

TNI Information Technology Committee Meeting Summary February 3, 2015

1. Roll Call

Participants	Present
Clark, Arthur	
Daystrom, William	X
Evans, Nick	
Friedman, Maria	X
Hickman, Dan	X
Kuhn, John (Chair)	X
Parr, Jerry	X
Pierrot, Rebecca	
Shepherd, Mei Beth	X
Starr, Rip	
Varner, Pam	
Ward, Keith (Vice Chair)	
Wlodarski, Jan	X

Review & approval of January 2015 Minutes held for March 19, 2015 IT meeting.

2. Welcome

John welcomed everyone to the meeting and reviewed the IT Committee's mission and objectives with the audience as well as a snapshot of issues currently under consideration.

3. Website Update (William)

William provided a review of what the website has looked, and how it has been redesigned/developed, over the years. The 2011 changes included the addition of the Quick Link buttons designed to make information on the website more easily accessible. Today's site is better (functionally) but it is still difficult for people not intimately familiar with where things are to navigate.

William has put together a higher level, more detailed navigation method that will help resolve this issue. Hovering over the main links opens a large pop-up content box with information grouped by type of content/categories. This is not brand new content; the new navigation bar makes what we have more accessible. Menu items (links) are duplicated across the menus as appropriate for easy access and to reduce the need to hunt for information. Content will always be changed and added over time. It's the navigation that is key – we don't have to rebuild the entire website to make it easier to use.

Contact Information – How to Contact TNI: The current button in the upper right hand corner goes to a page with more information. Many websites now are listing this information at the bottom of the page in the footer. The link at the upper right opens into a new page with contact information (names and emails). We will be taking the contact information link off the top and placing the information and link at the bottom of the site.

RSS Feed (Really Simple Syndication): Allows you to get updated information without having to go to the website.

Audience feedback about the new navigation approach:

Everyone likes it and believes it will make it easier for people to find what they are looking for. Anything that's easier and more effective is going to be helpful. *Suggestion:* Test it with a group (under 40's?)—ask them to play with it. Also beta test – give them a list of [specific] things to look for and see how easy/fast it is.

Content questions:

- *NELAP ABs and the different lines of accreditations that they offer.* Is there any place on the website (a spreadsheet?) of what they offer by analyte code? AB FOAs will show technologies, but not specific details or specific analytes.
- *Can we take the map of the US that shows who are ABs, etc. and actually hover over them they provide the immediate contact info for that state or a link directly to their website – or something that gives the ability to get that information?* There is a page listing of NELAP-Recognized ABs, but it only shows info by state. Difficult to keep updated because it changes all the time. Matrix/technology – ok; by analyte too much.
- *Do we have a “Complaint” button?* Under the Contact Us information. William needs to figure out where to put it. The question is how important is it, and how big should it be? There is a separate button (a “Comment” button) on the LAMS section. Place a “Complaint/Comment” link on each navbar menu item? “Questions, Comments, and Complaints”? Move so it's in the footer for each page, not just on the home page. “Comments” not “Complaints”? “Complaint” is a separate process and goes to a separate form.
- *Standards Menu: Easy to get to 2003/2009 standards.* It is hard to get to all the interim standards after voting is done. We need to have a simplified version of the standards tracking document that goes where standards are so people can see where everything is in the pipeline. But only link to the document that is currently in progress. It should be up to the committee chair or program admin to decide which document this should be, not William. One that's in development or one that's waiting for something or one that's done. Very labor intensive? Process: Each time a standard moves from status a to status b, a note is sent to William and the tracking document is updated.
- *Lab page: Does the checklist appear there?* What about a link where people can find “checklists” in general?
- *A section for a “Toolbox”?*
- *A pdf of our Acronyms in one place.*
- *New members – Are asking for things that are not appropriate for our website, but that would be found on the state's website.* Maybe develop an FAQ about what can be found here – otherwise look at State's website.
- *Beta-testing – survey.* Should we do a beta-test or conduct a survey about how well the website works for people, or doesn't work for people.

- *Categorize trainings so they show up on each nav header?* Yes. We can do this.
- *Document library* – can be accessed from each nav item.
- *3 or 4 things as an assessor that I (Jack's comment) need to find/use a lot: SIRS, FOPT tables, go to links on different states quickly, methods.* Think, from a different category of user perspective, what they need/want to find quickly.
- *Include acronyms as standard practice* – i.e., standards interpretation requests (SIRS).
- *Archive? Do we have one, are we using it?* Where it is, what is our process of using it? A lot of the documents in the document library are quite old. News items are still there. Committee minutes are still there from the beginning of TNI. We haven't addressed any procedure for removing out of date items on the website other than via info found on a page. Obsolete tables, sops and policies are removed from the website but could potentially be found via Google search that someone else may have copied and posted elsewhere. Library – things check in, they don't check out. Do we need to mark things are obsolete?
- *FOPT Tables* – sometimes ABs need to see the older ones.
- *Having access to PowerPoint's, etc., on the website within a reasonable time after the conferences, etc.* A very important time-oriented issue.
- *FOPT Tables do they have CAS number?* Not yet, but working on it. Analyte code numbers – look them up and they should have the CAS numbers on there and should be correct.
- *When will this be ready to go?* It is a work in progress... should we make it live? Yes, upon William's schedule. Launch without beta-test. Article in next newsletter with request for comments. Tell everyone at the conference to watch for the change.
- *Has the old information on the site been updated?* This is a separate issue. We should make sure the information throughout has been updated before we roll out the new menu. Each committee should be responsible for reviewing and sending in their updates.
- *Do we need another button for changes or to report errors?* So people can send in minor changes directly (my name is now...; I have changed jobs...; etc.). Committees need to understand that they are responsible for their content and keeping everything updated.

4. LAMS; Method Compendium Update & Demo; Gen App Form, Q&A (Dan)

General issues:

LAMS, in order to work correctly, requires all ABs to put in the data and keep it up to date. All originally agreed to do it. Four ABs have no FOAs; one has some. One does not update theirs on a regular basis. It's required in the Standard. Evaluators have signed off on a "policy to update"; have asked assessors to ask if it's actually been done.

First national database development plan: One of the things that the labs did not want was an automated procedure that changed them from "active" to "inactive". This creates a problem. It is simple to change a lab or two, but a larger scope – 50 or 60 labs – these large changes never got done. *Inactive vs. switched* to an AB – knowing this is key. This required a lot of legwork to figure out – Dan did it for Minnesota. But everyone else had the same problem. Dan did everyone's so as of the beginning of the year everything is updated.

FOAs – ABs are struggling with the resources to get everything input. They may not have IT support or it's considered a low priority, but the Standard requires it. Dan has offered to help all ABs get their data in. For the most part this has been able to be done. IL – has no database – but Dan got all their lab demographics in and is ready to add everything in FOAs for all their labs. He is working on the 4th and soon will be down to 3 outstanding ABs.

Dan has been updating labs, upon request, and emailing ABs about the changes. There have been no complaints so far, even though the changes are supposed to be going through and being done by the ABs.

ABs big news: Dan was able to make a change so that all records are accepted, except for the items that are wrong (previously if there was an incorrect item, the entire upload was disregarded).

- *How often should ABs be updating?* Every 2 weeks.
- *Is there something that ABs can see as to when they last did an update?* Yes, a specific report could be written to answer this.
- *Coming: the capability to pull and download FOA reports in .csv format.* Is there a way to download the .csv file?

LAMS:

The LAMS training is pretty good. It will be posted on the web in the next week or so.

Please go to the AB page and check out the information. If it's not there, or it's wrong, let Dan know.

Go to Recognitions – be sure to review this in case something has dropped or needs to be added. ABs can change contact information. Dan may be required to change the technology information. If something needs to be changed, let us know.

Do evaluation teams have the right to approve changes to the Field of Recognition? No. Dan needs to be informed by evaluation team or program admin that something needs to be changed.

Also, the FOA spreadsheet on the ABs would need to be updated.

Analytes Table: You can click on header and sort the information. Code – type it in the field. Analyte – type in any portion of the code name.

CAS Number – Iso chloropropylether should have a different CAS number. It was duplicated with another analyte and has been carried through documents for a really long time. Different sources will give different CAS numbers for each. Do we (staff) have access to the CAS registry? Need to verify what is correct. Maria will send Jerry email requesting this.

How much notice to we have to give/get before we fix “it” (the IT Committee)? If it’s going to cause some problems, Standard Method says 6 months, or we can do it sooner if possible. Talk about this at the next meeting.

There are things like this that come up. Also, “download analyte csv” – this downloads EVERYTHING. Anybody can download this. Method and analyte are downloads that anyone can do. The upload/update dates are important in comparing for updated analyte information and can significantly shorten the list of changes that needs to be reviewed.

We don’t claim that LAMS is current – need to go to the AB for the most currently data (because it’s not being updated every 2 weeks like we were hoping).

“Current” will be here; never history.

Dan reviewed Method Code Request Form and the Analyte Code Request Form

Requests go to Dan, who checks to make sure they don’t exist by some other name; that it does exist, and can be located; if it doesn’t exist, Dan will email back and ask for verification or documentation that he can’t find.

Does a lab do PCBs? You have to know what analyte to search for. What people don’t do, “type” field, pick from the list, and you can get a list that you can look through. If you don’t know anything about chemistry, it’s going to be hard to do.

You can pull up anything that has “pcb” in the name. Enter it into the Analyte field. Go back to the lab search page and enter the analyte and matrix, and a list of labs will come up for airclore (sp) for matrix solvent.

Standard Methods “edition number” used to be the date the revision was published.

How do we know what new technologies are? The IT committee would propose to the NELAP council.

LAMS Contact form – Use this to submit questions, comments, complaints. They go to Dan, Dave, William, - Dan usually answers. Do we need to change the name of this form? “Inquiries” “Comments” form...

NGABS – There is no reason to make them look different than ABs because you all know who they are. Dan doesn't think there's anything we would have to do to accommodate those ABs. No reason to make it look any different.

METHOD COMPENDIUM:

What we are doing – why we need specific method criteria – collection of methods used in the program – for LAMS and assessors that want to know a specific method code: You will go right here enter the code and the method will come up. Cannot publish non-public domain codes, but website/link info will be provided instead.

Sometimes EPA doesn't have a date on the method, but there may be a date on the cover of the book, or in the name.

GENERIC APPLICATION

This is a single lab application that all labs could use for all ABs. We have a development plan, but other higher priorities have pushed this down the list.

- Is this okay? Development plan is an official document in the document library. This will tell you about what kind of data will be pulled and what it will do. The hard part is the front-end security pieces.
- The Gen App won't work unless all the FOAs are in LAMS. Huge time savings for the ABs in LAMS.
- Does William have an idea of when he might be able to get to it? There might be something new to show by the next meeting, but it probably will not be finished.

5. **Next Meeting:** Thursday, March 19, 2015; 3:00pm EST