

TNI Board of Directors Meeting Summary October 10, 2018

1. Roll Call

Directors	Present
Jordan Adelson	X
Aaren Alger	X
Steve Arms	X
Justin Brown	X
Bob Di Rienzo	
Jack Farrell	X
Maria Friedman	X
Chris Gunning	X
Myron Gunsalus	X
Daniel Lashbrook	X
Judy Morgan	
Cheryl Nolan	
Patsy Root	
Debbie Rosano	X
Scott Siders	
Alfredo Sotomayor	X
Dave Speis	X
Lem Walker	X
Curtis Wood	X
Past Chair	
Sharon Mertens	X
Staff	
Lynn Bradley	X
Carol Batterton	X
Ken Jackson	X
Jerry Parr	X
Ilona Taunton	X
Janice Wlodarski	X

2. Approval of September 2018 Minutes

Motion to Approve: Dave Speis

Second: Myron Gunsalus

Abstentions: Jordan Adelson

Approved: Unanimous

3. Implementing the 2016 Standard (Attachment 1)

An updated spreadsheet summarizing the activities that need to occur before the 2016 Standard can be implemented can be found in Attachment 1. This document will be updated every month for the Board to track progress on this topic. Good progress was made in September with the Small Laboratory Handbook published and the three guidance documents nearing completion.

4. ISO/IEC 17025: 2017 (Attachment 2)

Both the Quality Systems and Field Activities have active efforts underway to incorporate the 2017 version of 17025 into the TNI Standard. At the same time, NELAP is just now beginning to implement the 2016 Standard. In the September Board call, Jack Farrell requested the Board step back and consider this issue.

Attachment 2 summarizes the meeting from New Orleans. In the presentation Chris Gunning gave, he indicated new things that need to be added to existing practices:

- Competence instead of Qualification and Monitoring (6.2)
- Requirements for and Monitoring of Service Providers (6.6)
- More Robust Complaint Process (7.9)
- Risk Identification and Handling (4.1, 8.5, and 8.9)
- Confidentiality Requirements more detailed (4.2)
- Document “Range of Lab Activities” (5.3)
- Handling Decision Rules / Statement of Conformity (7.1 and 7.8.6)
- Records for Verifying Performance of New Methods (7.2)
- Functionality of LIM Systems (7.11)

Chris indicated that A2LA and the other NGABs can accredited labs to both the TNI Standard and the new 17025.

The Department of Defense released version 5.2 of their Quality Systems Manual on October 1, 2018. They have taken a very creative approach to this issue, maintaining the 2005 (and TNI) structure, but then referencing sections from 2017: 17025. For example, Section 4.5 on subcontracting references Sections 6.6 and 7.1.1c of the 2017 version.

Next Steps:

Form a small group to discuss options and direction: Jordan, Jack, Jerry, Alfredo, Aaren, Chris, Ken, Maria will participate in the small group. We will also ask Bob Wyeth if he will participate.

Jerry will develop a charter for this group. Goal to have this completed by January. Report to the Board early January. Also report to membership in Milwaukee and solicit feedback before making a final decision.

5. NGAB Developments (Attachment 3)

One of our recognized NGABs (A2LA) has posted information on their website, and initiated conversations with state agencies that resulted in A2LA reaching out to Judy Morgan as chair of the TNRC to try and clarify what is going on. After Judy, Alfredo and Jerry discussed this issue, we felt we needed to get the Board involved.

The big issues are the words “acceptance” and “equivalent” – what do they mean? Chris tried to explain that “equivalent” meant that NGABs have undergone the same type of evaluation as a government AB did and that their assessors have had the same type of training. This did not mean to imply that they were the same as a state agency. The word “acceptance” was not to imply that this was an automatic situation – the lab would still have to pay a fee and submit an application and the AB would still have to take some minimal sort of action to accept the accreditation. Still we need to

know what “acceptance” means, keeping in mind that different ABs could have different levels of acceptance.

So the issue is that there may be a misperception about the label that the NGABs might be using as they accredit laboratories but also that when A2LA comments on legislation and shape things to their advantage as everyone would want to do, that this then takes resources from the state, energy that could be spent somewhere else.

As far as promoting the NGABs in concept, in some fashion, is this something that the Advocacy Committee could take on? It is not really Advocacy’s function to provide marketing for the NGABs, but perhaps they could explain to people what their options are for accreditation. If Advocacy is willing to do a little work and present the options to our constituency, that seems to be fair and correct. Advocacy will take this on.

6. Eurofins Acquisition of TestAmerica (Attachment 4)

As shown in Attachment 4, Eurofins announced on October 1 it was acquiring TestAmerica. This event could impact TNI committee operations since our current SOPs only allow one individual from an organization to serve on a committee. The only committee impacted at this time is radiochemistry, which has Yoon Cha from Eaton Eurofins in California and Terry Romanko from TestAmerica in St. Louis.

SOP 1-101 for general committee operations and 2-101 for expert committee operations both state “No organization may have more than one Committee Member at any one time on a particular Committee. An organization is a company, state government, EPA Program/Office/Region, or other federal agency.”

We don’t want dominance from any one group but we also don’t want dominance from any one organization. Do we need to have a way to have exceptions where this is a need or there is value to having more than one person from a group or organization?

Assign this to Policy to review this, as to how to handle with if an exception is needed. Do we need to rewrite an SOP? Revise the current SOP? Policy can come back to us with a recommendation in 3 – 4 months.

7. California Update

California ELAP made an update to the Water Board on October 2. This update included a presentation from Mitzi Miller on NV5’s assessment findings of 88 drinking water laboratories. Excerpts from this presentation have been included as a separate file. The Board appeared to be shocked, but the laboratory representatives present, including many trade associations challenged this and as well argued strongly for a 2-tier program, without defining what this second tier would be. Jerry has started an effort to summarize the second-tier programs of LA, PA, and VA to show that all of them have a strong quality system foundation and present this information to the next meeting of the laboratory advisory committee.

8. 2019 Board Election

Nominations for the 2019 Board election will begin this week according to this schedule:

- November 5 – December 31, 2018: Nominations accepted
- January 1-15, 2019: Nomination Committee will review the nominations and prepare a slate of candidates.
- January 14: Voting opens with the announcement of the slate of candidates on the TNI website
- January 28-31: Forum on Laboratory Accreditation, Milwaukee, WI – Candidates Meet and Greet
- February 11: Voting closes
- March 14: Newly elected Directors assume office

Directors whose terms expire in March 2019 include Steve Arms, Daniel Lashbrook, Judy Morgan, Debbie Rosano, and Alfredo Sotomayor. The TNI Bylaws allow, and in fact encourage, Directors to serve multiple terms.

There are 2 other open positions. The current make-up is 5 AB, 6 lab, 5 other and 3 ex-officio.

9. Program Reports (Attachment 5)

**Attachment 1
 2016 STANDARD IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES**

Action Item	Assigned To	Expected Completion Date	Status Update
<p>QAM Template Update Create a template that will help laboratories prepare a QA Manual compliant with the new TNI Standard. Include multiple examples of documents, forms and procedures that might be helpful to laboratories.</p>	<p>QS Expert Committee</p>	<p>12/31/17</p>	<p>Completed November 2017. Now on the website for \$115 for members.</p>
<p>Post comparison document A document detailing the changes between 2009 and 2016 was prepared in October. The website needs to be revised to allow individuals to access this document as well as the 2009 to 2003 comparison. Need to prepare document that summarizes changes between 2003 and 2016, since some are still using 2003.</p>	<p>Jerry Parr and William Daystrom</p>	<p>1-22-18. No date determined for 2003-2016 document</p>	<p>2009-2016 document posted on website 1-22-18. New draft of 2003 to 2016 document completed and will be posted this week.</p>
<p>Guidance Document - PTRL Issue There is still an issue regarding the clarification and use of the PTRL. Include LASEC in final review of document. Small Lab Handbook will be helpful and could provide additional guidance.</p>	<p>PT Expert Committee</p>	<p>10/15/18</p>	<p>Final comments back to committee and document nearing completion.</p>
<p>Update Standard Interpretation Requests (SIRs) Review current interpretations from 2003 and 2009 Standard and map to new TNI Standard. Is an interpretation still relevant and if so, what is the section reference in the new standard? Keep legacy 2003/2009 SIR's active along with 2016. Relevant 2003, 2009 and 2016. Put folders on website. Long term review and consider whether SIRs trigger notes, annotations, or guidance. Archive old, obsolete SIRs.</p>	<p>Expert Committees</p>	<p>08/10/18</p>	<p>Draft spreadsheet summarizing existing SIRs provided to Expert Committees</p>
<p>SIRs Set-up site for interpretation requests for the new TNI Standard.</p>	<p>IT Administrator</p>	<p>03/01/18</p>	<p>Completed</p>
<p>Can I Implement the New Standard Now? LASEC? needs to prepare an answer to this question for a Training Workshop PPT slide. Consider preparation of guidance on how to move to the new standard - what do you need to add and when? What can you stop doing? Etc.</p>	<p>LASEC</p>	<p>10/10/18</p>	<p>Assessment Forum for New Orleans discussed this topic; minutes need to be written</p>

Action Item	Assigned To	Expected Completion Date	Status Update
Quality Systems Checklist - Laboratory Assessments Checklist needs to be prepared for ABs to use during laboratory assessments.	Quality Systems	06/15/18	Checklist has been posted
Quality Systems Checklist - Website Revise the checklist web page to allow downloading either the 2009 or 2016 checklist	IT Administrator	06/15/18	Checklist has been finalized.
LOD/LOQ Guidance Will need LASEC and Policy review. Implementation date set after review by AC.	Chemistry Expert	10/15/18	Final comments back to committee and document nearing completion.
Calibration Guidance Needs LASEC and Policy review. Implementation date set after review by AC.	Chemistry Expert	10/15/18	Final comments back to committee and document nearing completion.
New Standard Training Webinars Make training on the new standard available to laboratories and ABs across the country. Roll out when we have an implementation date for 2016 standard.	CSDP EC	Fall 2018	4 webinars underway; one every 3-4 weeks beginning September 13.
Small Lab Handbook Update Small Lab Handbook. Create a tool that will help laboratories prepare a QA Manual compliant with the new TNI Standard. Include multiple examples of documents, forms and procedures that might be helpful to laboratories.	QS Expert Committee	7/15/18	Posted 10/7/18.
Implementability Issues Review the final Volume 1 of the 2016 Lab Standard and the Volume 2 PT module as well. Each method/type module will be reviewed against the QS module to ensure no conflicts as well as implementability, and the administrative parts of the QS module (record keeping, document management, etc.) will be reviewed against Volume 2 for the same ends. Members without a specific module assignment are asked to review the entire Volume 1 for implementability and potential internal conflicts.	LASEC	03/05/18	Completed.
Benefits of the New Standard Prepare a document to show why the 2016 standard is an improvement over the 2009.	Expert Committees	6/7/2018	Complete

Attachment 2 ISO 17025:2017 – WHAT'S NEW FOR TNI?

TNI hosted a session on Transition to ISO17025:2017 at NEMC 2018 in New Orleans on August 8, 2018. The session included presentations from representatives of Third-Party ABs, TNI's Quality System Committee, and TNI's Field Activities Committee. These presentations were directed toward a panel of experts as well as the audience in attendance. The hope for the session was to gather as many interested parties in one place so that we could share our visions for the direction we will take with revisions brought on by the revision to ISO 17025, as well as avoiding any pitfalls by not considering all of the options available to us as an organization.

Chris Gunning (A2LA), Paul Junio (TNI Quality Systems) and Shannon Swantek (TNI Field Activities) each gave brief presentations to provide some background to everyone in attendance, as well as to frame the questions that the organization needs to address. From the perspective of A2LA, a laboratory will need to perform some additional tasks to comply with the new version, as well as doing what it had previously done. From the perspective of dealing with 'risk', it is important to keep in mind that one can't choose to disregard a requirement in the name of risk. The Quality Systems Committee sought feedback regarding how the transition would occur (in one step or in phases), and what should be done about outstanding SIRs and previous discussions regarding Technical Manager requirements. The Field Activities Committee expressed concern about whether Field Sampling would be included in the Quality Systems Module (since it is addressed to a greater level than it had been in the past). Along those same lines, there is a question about whether and how Field Sampling might become a requirement as opposed to the voluntary situation that it is currently.

From the Panelists and audience members, it was noted that the Department of Defense will be creating a revised version of their QSM, which will be a stepwise update (not a complete re-write, but inserting new requirements into the existing version. A complete re-write will occur, but this stepwise update is needed sooner than the complete re-write could be ready.). Labs and ABs both are concerned about how risk management and risk assessment can and will be assessed. These concepts are different terms from what we have historically followed, and it will take time to become proficient in their use and review. This shift to risk assessment is likely where TNI's effort needs to focus, so that the entire organization is ready to make adopt to this change.

The Field Activities Committee will continue on its path of re-writing its Standard, as will the Quality Systems Committee. Their timeframes need not be the same, as Field Activities is in the normal stage of a 5-year review, while Quality Systems is only beginning the process. Please contact the Chairs of those committees (Shannon Swantek or Paul Junio) should you like to be more involved in the process.

Attachment 3 “ACCEPTANCE” OF ACCREDITATIONS FROM NON-GOVERNMENTAL ACCREDITATION BODIES BY NELAP ABS

In 2011, TNI published a report, the TNI Accreditation Body Task Force Report, that was chartered to identify means for TNI to “assist ABs to eliminate bottlenecks and to deal with financial and personnel strains while promoting continuation of nationally recognized full accreditation services to laboratories.” Among the eight specific recommendations in this report, was one to create a Non-Governmental Accreditation Body (NGAB) program. See Appendix 1. That program was created in 2017 and three NGABs have been recognized so far and a fourth one has applied. Among the “next steps” in this recommendation were:

- Develop a process by which a state agency can recognize a non-governmental AB to accredit labs in their state.
- Explore the feasibility of a process that would allow a NELAP AB to accept the accreditation of a laboratory that is accredited by another state-recognized non-governmental AB.
- Promote this approach to state programs that are experiencing pressure to change or privatize their accreditation program.

Over the past year, NGABs have initiated efforts to implement this program by posting information on their websites and reaching out to states. These efforts have caused some concerns from some states in the following areas:

- Allow NGAB accredited TNI laboratories to automatically gain reciprocity from NELAP ABs.
- A belief or perceived belief that NGABs are equal to the NELAP ABs.

Three NGABs have been recognized by TNI as Accreditation Bodies to accredit laboratories to the TNI environmental standard but have not yet seen the benefit from their investment to have this recognition. The NGAB assessors have been trained using the same resources as State AB assessors. In addition, they have also participated in specialty training that is required via other programs beyond NELAP. They believe that their level of expertise to evaluate laboratory competence is at least equivalent to that of the State ABs since their program has been evaluated using the same rigor as the NELAP AB evaluations and their assessors are expected to have the same training on basic and technical laboratory assessments. Their claim of equivalency is not referring to acceptance by State agencies and is focused solely on capability and expertise. The NGABs understand their program is not equivalent to a state program, especially for drinking water laboratories.

TNI established the NGAB program to help leverage state resources under these two scenarios:

- A laboratory in non-NELAP state that has no intention of ever doing any work other than their own state.
- A laboratory in a non-NELAP state that does wish to do work in NELAP states, such as laboratory which is also already accredited by a NGAB for DOD work.

In the first scenario above, state ABs should not have to spend their resources on accrediting labs where no data is reported to their state. In the second scenario, TNI hoped the NGAB program would allow state ABs to accept the accreditation from the NGAB to reduce their costs of performing the on-site assessments. The key discussion is what does “acceptance” mean. Does it mean an automatic decision with no action required by the NELAP AB, or does it mean some level of review and approval? The table below shows some of the options available.

Options for “Acceptance”

	Drinking Water	Other Programs
Full Acceptance	Acceptance (with an application and payment of fee) of the documents used for accreditation by an NGAB, while the state AB retains the final decision to accredit. Essentially allows the AB to easily substitute and accept the NGAB docs to meet the on-site assessment requirements.	Acceptance (with an application and payment of fee) by a State AB of the assessment and conformity process as conducted by a NGAB. Example: If a TNI recognized NGAB awards accreditation, it would be fully accepted by any TNI AB.
Provisional Acceptance	Acceptance (with an application and payment of fee) after the state AB reviews the assessment report, corrective action report, and PT results, or other similar documents as specified by the AB.	Acceptance (with an application and payment of fee) after the state AB reviews the assessment report, corrective action report, and PT results, or other similar documents as specified by the AB.
LCO Acceptance	Acceptance by a primacy LCO to use the assessment and conformity process as conducted by a NGAB, as the formal assessment to award accreditation. Example: If a TNI recognized NGAB awards DW accreditation, the State will follow options within the laws of primacy to allow that NGAB award to be used as the formal accreditation documents for review and approval by the State agency LCO. The depth, completeness, and compliance represented by the documents will allow the LCO to make a well-informed decision to allow/disallow the laboratory to be awarded DW accreditation by the State program.	

TNI established the NGAB program under with a “if we build it, they will come” premise. That has not been the case, and TNI may need to consider taking additional steps to clarify this issue, such as reaching out to all the ABs, NELAP, non-NELAP states, and NGABs.

With respect to the TNI mission and vision, included below, it is healthy for both the accredited and accrediting communities within TNI to pursue options that allow for any of the following outcomes:

- More choices of accreditation bodies
- Capability to consolidate on-sites
- Allow for option to have DOD/DOE, DW, ISO 17025, and TNI via a single on-site
- Flexibility in scheduling
- Reduction in wait time to expand or add analytes to an accreditation
- Greater consistency

US Laboratories Accredited to TNI Volume 1 by NGABs

Lab	Location	NGAB	NELAP AB
APPL	CA	A2LA	
Agrolytical	GA	A2LA	NA
ALS Houston	TX	A2LA	
American West Analytical	UT	A2LA	
Amplified Geochemical Imaging	DE	A2LA	NA
Ana-Lab	TX	A2LA	
ASL	GA	A2LA	
Army Public Health Center	MD	A2LA	NA
Cape Fear Analytical	NC	A2LA	
ChemSolutions	CO	A2LA	
Consumers Energy	MI	A2LA	NA
CT Laboratories	WI	A2LA	
EMSL Tampa	FL	A2LA	
EMSL West Palm Beach	FL	A2LA	
Environmental Quality Laboratory	PR	A2LA	
Eurofins Lancaster	PA	A2LA	
Eurofins Spectrum	MA	A2LA	
Eurofins Frontier	WA	PJLA	
Exova Pharma	CA	A2LA	NA
GEL	SC	A2LA	
Microbac Knoxville	TN	A2LA	
Microbac Chicago	IL	A2LA	
Microbac Ohio	OH	A2LA	
Midwest Analytical	MI	A2LA	
Nestle Waters	CA	A2LA	NA
ORAU	TN	A2LA	NA
Pace Mt. Juliet	TN	A2LA	
Pace Mobile	WI	A2LA	
Pace Billings	MT	A2LA	
Pace Minneapolis	MN	A2LA	
Pine Bluff Arsenal	AR	A2LA	NA
Pro Quality Labs	GA	A2LA	NA
Public Health Command Region - Pacific	APO, AP	A2LA	NA
Puget Sound Naval Shipyard	WA	A2LA	NA
RTI	MI	A2LA	
Sanders	FL	A2LA	
SGS Alaska	AK	A2LA	
SGS Wilmington	NC	A2LA	
TN Department of Health	TN	A2LA	NA
TestAmerica Denver	CO	A2LA	
Test America Nashville	TN	A2LA	
USEPA Region 7	KS	A2LA	
USEPA Region 10	WA	A2LA	
Vista Analytical	CA	A2LA	
Water Quality Laboratory Albuquerque	NM	A2LA	NA
Waypoint Analytical	TN	A2LA	NA
Alpha Analytical	MA	ANAB	
Brooks Applied	WA	ANAB	
TestAmerica Savannah	GA	ANAB	

Appendix 1: Recommendation 8 from the 2011 Accreditation Body Task Force Report - Non-Governmental Accreditation Bodies

Recommendation

Develop a process to allow non-governmental ABs (also called third-party ABs) to offer accreditations that would be accepted through reciprocity by the existing NELAP-recognized ABs, especially in states that do not operate a NELAP accreditation program, or where an existing state program may be privatized.

Background

Several initiatives are underway in state governments to “privatize” the state-run accreditation program and thus some alternate solution may be needed. A number of non-governmental organizations operate accreditation programs, and many of these are recognized by the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) as operating a program under ISO/IEC 17011. These ILAC ABs would likely be capable of administering a NELAP accreditation program. Such an approach would need to be developed in cooperation with the EPA Office of Drinking Water to assure compliance with 40 CFR Part 142. The state might establish an approval or recognition function and possibly allow all other actions to be done by the non-governmental accreditation body.

In initial discussions on this approach, there was a mixed response to the idea from the NELAP Accreditation Council, since as to date, environmental laboratory accreditation has been considered an “inherently governmental function.” State ABs were also concerned that the assessors used by these organizations are not NELAP qualified assessors and this would introduce another element of inconsistency. Some states indicated a legislative change might be needed for them to accept an accreditation from a non-governmental AB.

However, recent developments caused the task force to re-consider this option and conduct a follow up meeting with the NELAP AC. It was determined that Oregon was the only AB that would require a statutory change to recognize a non-governmental AB. A number of states would need to make a regulatory change. Philosophical issues with third party ABs were brought up by the AC, but this Task Force believes most if not all of these are based on misunderstandings.

There do not appear to be any serious show stoppers on use of non-governmental ABs, however, there seems to some fear that needs to be alleviated. The position of the DW program appears to be that as long as the state makes the final decision; all other parts of the certification process can be accomplished by a non-governmental party. Overall, the use of third parties appears to be more feasible than first envisioned and we need to explore this option more. States will however, need to maintain control of decision-making in the DW program. It may be possible for TNI to approve third parties for labs that just need a NELAP accreditation, especially in states that are have not implemented a program.

Some states might be better able to accept an accreditation from a non-governmental AB if the state had some control over the organization.

Next Steps to Implement This Option

- Ensure any non-governmental ABs have the ability to operate a NELAP accreditation program according to TNI expectations, including activities such as participating in AB evaluations, payment of appropriate fees, and adhering to the requirements in Volume 2 of the TNI standard.
- Determine if the TNI standard (Volume 2) and Bylaws need to be clarified or revised to allow for non-governmental ABs to offer accreditations to laboratories.
- Determine if any changes are needed to the existing process by which TNI recognizes NELAP-ABs in order to recognize non-governmental ABs. Make sure this process does not duplicate efforts in the NEFAP recognition process for those organizations that offer accreditations in both programs.

- Develop a process by which a state agency can recognize a non-governmental AB to accredit labs in their state.
- Explore the feasibility of a process that would allow a NELAP AB to accept the accreditation of a laboratory that is accredited by another state-recognized non-governmental AB.
- Promote this approach to state programs that are experiencing pressure to change or privatize their accreditation program.
- Initiate a dialogue with the Office of Water to discuss this option relative to the drinking water certification program.

Attachment 4
EUROFINS PRESS RELEASE

Eurofins to Expand Its US Environment Testing Offering with the Acquisition of TestAmerica

October 1, 2018 1:30 AM EDT

Test America will expand the footprint and complement the service offering of Eurofins' Environmental Testing Business in the USA

Eurofins Scientific (EUFI.PA), a global scientific leader in bioanalytical testing, announces that it has signed an agreement with the JSTI Group, a global provider of Environmental Consulting and Engineering solutions, to [acquire](#) TestAmerica Environmental Services LLC (TestAmerica). The transaction is expected to close in the fourth quarter of 2018 subject to the fulfilment of regulatory and customary closing conditions.

TestAmerica, which became part of JSTI through its acquisition in September 2016, operates an integrated network of 24 full service testing laboratories and 40 service centres throughout the USA. TestAmerica should generate revenues of over US\$230 million in 2018 and employs over 2,000 staff.

The scope of services offered by TestAmerica includes Wet Chemistry, Trace Organics and Specialty Testing and Metals & Inorganics Testing across all matrices including air, water, soil and Tissue. Through its subsidiaries, TestAmerica also provides Air Emissions and Source Testing (Metco Environmental), Indoor Air Quality Testing (EMLab P&K) and Environmental Testing Field Supply Services (ESS).

The agreed acquisition price is US\$175 million on a cash free debt free basis. As Eurofins and TestAmerica have a largely complementary geographic footprint and technical offering, restructuring of either business is expected to be minimal, the focus being on further enhancement of consolidated service offering to the market, and scale economies with respect to rare tests, R&D, operational costs and operational optimization/harmonization/specialization of sites to improve efficiencies.

Comment from **Dr. Gilles Martin**, Eurofins CEO: *"We are extremely pleased to welcome TestAmerica and its talented teams to the Eurofins Group. Its competencies, reputation for scientific excellence and complementary geographic footprint, client focus and service offerings further strengthen Eurofins' global offering in the very competitive environmental testing market. We look forward to working together as an integrated network of independent state-of-the-art laboratories providing our customers access to the full range of services, high quality standards and technological capabilities of the combined Group."*

Comment from **Ms. Rachel Brydon Jannetta**, TestAmerica CEO: *"Today is a milestone in the history of our business. I am personally very excited about joining forces with Eurofins and look forward to a bright future as we move ahead with new owners who already operate within the environmental testing industry globally, as well as being market leaders in several other important scientific testing arenas"*.

Attachment 5 PROGRAM REPORTS

CONSENSUS STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT

- On September 21, a Notice of Proposed Standards Activity for VIM2 of the Environmental Sector standard (Management and Technical Requirements for Laboratories Performing Environmental Analysis) was published on the TNI website. This stated that the Quality Systems Expert Committee seeks to review and update the module, which will be reorganized to conform with the 2017 revision of ISO/IEC 17025. Pursuant to SOP 2-100, the notice requested stakeholder input within 30 days, after which the committee will arrange to meet with interested stakeholders by webinar or conference call.
- The Chemistry Expert Committee received feedback from the NELAP Accreditation Council and LASEC on its guidance documents for calibration and detection/quantitation. The comments were discussed during a recent conference call, when the committee agreed on further changes to the documents.
- The PT Expert Committee has finalized its PTRL guidance document, having received further feedback from LASEC, and plans to vote on it by email in the very near future.
- The Asbestos Expert Committee is continuing its work to revise V1M3.
- The Laboratory Accreditation Body Committee continued review of “parking lot” items and completed and pending SIRs for consideration for inclusion in the revised V2M1. We anticipate that LAB will be ready to publish its outline of proposed changes for comment from TNI members within a few months.
- The WET Expert committee has completed its task of identifying suitable method documents (rather than the entire method manuals) for posting to TNI’s method compendium, and has also reached agreement on a preferred scheme for analyte codes to be used in FoPT tables. Work with PTPEC about increasing comparability of PT results in the future continues, albeit slowly.
 - Informal interactions among committee members, ELAB and EPA’s DMR-QA Coordinator have continued since conference. No specific recommendations are even in concept stage yet, and the program office staff will need to be brought into the conversation before that happens, but as mentioned previously, drawing a distinction between PT and QCS samples provides an entry point for finding a solution that addresses everyone’s interests while providing meaningful quantities of comparable data for calculation of PT scores and pass/fail determinations.
 - Discussions about how best to revise the Demonstration of Capability language in the standard continue as time permits. Since the next revision date seems to be well into the future, this committee is dealing with other priority issues as they arise while sustaining slower efforts on the revision process.
- The Radiochemistry Committee is ready to start presenting the recommended calculation updates for FoPT to the Chemistry FoPT Subcommittee. An email has been sent to Carl Kircher for review. He is working on the review and will setup a Chemistry FoPT Subcommittee meeting in the month of October or early November. The committee is starting to plan for the winter meeting training and planning to add additional members.
- The Microbiology Committee placed the Method Code issue on hold this month to prepare for the Standard training. The Committee is continuing work on the review of Technical Manager requirements as requested by the Quality Systems Expert Committee.
- The SSAS committee is continuing to work on the SOP to establish new limits for audit samples.

NEFAP Executive Committee

- The committee had a short meeting this month due to schedule changes.
- The committee reviewed the information gathered during the New Orleans August meeting and reviewed upcoming action items based on that meeting. They will be working closely with the FAC as that committee begins work to reach out to Stakeholders for value added topics to add to the Standard.
- The committee will continue to focus on Marketing/Strategic Planning over the next few meetings. The Marketing/Strategic Planning committee will now be led by Justin Brown.
- The committee has delayed the review of the Field Activities Expert Committee (FAC) DRAFT Scope Guidance Document.
- The committee received a complaint about FSMO assessment frequency. The Complaint Subcommittee has started working on this issue.

Field Activities Expert Committee (FAC)

- The Committee did not meet this month. They have started review of the 2014 Standard and ISO/IEC 17025:2017.
- Marlene Moore prepared an updated Section 4 to begin the process to determine what format to use for the Standard update. The committee is reviewing and commenting on this DRAFT by email to prepare for the October meeting.
- The Scope Guidance Subcommittee: No update. Still awaiting comment from the NEFAP EC.
- The FSMO Tools Subcommittee: On hold until the NEFAP Marketing/Strategic Planning Subcommittee begins meeting.

Field Activities Task Force

- The task force had a productive second meeting. They began review of new language prepared by Marlene Moore. This sparked good conversation about what the NELAP states are currently doing with mobile laboratory secondary accreditation. Nick Nigro (Vice-Chair) will be compiling a document to summarize what all States are currently doing with mobile laboratory accreditation. The task force also reviewed an older presentation that compared the difference between NEFAP and NELAP with regards to mobile lab accreditation.

NELAP

Accreditation Council

- Council members closed out review of the two revised Chemistry guidance documents at the October 1 meeting. Combined comments from the AC, LASEC and Policy Committee were delivered to Chemistry on October 1. We anticipate that one additional revision will be needed before approval and acceptance, at which time an implementation date can be established for the 2016 NELAP Standard.
- AB representatives will also have final comments on LASEC's Lessons Learned document delivered to LASEC by mid-October.

- For the current round of evaluations, all renewal letters have been issued with eight recognition renewals approved. Seven applications are in various stages of review with one renewal application pending submission. Per the now-approved Relationship of NELAP Recognition and Evaluations Policy POL 3-10, certificates of recognition for all NELAP ABs are being prepared for delivery this week.
- Paul Bergeron has resigned as Vice Chair, due to being promoted and the nomination and election process for a new Vice Chair is underway. The new AB representative for LDEQ will soon be hired, and the designated alternate continues to participate.

Laboratory Accreditation System Executive Committee (LASEC)

- Planning for both the Mentor Session and Assessment Forum session in Milwaukee is starting up.
- LASEC members provided a hefty volume of substantive comments on the Chemistry Guidance documents. This was especially useful since the lab and “other” stakeholders are the ones who will need to utilize this guidance. LASEC’s comments were combined with those from the NELAP AC and the Policy Committee and transmitted to Chemistry Expert Committee on October 1.
- LASEC expects to receive the NELAP AC’s comments on the Lessons Learned document in time for review at its October 23 meeting, when final recommendations will be considered for presentation to the TNI Board.

PROFICIENCY TESTING

- The committee began discussion on the implementation of Volume 3 and 4 of the 2016 TNI Standard. Nicole (Chair of PT Expert Committee) summarized the issue as follows:

The PT Providers and PTPAs are going to need time to set up their programs to the new Standard. Unfortunately, this could prove to be a bit of a challenge. Since States will be implementing on different schedules, until all States transition out of the 2009 Standard, there is going to be a disconnect between the way in which labs are required to report and the way PT Providers will be scoring. I brought this up at the AC meeting and got mixed responses from the various States. Some were ok with the 2016 Standard reporting/scoring even if they were still on the 2009 version of the Standard, while others said that they would require different reports depending on the Standard in place (so potentially 3 different reports, 2003, 2009, and 2016 for PT Providers to produce).

The committee decided to have Maria and Ilona meet with the PT Providers and PTPAs to understand the impact of implementation on these stakeholders. A meeting is being planned later this week. Discussion on this topic will continue during the PTPEC October meeting.

- A meeting is being planned with Alfredo Sotomayor, Jerry Parr, Stacie Crandall, Maria Friedman, Kirstin Daigle, Ilona Taunton and Matt Sica to discuss the recognition procedure for the PTP and NEFAP combined evaluations. There has been difficulty planning a meeting with everyone’s schedules this last month, but a Doodle was distributed to pick a date in the next two weeks.
- Eric Smith will be stepping in as the new Chair for the PTP SOP Subcommittee. He will be replacing Gil Dichter who just retired.

ADMINISTRATION

Advocacy

- Articles have been finalized for the next newsletter which will be published around November 1. Steve Arms is the editor.
- Jerry received additional proposals for the winter 2020 meeting from Newport Beach and San Diego Mission Bay. After reviewing the proposals and then considering the cost implications for Mission Bay, the Advocacy Committee recommended that we pursue meeting at Newport Beach.
- The Advocacy Committee approved the article prepared by Jerry on the 2016 TNI standard and resources for implementation.

Policy Committee

- Policy Committee provided additional input to Jerry and the IT Committee as a privacy policy and SOP continue development. This should be available in time for use with NEMC submissions, early in 2019.
- Ilona briefed Policy Committee on the new internal audit database and discussed concepts for the SOP about performing those audits, which will be used by individual committees as they implement the annual self-audits required by the TNI Quality Management Plan. This entire process has taken longer than anyone anticipated, so that an initial pilot audit of one program is being considered for early 2019, instead of the planned audits of every committee.

Training

- A number of new training courses are still being worked on:
 - Changes to the TNI Standard – 4 courses (PT, Quality Systems, Microbiology, Chemistry). The course is being taught by the various expert committees. The PT (Nicole Cairns) and Quality Systems (Paul Junio) classes have been completed and the Microbiology class (Robin Cook) is scheduled for this Thursday. The courses have been well attended with 200+ attendees between individual students and group training.
 - Sample Collection (Silky Labie – A final date for the course is still forthcoming based on a trip to Florida to help with the recording of this training.)
 - Good Laboratory Practice – Internal Audits (Matt Sica) Still in progress, but ready to finalize flyer and announcement.
 - Marlene will be doing a Microbiology Assessor training December 3, 5 and 6th. We need a minimum of 10 students to sign-up by mid-November for this course to happen. It will also be recorded for a Webcast.
 - Marlene prepared a proposal for a Laboratory Management Training series. Part of the course will be taught on Thursday at the TNI winter meeting (3 parts – remaining 2 will be taken by webinar). The series is a total of 5 parts that will be offered by webinar/webcast. The series is purchased as one class.

Milwaukee Meeting

- Attendee registration opened on October 3.
- We added a second training course for Thursday on Managing an Environmental Laboratory.

NEMC

- Steering committee members finalized a budget for 2019 which includes a modest registration fee increase in preparation for the completion of our cooperative funding agreement with EPA.
- Work is continuing to finalize the session topics to include in the Call for Abstracts.
- The proposal from Hyatt Minneapolis appeared to be the best choice for the 2020 summer meeting. Jerry is pursuing a contract for that location.

NGAB

- Kirstin Brown and Ilona will begin formal review of the IAS application in October with a goal to complete the initial review in November.

Active Members: 1074