re-write the PT provider volume (Volume 3) as a shorter version containing only those TNI requirements that are supplemental to ISO 17043 (General requirements for the competence of reference material providers) and Guide 34 (Conformity assessment — General requirements for proficiency testing). The TNI volume will assume PT providers are already accredited to those ISO requirements (as they are currently).
- The Chemistry Expert Committee will present at the San Antonio meeting its draft revision of the EPA document “Appendix B to Part 136 – Definition and Procedure for the Determination of MDL”. It will be reviewed by an advisory group (yet to be established) prior to its submission to EPA. The committee is now organizing the comments received from voters on its Calibration VDS, and will discuss them publicly in San Antonio. Several people have applied to be Committee Members, including 3 Accreditation Body representatives. It is planned to appoint new members prior to the San Antonio meeting.
- The Quality Systems Expert Committee is working on the Small Laboratory Handbook and Quality Manual review. It is planned to add some new members due to a retirement and a resignation.
- The Microbiology Expert Committee is continuing to work with the Quality Systems committee on the small laboratory handbook, having taken over the microbiology section. Ambiguities in the existing standard are hampering the handbook, and those aspects of the standard will be addressed in due course. The committee is collecting information on parasitology and hopes to recruit a Giardia/Cryptosporidium expert in due course.
- The Radiochemistry Committee met this month and is continuing to edit the standard. They hope to complete the DRAFT edits during the San Antonio meeting and then review the standard to start preparation of the formal Working Draft Standard.
- The Laboratory Accreditation Body Committee is reviewing the streamlined Compliance Checklist used for AB Evaluations (the “Technical Review Checklist”) and this effort will be completed prior to conference. The LAB deferred the Evaluation SOP review to LAS EC. Jeff Flowers, LAB Chair, is

working with the IT Committee to address issues requiring resolution before web development work about the Generic Application can begin. The most difficult issue will be how to accommodate the ever-changing Fields of Accreditation in a way that will make the application useful to ABs but not impossibly difficult for labs. Development of a web page listing individuals and companies available for Third Party Assessor contracts is underway; once the web page with approved templates is available, the LAB Chair will send invitations to participate to all known candidates and the availability of this page will be announced in the next TNI Newsletter.

## **NEFAP**

- The Mobile laboratory survey was sent out and the responses were summarized and sent to the subcommittee. This subcommittee will meet in July to review the results and determine next steps.
- The EC has received a copy of the Interim Standard for review and discussion next week. They have 30 days to get comments back to the FAC.
- The most recent evaluation process has raised some questions about determining FSMO scopes. The EC is looking at the standard, collecting member comments and will discuss this in San Antonio. There are some strong opinions on this topic.
- AB Accreditation: The Evaluation Team is completing their final report. Ilona has pulled all parts of the application and supporting documents that the Recognition Subcommittee needs to complete the accreditation process. She will add the final Evaluation report when she receives it and the subcommittee will then begin their work.
- The Evaluation SOP update is being worked on and will be a topic of discussion in San Antonio.
- Continued follow-up on training needs for Recognition Subcommittee. One member still needs to complete the quiz for the webcast, but all subcommittee members have reviewed the webcast or participated in the original Webinar.
- The EC will review and discuss the Nomination SOP in San Antonio.
- Scott Evans distributed a final DRAFT to the subcommittee working on the NEFAP training SOP. The subcommittee has not been able to meet to finalize the DRAFT. A new target deadline of San Antonio can be expected.
- The charter is being updated to the new format.

## **Field Activities Expert Committee (FAC)**

- The FAC did not meet in June.
- There were no changes in vote on the modified standard that was posted on the website. The standard is now the Interim Standard and has sent to the NEFAP EC for a 30 day review period. The next step will be the CSDP review.
- The committee has started working with the NEFAP EC on mobile lab issues. John is the FAC representative on this committee.
- The FSMO tool subcommittee has not met, but a meeting will be planned in July.
- The committee will begin work to update the NEFAP brochure. They will work with the NEFAP EC and Advocacy to do this.
- A new Advocacy summary has been added as a permanent addition to the minutes each month until the website is ready.

## NELAP

### Accreditation Council

- Four AB evaluations are still in process, with varied reasons for delays. None have substantial non-conformance issues, but workloads plus programmatic and legislative changes seem to have conspired to make these drag out interminably. For the next round of AB evaluations, beginning December 2015, the AC has determined to utilize Third Party Evaluators (TPE) as Lead Evaluators with a state AB person as the 2<sup>nd</sup> team member. EPA regional evaluators may join the team if the region chooses to continue participating with NELAP; this may be as many as half of the regions.
- The third quarterly assessor call was held on June 3 with good attendance and participation. MN led this conversation, on the topic of AB Evaluations of PTs Using the 2003 NELAC and 2009 TNI Standards.
- On June 17, the AC met with Carrie Miller and Dan Hautman of EPA's Technical Support Center in the Ground Water and Drinking Water Program to gather more information about the Agency's expectations of states that choose to participate in accrediting labs to perform *Cryptosporidium* analyses.

### Laboratory Accreditation System Executive Committee (LAS EC)

- All outstanding Standards Interpretation Requests have been reviewed by the LAS EC SIR Subcommittee, and decisions made about how to proceed. The oldest SIRs that were previously reviewed by the AC have been reviewed by the Subcommittee and the final response approved by the full LAS EC. All of the revised responses will soon be posted to the AC voting site so that the NELAP ABs can review and approve them as implementable and enforceable.
- The Assessment Forum and the Mentor Session for conference in San Antonio have been finalized well in advance of the meeting.
- The LAS finalized a policy requested by the AC, about when ABs need to notify the AC of operational changes and how to determine the degree of scrutiny that those changes might warrant. This policy was then referred to the AC for its consideration and adoption.
- The reviews and revisions to the SIR SOP and the NELAP Evaluation SOP are approaching completion. The Evaluation SOP will be re-reviewed to ensure that the earlier anticipated usage of TPEs is appropriately addressed.
- Under Judy Morgan's leadership, Associate and Full members of the LAS EC have worked diligently to accomplish these items since formally merging with the Technical Assistance Committee in late February of this year.
- Standards Interpretation Request (SIR) update:

Total Number of SIRs	SIRs Closed Out	SIRs in NELAP AC	SIRs To Be Responded To: Quality Systems Expert	SIRs Being Redirected
229	171	43	15	2

## PROFICIENCY TESTING

### PT Program Executive Committee (PTP EC)

- The Chemistry FoPT Subcommittee is continuing to work on the Solid Chemicals and Materials FoPT table. The NELAP AC has been sent requests to review a couple of footnote clarifications to the DW table.
- The Microbiology FoPT Subcommittee will be meeting July 16<sup>th</sup> to begin finalizing some recommendations for the July PTP EC meeting.
- Stacie and Ilona met with each of the PTPAs to discuss ideas and options for evaluating the PT Program. The call with the subcommittee to finalize a recommendation for evaluating the program had to be canceled and is being rescheduled in July prior to the next PTP EC meeting.
- The PTP SOP Subcommittee is still working on the comments received from the Policy Committee on SOP 4-107: FoPT Table Management SOP. The subcommittee is reformatting the SOP to make it flow better and it will be reviewed at the July PTP EC meeting.
- The position paper is on schedule to be finalized in San Antonio. The paper describes TNI's philosophy behind PTs and it will be submitted to Advocacy.
- The committee is looking for a new AB member.
- The committee added an agenda item to the San Antonio meeting to seek PT program concerns.

## ADMINISTRATION

### Advocacy Committee

- A planning call with speakers for the half day session in San Antonio tentatively titled: The Benefits of Accreditation in the Environmental Measurement and Monitoring Community is scheduled for July 22.
- The next newsletter is on track to be published this week.
- The Advocacy Committee has begun work on the next position statement which is a general quality systems position.
- The Advocacy Committee will solicit comments in San Antonio on a handbook for good practices for environmental laboratories.

### Non-Governmental Accreditation Bodies

- The NGAB working group has begun development of draft language for the evaluation SOP. This will be discussed in San Antonio.

### Finance Committee

- The Finance Committee met and discussed options for graphically presenting financial information for the annual report, and also briefly reviewed the current financial information. Second quarter financial statements should be available in late June.

## **Information Technology Committee**

- The committee has begun work on generic application and continues to discuss the methods compendium effort outlined in the EPA cooperative agreement. A draft Development Plan has been prepared and a beta version of the compendium is planned to be available by the San Antonio meeting.

## **Policy Committee**

- The Policy Committee plans to present its training session on the recently approved Committee Operations SOP 1-101 during the second half of the Monday morning session at conference. This training will include guidance about committee member conduct that is presently in development.
- Policy 1-122, Determining Stakeholder Category of Committee Members was finalized in June and presented to the Board for approval at its June meeting.
- Reviews of several NEFAP SOPs were initiated but after initial discussions, the NEFAP Executive Committee determined to withdraw those from the queue for further Executive Committee deliberations.
- Position Statement POS 1204, Small Laboratory Quality Systems, was approved by the committee for presentation to the Board for adoption. This is the first of many TNI Position Statements, and originated with the Advocacy Committee.

## **Training**

- The next Brown Bag training is planned for July 12<sup>th</sup>.
- The technical webinar regarding bromate and perchlorate was completed. There was some confusion on start time, but the availability of the Webcast will take care of any issues. The next course date has not been determined yet.
- In Progress: The review of the ethics training has been expanded to add information about a 5 minute portion of the training where the microphone was not working. Language has been agreed on to provide information about using the Ethics training for annual and refresher training. Jack has decided to prepare a 5 minute webcast that will be added to the training. This should be complete in the next few weeks.
- 2013 goals: Progress was made on preparing the documentation for formally distributing CEUs. Ilona has started work on a document to help people determine Learning Outcomes.
- Training certificates for completed webcasts were prepared and distributed.
- Work with Webex on a few documentation bugs that have surfaced.

## **2013 Environmental Measurement Symposium – San Antonio, Texas**

- All abstracts and biographies are posted on the NEMC website within the Technical Program.
- Updates to the website have occurred so that papers and presentations can now be submitted. Presentations are due next week and a detailed reminder for each session went out on Monday.
- There have been a number of changes in presenter, but this is normal and all updates are being tracked by the database.
- The final program is being worked on and documents have been distributed for review as this gets finalized.
- The agenda for all TNI meetings have been finalized and will be posted this week.
- Presentations are due earlier this year because we will be reviewing the actual presentations before the conference. There were a number of format issues raised last year, so we will work on these with

the presenters ahead of time. This earlier date also gives session chairs an opportunity to review the presentations for content to confirm consistency with the abstract and good flow within the session.

- Final decisions were made on conference gifts and the drawing for on-time presentation submissions.
- Registration is currently over 400 and the hotel room block is almost completely sold out. The room block is well above the minimum in the contract.
- No special meetings have been scheduled.

### **Membership Report**

- There were 3 new committee applications this month. Requests were for LAB, Quality Systems, PT Expert and SSAS.
- Active Members: 882