

Summary of Field Activities Committee Meeting  
August 12, 2008

1. Call to order

Chair Marlene Moore called the committee to order on August 12, 2008, in Washington, DC. Committee members present included: Mike Miller, Joann Boyd, Dane Wren, Elaine Sorbet, Patrick Conlon, Dave Speis, Jan Wilson, and Michael Perry.

2. Update on FSMO standards

Ms. Moore informed the audience that the FSMO standards were final. The version without the ISO language can be obtained for free from the TNI website. Versions with ISO language included can be purchased from TNI.

3. Standards adoption

Ms. Moore asked for input on potential accreditation bodies (AB) for this standard. Comments received included:

- This standard did not go to LASC and the NELAP Board for approval. States cannot adopt until approved by LASC and NELAP Board.
- What about a third party AB?
- This could be a problem for states. Oregon plans to do a GAP analysis to see if they are ready to implement the standard.
- Any organization can use the standard as a contractual requirement. Then, it becomes accepted.
- If a third party does the accrediting, then the standard doesn't need to be approved by LASC and the NELAP Board.
- The third party concept has precedent, but what about enforcement? Adverse publicity may be more effective than enforcement.
- States may be OK with 3<sup>rd</sup> party, just depends on who it is. No indication that states plan to accredit to this standard in the short term.
- This standard was designed to be a government regulatory function. The purpose was to provide an operating standard for the industry. Provide control on the front end of the process.
- There is precedent for an organization like A2LA to be to serve as an oversight AB. This does not preclude a state from being an AB.
- Community might not accept multiple ABs.
- A complaint process for ABs will be needed, whoever it is.
- New Jersey law will allow accreditation of FSMO's. Similar to private well testing, already regulated.
- May be possible to work this standard into ITRC specifications.

- We should avoid a situation where there are multiple standards with various degrees of rigor. Want to have one standard for the industry. DoD in a good position to require adherence to this standard in DoD contracts.
- DoD accredits to NELAC plus. Accreditation done by 3<sup>rd</sup> parties. Could be extended to FSMOs. Hard for DoD to use copyrighted material.
- Could a topic for conference next year for ITRC. This needs to be reviewed.

#### 4. Decision Making Rules

Ms. Moore reported that the Field Activities Committee adopted decision making rules in June. These rules follow a process for the different types of decisions that the committee makes.

#### 5. Policy Review

Ms. Moore reviewed the Accreditation Process Policy for FSMO's that has been submitted to the Policy Committee. This policy was created for FSMO's and ABs to assure a uniform approach. The purpose is to bridge the gap between the standard and what actually needs to happen to be accredited. Comments on the policy included:

- It is a good policy. It recognizes 3<sup>rd</sup> party ABs and allows satellite offices to apply as one application. Can the policy be broadened to apply to accreditation to other standards besides the TNI standards (e.g. ASTM)?
- Committee needs to think about how this would flow using another standard.
- This policy probably doesn't preclude using another standard. Could change the language to say it applies to any ISO 17025 based standard.
- TNI should adopt the ASTM standard.
- The ASTM standard may be too loose for accreditation.
- The committee needs to consider whether to apply this policy to other accreditation standards. Not here to debate the merits of the different standards.
- The TNI board is open to providing the TNI structure as a platform for other organizations to develop standards.

Dave Speis moved that the committee delay action on whether or not to include implementation of other standards in the accreditation process policy until they had an opportunity to discuss further as a committee. All voted in favor of tabling the issue until the next committee meeting with the exception of Mike Miller.

#### 6. Advocacy

Ms. Moore indicated that a presentation had been developed to let other groups know about the TNI standards for FSMO's. The presentation was designed to provide consistency in the committee's outreach efforts.

Dave Speis reviewed the presentation and pointed out that the presentation emphasized that the FSMO standards were based on the "less is better" approach. The process is very different from traditional laboratory accreditation and it is easier for organizations with multiple facilities.

Comments on this presentation included:

- Don't forget to mention that the goal is a truly national program
- Need to consider presentation at water conferences

#### 7. Approval of minutes

Ms. Moore presented the minutes from the August 1, 2008, meeting. Jan Wilson moved to accept and Jo Ann Boyd seconded. All present voted in favor.

#### 8. Committee membership

Ms. Moore informed the group that committee member Mike Miller had retired from his job with the state of New Jersey, and now the committee has no AB member. Elaine Sorbet works for the state of Louisiana, but she is classified as a "lab" member of the committee. Marlene asked for the audience and committee members to help recruit an AB member for the committee.

#### 9. Open discussion

- Is it possible to write a recommended framework for QA for each matrix covered by the FSMO standard?
- Suggest that QA be put into a guidance document
- Depending on purpose of the study, QA requirements may be different
- The committee needs input on this before writing a standard or guidance
- Appendix D, chapter 5, should provide enough specificity for guidance and also some leeway
- The EPA method update rule requires samples collected in the field to be preserved in the field or filtered in the field. This may provide an opportunity to promote the FSMO standard.