

TNI Board of Directors Meeting Summary August 12, 2015

1. Roll Call and Approval of May and June Minutes

Directors	Present
Jordan Adelson	
Aaren Alger	X
Steve Arms	
Justin Brown	
Scot Cocanour	
George Detsis	
Zonetta English	
Jack Farrell	X
Keith Greenaway	
Myron Gunsalus	X
Sharon Mertens	X
Judy Morgan	X
Lara Phelps	
Patsy Root	X
Scott Siders	X
Alfredo Sotomayor	X
Dave Speis	
Elizabeth Turner	X
Staff	
Lynn Bradley	X
Carol Batterton	
Ken Jackson	X
Jerry Parr	X
Ilona Taunton	X
Janice Wlodarski	X

2. Approval of Minutes

May 2015, June 2015, and July 15 Conference Report – no quorum. We will do an email vote on these.

Note: The May minutes were amended by removing Attachment 1 that provided more detail about the NELAP evaluation program and were determined to be Executive Session discussion.

3. Program Reports (Attachment 1)

**Attachment 1
PROGRAM REPORTS**

CONSENSUS STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT

- There has been a very low turn-out of voters on the “2015” standards. Lowest of all was the recent Chemistry Committee Voting Draft Standard on the detection and quantitation sections of V1M4. It is of serious concern that only 33 TNI members voted, including the 11 Chemistry Committee Members. The vote tally was: 24 affirmative; 3 affirmative with comment; 4 negative with comment; and 2 abstentions. Representatives of only 6 Accreditation Bodies (AB) voted (3 of them are on the committee); and only 1 LASEC member voted. When a standard is published for voting the ABs and LASEC are already notified, but in future it is planned to send out a series of e-mail blasts to all members throughout the voting period. It is hoped the new standards development protocol will encourage better member participation through the expert committees actively reaching out to them for input early in the standards development process.
- During the joint meeting in Chicago between the Accreditation Council, LASEC, and the Consensus Standards Development Executive Committee, additional concerns were raised over the Chemistry Committee’s Final Standard on Calibration (V1M4). Since the standard has passed through the voting process, further substantive changes cannot be made. However, on discussion it was found that several of the concerns may be satisfied through editorial changes that can be made; i.e., clarification without changing the intent.
- The Chemistry Committee has almost completed its consideration of comments received on its detection and quantitation Voting Draft Standard. The 7 people who voted with comment submitted a total of 23 comments, most of which are being ruled persuasive. An Interim Standard will be published for voting within the next few weeks.
- The Proficiency Testing Committee has published an Interim Standard on V1M1 and V2M2, with voting remaining open through August 21. Comments on its V3 and V4 Voting Draft standards are under consideration.
- The Proficiency Testing Committee has discovered the ISO Guide 33 second source standard adopted by the committee is in conflict with the Quality Systems standard. The issue revolves around the definition of “lot”, which is used in Volume 1 Module 4, but is not defined. On discussion it was suggested the Chemistry Committee add the ISO definition of “lot” to its definition section. The Quality Systems Committee also plans to add this to Volume 1 Module 2 by submitting the change as a Voting Draft Standard. Under the new standards development procedure, this should be approved quickly.
- The Laboratory Accreditation Body Committee is postponing its revision to consolidate Modules 1 and 3 of Volume 2 will need to wait until calendar 2016, so as not to overlap notifications to ANSI about revising the ELSS. LAB looks forward to receiving the developed generic application from the IT Committee, so that beta-testing and working with the various ABs to determine the format for each state’s application can begin.
- The new WET Expert Committee continues to work diligently to establish its goals and priorities for activities. Recommendations for the EPA DMRQA program were approved and provided to the Agency, concerning PT test endpoints and ways to improve comparability of PT data by standardizing the parameters under which PT studies are conducted. This information was also shared with PTPEC, in hopes that the PT program (which incorporates DMRQA PTs) can support the recommended steps to enhance data comparability across WET PT studies.

- The Radiochemistry committee will post the Interim Standard for vote on 8-14-15. Responses to VDS comments have gone out to all commenters and the response document will be posted with the Interim Standard. The committee has started discussing tools to help with the implementation of the new standard. The committee will plan to do a training at the Winter Forum and a subcommittee has been formed to work on the Small Lab Handbook.
- The Microbiology Committee reviewed and responded to all VDS comments during their meeting in Chicago. A final response table is being completed and will be voted on by the committee. The changes will then be made to the Standard and an Interim Standard will be posted for vote. This should happen before the end of the month. The committee began work on the Small Lab Handbook.
- The Quality Systems Committee is continuing work on the Handbook using Webex to make drafting language easier. Assignments for preparation of specific sections have been made. The committee is making updates to the Standard to deal with support equipment calibration checks and defining "lot".

NEFAP Executive Committee

- The Mobile Lab Subcommittee is meeting again and has started sending out the new survey. Ilona forwarded the survey to all NEFAP associates, FAC members and NELAP AC members. The survey link will be included in the next TNI newsletter.
- The committee still needs updates to be made by William to the web pages.
- The vote for 2015 NEFAP EC membership has been completed. New committee members include Harry O'Neill (Beacon Environmental Services, Inc), Janis Villarreal (H&P Mobile Geochemistry, Inc.) and Richard Rago (Haley & Aldrich, Inc.). The members who rotated off are John Moorman, Jack Farrell, and Dane Wren.
- The new NEFAP brochure was well received at the Chicago meeting.
- The committee started work on its charter to incorporate TNI's new strategic plan.
- Kim is working on staffing the new subcommittee working on NEFAP's strategic plan to let people know about NEFAP and to increase interest in accreditation. This group will start meeting in August.
- Marlene Moore will be presenting a 15-20 min Webcast to let people know about TNI's various programs including NEFAP on August 31, 2015. It highlights information about the Field Program. This webinar will be made available on the NEFAP website. She presented the information at the State Assessor call in July and Lara Phelps presented it to FEM late July.

Field Activities Expert Committee (FAC)

- Three FSMO tools were sent to William for posting on the NEFAP EC website, but they have not yet been posted. Ilona will send another request in August.
- The Container Subcommittee: Justin still needs volunteers from the manufacturing side and will prepare a letter that will be sent to sampling container manufacturers to let them know about this effort and to hopefully get them to participate. This subcommittee needs to review the scope of the project and make a recommendation to the TNI Board on how this project should be approached. The expectation is that the TNI Board will decide how to move forward after this recommendation is made. This not just a NEFAP project.

- The committee is continuing to work on the Scope Guidance document. Justin reminded everyone that the document needs to reflect the Standard and cannot change the language of the Standard. The committee will begin using Webex to develop this document. This document will be helpful for both ABs and FSMOs.
- The committee is still looking for a Vice-Chair.
- Progress has been made on ANSI approval. Ken sent off the information the committee prepared and ANSI has posted it on their website.

NELAP

Accreditation Council

- Five evaluations are complete with renewals approved. An additional eight are in various stages of the process, with two site visits not yet scheduled, but the other six completed and four of the site reports completed. The other four are between dealing with corrective actions, their review, and the final recommendation to the AC. One remaining evaluations will begin later this year and we anticipate an application from Oklahoma before the end of the year, as well. The Council continues discussing and considering changes to the evaluation process for the next cycle (beginning in December 2016.)
- Another successful NELAP Assessor Call took place on August 3, with the topic being how to assess mobile labs.
- The joint committee meeting in Chicago was very productive in terms of resolving the identified stumbling blocks of the revised standard documents.
- Update on NELAP Evaluation Process
 - An extended discussion of possible ways to rework the evaluation process to accommodate the inevitable conflicts of interest followed, with the example of Texas standing out as successful, based on how the AC had planned to accommodate such COIs when first discussed in April 2014. There exists no enthusiasm for reworking the Evaluation SOP yet again, and the AC members have been clear that using two state people for an evaluation team will not be acceptable.
 - All agreed that there needs to be a consistent person present for all (or nearly all) evaluations, whether in the QAO role or as the Lead Evaluator. The option of using a TNI staff member as LE was acknowledged but without enthusiasm. We also discussed adding language to the SOP that the contract LE be shielded from information about contract assessors, to include transmitting an application package to the LE with that information removed.
 - Michelle noted that, when she was in KS, if an in-state lab objected to the state employee assessor, then that lab could be provided a different, contract assessor, but would have to pay the difference in costs. This led to a suggestion that, if an AB continues to protest the use of a contract Lead Evaluator (who might have some COI,) that the AC could create a custom evaluation team for that particular instance, with the AB absorbing any additional costs beyond that of the “regular” team. This concept was well received.

Laboratory Accreditation System Executive Committee (LAS EC)

- LASEC members are reviewing the Calibration Standard (Section 1.7 of V1M4) for the purpose of formulating an interim recommendation to this module as revised.
- LASEC has received Policy Committee's review comments on its revised Standards Review for Suitability SOP 3-106, as well as comments from the CSDEC Program Administrator. The role of LASEC in the standards development process will be clarified over the next few months. Once that is accomplished, LASEC will review the NELAP Standards Acceptance SOP 3-103, to affirm that no additional changes are needed there.
- The Assessment Forum and Mentor Session at summer conference were popular and well received. Future sessions may use these models or build on the topics addressed. Many thanks to the Advocacy Committee and Jerry for the concept of offering free registration for the day of the Assessment Forum to one person per non-NELAP AB state. Planning for the winter meeting in Tulsa will begin shortly.
- LASEC is developing two draft policies requested by the NELAP AC, concerning how ABs may document their assessments of prep methods and how methods are to be assessed during reassessment site visits (this latter drafted by the LAB Expert Committee). Once final, these two policies will be forwarded to the AC for its consideration.
- Two new SIRs were submitted, but after a bit of discussion, one was withdrawn. A few SIRs have enough votes to be issued a 2-week notice prior to becoming final interpretations.

California

- The California Expert Panel (Jordan Adelson, Steve Arms, Mitzi Miller, Lara Phelps, and David Speis) is meeting August 10-12 to continue their efforts to provide advice on the California accreditation program. Presentations by Alfredo Sotomayor, Chris Gunning from A2LA and others that were made on August 10 are available at <http://www.sccwrp.org/elap>.

PROFICIENCY TESTING

- The committee is continuing to work on the addition of analytes to the FoPT tables (Analyte Addition Requests):
 - (Carl Kircher – FL) SCM FoPT Table: Arochlor 1221, Arochlor 1232 and Arochlor 1248 to PCBs in Oil.
 - (Jeff Lowry) SCM FoPT Table: DBCP, EDB and 1,2,3-Trichloropropane.
 - (Jennifer Best - EPA) DW FoPT Table: Subdivision of current codes to: MPN – Multiple Tube and MPN – Multiple Well. The code for MPN encompasses different methods that have different sample volumes analyzed – therefore different reported values. This is a PT problem.

The first two are now in the Chemistry FoPT Subcommittee to prepare the data for evaluation and decision making. The third is awaiting feedback from the NELAP AC to make sure this is something they want before more time is invested.

- Still in progress: The committee has started work on two old SIRs that were returned. They center around asking labs to run PTs for methods that they were not designed for. Usually a concentration issue. This was tabled for a few months, but the committee will get started on this again in Fall.

- There has been communication between the NELAP AC and the PTPEC regarding the format of the FoPT tables. There appears to be some sort of disconnect. The NELAP AC brought the issue of FoPT table format to the PTPEC, but now they are asking for reasoning for making changes to the tables. A letter was sent to the NELAP AC in early July and discussion and guidance is expected in August/September.
- The 2,2'-oxybis(1-chloropropane) nomenclature change is being worked on. A number of questions have been raised about the actual change and coordination of notifications. Maria contacted the NELAP AC about their timing for making the change so everything can be coordinated between PT Providers, ABs and the posting of the FoPT table.
- Work is still progressing on the finalization of the new WET FoPT table. There is general agreement that the controversial footnote can likely be deleted because there are thorough instructions through DMR QA. There has also been confusion on whether the WET FoPT Subcommittee merged into the new WET Expert Committee. The WET FoPT Subcommittee should still be in existence - it would not be appropriate for the WET Expert Committee to develop FoPT limits. Maria, Lynn, Bob and Ilona are working through this confusion. The PT Provider's are also being asked to send a copy of their instructions so the committee can look for consistency in instructions.
- The FoPT Table Format Subcommittee is on hold until they receive input from the NELAP AC.
- The Chemistry FoPT Subcommittee is continuing the review of SCM data.
- Members of the PTPEC got together and collectively wrote comments for Volume 3 and 4 of the PT Standard.
- The committee will finish work on its Charter in August to incorporate action items from TNI's strategic plan.
- The Chemistry FoPT Subcommittee is looking at analyte code issues for Oil & Grease.

ADMINISTRATION

Advocacy Committee

- The Advocacy Committee is preparing/revising the state of national accreditation report for transmission to EPA as part of their response to high priority items in the strategic plan. We hope to have the letter to EPA in time to be before the FEM at their next meeting on October 28. Updates are still needed for NEFAP, the PT program, and training.
- The committee has identified potential TNI ambassadors for pilot non-NELAP states. Steve Arms is in the process of contacting the ambassadors. Once all have agreed, the Advocacy Committee will have a webinar to discuss roles and activities for the ambassadors.
- The Advocacy Committee will begin focusing on completion of the Best Practices Handbook.
- The next newsletter will be published in October.

Non-Governmental Accreditation Bodies

- The TNRC announced at the Chicago meeting that they will begin accepting applications for recognition on August 1.
- The TNRC will ask the TNI Board to appoint a replacement member for Joe Aiello who has resigned because of a change in job duties.
- Ilona participated in the Virginia NELAP Evaluation the last week of July.
- A Webinar is being planned for August 31 and September 3 from 11-3pm Eastern for NGAB Evaluator training.

Information Technology Committee

- A generic laboratory application has been developed and is ready to be evaluated by the Laboratory Accreditation Body Committee once some security issues have been addressed.

Policy Committee

- Policy Committee is presently focusing its review activities on the draft TNI Quality Management Plan and the associated internal audits. Brief interruptions in this review have occurred to review requests to develop guidance. Current plans are that the internal audit process will be thoroughly described with a 5-year schedule and checklists for the various committees and functions within TNI before the QMP can be considered ready for implementation.

Training

- Training was a topic during the recent Ways and Means Task Force meeting in Chicago to discuss additional activities TNI should consider taking on to increase TNI revenue. There were a group of volunteers that would like to help look at Training and different possibilities to expand TNI's training program.

NEMC

- All website documents for 2016 have been updated in preparation of an early start on collecting abstracts.
- The NEMC database was reviewed and comments for updates have been sent to William.
- All presentations were converted to PDFs (one page and a two page format) and forwarded to William for posting and to Jan for preparation of the 2015 NEMC Compendium.
- Presentations for NEMC 2015 are now posted on the website.
- The NEMC Facebook Group page is operational (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/NEMCmail/>). The LinkedIn site (<https://www.linkedin.com/grp/home?gid=8287434>) is also operational. Postings went out to let people know that presentations are now posted on the NEMC website and to give people a heads-up about the anticipated earlier call for abstracts.

Winter Meeting: January 25-28, Tulsa

- A preliminary schedule for the meeting has been provided to the committee chairs.
- Marketing for the exhibit program will begin August 17.

Ways and Means Task Force

- This group had an initial planning meeting in Chicago and one conference call so far.
- Short-term activities being pursued (excluding training) include:
 - Charge for the methods compendium or publicize it as a member benefit
 - Have different levels of membership with different levels of access to website and materials
 - Increase membership fees. Increase fee and advertise benefits more.
 - Focus more on regional meetings to recruit new members
 - Combine TNI and FSEA membership options on FSEA conference registration form
 - Let vendors know what is available from TNI website so they can advise their clients and/or include with their equipment, QA manual template, etc. Vendors can add links to the TNI website on their own.
 - Promote use of ISO 17025 accreditation for vendors to allow laboratories to take advantage of this for demonstrating verification as per clause 4.6.2 of ISO 17025.
 - Consider selling our database of member lists and contacts. Good marketing potential for vendors. May be privacy issues
 - Have a fee for use of generic application

Complaints

- A new complaint was received about the operation of NGAB. The policy committee is working with the complainant as it determines whether this is a formal complaint or a misunderstanding.

Membership Report

- There were 5 new committee applications that have been forwarded to committee chairs and program administrators.
- **Active Members:** 909