

TNI Board of Directors Meeting Summary August 9, 2013

1. Roll Call

Directors	Present
Joe Aiello	
Aaren Alger, Vice Chair	
Steve Arms	X
Judith Duncan	
Zonetta English	
Jack Farrell	X
Keith Greenaway	
Sharon Mertens, Chair	X
Judy Morgan	X
Patsy Root	
Scott Siders	
Alfredo Sotomayor	X
Dave Speis	
Elizabeth Turner	X
Susan Wyatt	X
Ex-Officio Directors	
Brenda Bettencourt, EPA	X
Brooke Connor, USGS	
George Detsis, DOE	
Jordan Adelson, DoD	X
Staff	
Lynn Bradley	X
Carol Batterton	X
Ken Jackson	X
Jerry Parr	X
Ilona Taunton	X
Janice Wlodarski	
Committee Chairs Present	
Richard Burrows, Chemistry	X
Robin Cook, Microbiology	X
Maria Freidman, SSAS	X
Paul Junio, Quality Systems	X
Shawn Kassner, PT Expert	X
Carl Kircher, Vice Chair, LAB	X
Bob Wyeth, CSD EC	X

Sharon opened the meeting by thanking everyone for a great conference, and noting that this meeting was entirely for the Board to receive summary reports from the various committee sessions of the Forum on Laboratory Accreditation. She asked that the presenter for each committee give the highlights of that session and also indicate how much time the group will need for conference in Louisville, KY, and whether a teleconference line will be requested, given that virtually all groups operated without teleconferences in San Antonio, due to the technical difficulties. Reports are presented in the order given, below.

Laboratory Accreditation Systems Executive Committee – Judy Morgan
 Louisville – ½ day; speakerphone – TBD

The committee completed revisions to the SOP for SIR Management, designed to make the review and response to requests for interpretation of the NELAP standards more efficient and timely. A vote was initiated, with absent members to be polled by email (NOTE: the revisions were approved August 27, 2013.) She also noted that the LAS EC's next major push will be to finalize and approve the NELAP Evaluation SOP to recommend to the NELAP AC for its use with the upcoming round of evaluations.

Proficiency Testing Expert Committee – Shawn Kassner
Louisville – ½ day; speakerphone – TBD

Shawn thanked the retiring chair, Mitzi Miller, for her hard work. The committee began addressing the copious on its revision of the standard, and noted that it will begin revising Volume 3 to accommodate ISO/IEC 17043 updates.

Laboratory Accreditation Body Expert Committee – Carl Kircher
Louisville – ½ day; speakerphone -- TBD

LAB is functioning smoothly since the merger of the Accreditation Body and On-site Assessment Committees last year. Members presented updates on the generic application, with upcoming reviews of the Database Development Plan, as well as the planned Third Party Assessor page for the Resources section of the TNI website. The review and approval of streamlined and color-coded NELAP Compliance Checklist for Evaluating ABs was discussed in detail. In his position representing TNI on the ANSI committee which will cast the US vote with CASCO, about whether to revise ISO/IEC 17022, Carl noted that he intends to vote to affirm the standard as written, but that it is likely the votes to revise the standard will carry instead.

Chemistry Expert Committee – Richard Burrows
Louisville – full day; speakerphone – no

The committee reviewed all comments on the draft standard. None were resolved but all of those designated “persuasive” were assigned. The group also edited the MDL document.

Quality Systems Expert Committee – Paul Junio
Louisville – ½ day; speakerphone – no

QS addressed many comments on the Small Lab Handbook. Paul noted that the revisions to the Quality Manual template had gotten derailed but are now restarted in a new direction.

NELAP Accreditation Council – Susan Wyatt
Louisville – ½ day; speakerphone – yes

Regarding implementation of the 2009 TNI Standard, nearly all ABs are assessing against it either formally or informally even though not all have been able to adopt the new standard into regulations. Four of the fifteen evaluations for renewal of recognition of NELAP ABs remain underway. Phenomenal progress has occurred on the backlog of Standards Interpretation Requests, and the Council has adopted a new policy, recommended by the LAS EC, regarding what operational changes require an AB to notify the Council and how to determine whether further review or evaluation is needed as response to the change(s).

AC members appreciate that the PT Expert Committee listened to and is beginning to address the concerns of the ABs with the previous draft revisions, and that the Chemistry Committee has ruled persuasive most of the AB concerns with the calibration draft standard, and assigned Gary Ward (OR) to address them. Finally, a sidebar meeting between the Board, the AC and EPA drinking water program representatives has resulted in agreement that there is no need to modify the Microbiology part of Volume 1 and there is general agreement about how to move forward with establishing state

AB accreditations for *Cryptosporidium* that will be accepted as “equivalent” by the EPA. An implementation plan will be presented in Louisville.

Microbiology Expert Committee -- Robin Cook

Louisville – ½ day; speakerphone – yes

The Small Laboratory Handbook has been revised in 5 areas to clarify the language. One additional area cannot be “fixed” but the committee will prepare a guidance document for that topic. No changes are needed to accommodate crypto accreditations.

Stationary Source Audit Sample Program – Maria Friedman

Louisville – ½ day; speakerphone – yes

The committee updated its charter and is updating the standard in areas of ordering audit samples and reporting results. The committee plans to teleconference with user lab to hear those concerns and problems, and hopes to have a revised standard for vote (either as working draft or voting draft version) by Louisville.

Radiation Expert Committee – Ilona Taunton

Louisville – ½-to-full day; speakerphone – yes

The committee was able to review 10 of 13 sections of its draft standard and expects to have a Working Draft Standard by Louisville.

NEFAP Executive Committee – Ilona Taunton

Louisville – ½ day; speakerphone – nice but not necessary

The committee discussed the issue of mobile labs and how the fine line between field analyses and mobile lab analyses makes it difficult to determine which program mobile labs best fit into. A new NEFAP AB is coming online soon, and the Evaluation SOP and Charter are being updated.

Field Activities Committee (Expert Committee) – Ilona Taunton

Louisville – ½ day; speakerphone – nice but not critical

The Interim Standard has been sent to CSD EC by the NEFAP EC, after its review. The NEFAP brochure will be updated by the end of August and reprinted for use with outreach in September and October especially. The committee is working on tools for implementing the standard.

Consensus Standards Development Executive Committee – Bob Wyeth

Louisville – ½ day; speakerphone – no

Much of the past year has been spent revising SOP 2-100, “Procedures Governing Standards Development,” to incorporate all recommendations of the Corrective Action Task Force. Changes (about timing of implementing TIAs) made during this meeting will require a re-ballot within the committee before final approval. The committee recommends a webinar for the Standards Development Process be created and hopes for early stakeholder participation in learning to use the new procedures, particularly from LAS EC and the AB representatives.

The CSD EC will fill the role of the newly defined Standards Review Council, for this version of the SOP (and the presently-in-progress revisions to the standard) – this is an editorial check, not technical. The committee also discussed how and where to halt the module revisions in order to prepare for a 2015 document, since the PT revisions won’t be completed soon enough; they propose a cut-off date so the revised standard can go through the entire process all at once.

CSD EC will propose to the Board a Toxicity Expert Committee in the near future, due to interest levels identified during conference.

Proficiency Testing Executive Committee – Carl Kircher

Louisville – ½ day; speakerphone – yes

Eric Smith was elected as Vice Chair. The microbiology subcommittee recommended not specifying strains of micro species and the full committee approved the recommendation. PT asked for a toxicity expert committee and hopes that the Whole Effluent Toxicity Testing subcommittee will be able to work with that new group. Reports from both PT Provider Accreditors were received and the two PTPA organizations are discussing the possibility of pooling the PT data to improve their operations. A new position paper on PT was approved and will be forwarded to the Advocacy Committee as part of TNI's efforts to document its belief statements. PT EC discussed inconsistencies among ABs and recommended a change to PTs by method.

Advocacy Committee – Steve Arms

Louisville – ½ Day; speakerphone -- No

Advocacy sponsored a session on the Importance of Competency, and hopes to use elements of that forum in future webinars and newsletter articles. In the actual committee meeting, they reviewed that session and also plan to review the EPA Forum on Environmental Measurements' letter response to the ELAB letter to EPA about the state of national accreditation, and provide recommendations to the Board about how to proceed. Steve offered a motion, and Jack seconded, requesting the Board to formally task the Advocacy Committee for that assignment, and after determining that 7 Board members were present, a vote was taken and the motion passed. Other activities underway include multiple position papers in development, planning for the next newsletter (publication date estimated as November 1) and development of a handbook for good laboratory practice aimed at an audience of laboratories and laboratory workers (timeline TBD.)

Non-Governmental Accreditation Body Workgroup

Louisville – ½ day; speakerphone – no

This workgroup has attained agreements in principle about a recognition committee and framework for an Evaluation SOP.

Policy Committee – Alfredo Sotomayor

Louisville – TBD – no

This session piloted a training course on the Committee Operations SOPs (1-101 and 2-101) to include the developing guidance on conduct, and took feedback from the audience. The Guidance on Conduct has been approved by the committee and will be presented to the Board at the next opportunity.

Information Technology Committee – Dan Hickman

Louisville – TBD; speakerphone – no

Dan substituted for the Chair of this committee and noted that a ninth AB is putting Field of Accreditation data into LAMS, and hopes that the remaining six ABs will soon contribute their FoA data as well, making LAMS available at its full potential. The generic application is progressing, with a draft Database Development Plan ready for committee review and then for review by the LAB Expert Committee and LAS EC. Dan is working on the goal of a methods compendium by including in LAMS copies of all methods or links to where the method(s) may be purchased, for Standard Methods, AOAC, ANSI and other non-free sources.

Environmental Laboratory Advisory Board – Jack Farrell, TNI representative

The Designated Federal Official, Lara Phelps, clarified the altered document distribution policy. All documents may be distributed at any stage now, whereas previously only final documents could be

circulated outside of the ELAB membership. It will be important to distinguish drafts from final versions. Otherwise the presentation from the ELAB meeting will be posted with the other meeting presentations.

Assessment Forum – Jack Farrell

Louisville – full day; speakerphone – no

This conference's Assessment Forum was well received – a presentation about using ISO AB's interpretations of the 17025 standard to comply with the TNI ELSS. Jack indicated that only the management portion of the standard was covered. Barbara Escobar is transitioning into leadership of the Forum and moderated this conference's session.

Conference Planning Committee – Jerry Parr

Louisville – lunch; speakerphone – no

The Louisville agenda will be similar to Denver, with a 2-hour ELAB and reports from the TNI program executive committees on Monday morning, then half-day sessions Monday afternoon thru Thursday morning, ending at noon on Thursday. A half-day workshop on the Defense Department's Quality System Manual is planned for Thursday afternoon.

Full committee reports are planned for the NEMC in DC, summer 2014 at the Hyatt on Capitol Hill, and possibly reports from the NELAP ABs that are switching over to use of contract assessors, as well. The January 2015 conference will be a 20th anniversary celebration at the Hyatt Crystal City Hotel, the same venue as the initial NELAC meeting in 1995. Later conferences will be on the southwest coast, then the deep southeast (Tampa or Savannah) and likely the northeast for the August 2017 timeframe. Jerry indicated that a draft schedule would be distributed to committee chairs soon.

Jerry asked that chairs keep their committee rosters up-to-date, and that rosters and charters for Expert Committees be provided to the CSD EC while those for other program committees should be verified and sent to him. He noted sizable delays at the airport, purportedly typical for a Friday in San Antonio, but warned travelers to allow sufficient time.

Sharon thanked everyone for their reports, and for a great meeting, with special thanks to Jerry and the staff. Jack moved and Robin seconded that the meeting adjourn.