

Summary of Accreditation Body Committee Meeting
August 20, 2007
Cambridge, MA

1. Roll call and Introductions

Committee chair Jeff Flowers called the meeting to order at 1:30 PM on August 20, 2007. Members present included: Sharon Mertens, Jeff Goodwin, Steve Arms, Dan Dickinson, Lynn Bradley, and Linda Geddes.

2. Review of Committee Mission, Strategies, and Accomplishments

Jeff Fowers reviewed the committee's mission and strategies. The committee's mission is:

- To develop and support accreditation standards by engaging industry experts in a consensus-based standards development process.
- To improve the quality and consistency of environmental data throughout the United States, and
- To foster the mutual recognition of laboratory accreditation by Accreditation Bodies.

The strategies used by the committee to accomplish their mission include:

- Assisting TNI NELAP Board and TNI LASC as needed with review of existing NELAC policies, and
- Developing policies and procedures to assist TNI NELAP board in implementing new standards.

The committee's accomplishments to date include finalizing volume 2, Module 1, of the new TNI standards and continued mutual recognition of Accreditation Bodies.

3. Review of TNI Standard, Volume 2, Module 1, against NELAC Chapter 6 (2003)

The committee's current assignment was to review the new TNI V2M1 against the NELAC Chapter 6 standard in order to identify issues that are not in the new standard and that will require a policy or SOP in order for the accreditation program to operate. The committee identified the following items:

1. Recognition
2. Where to apply for NELAP accreditation
3. Documentation Maintained by Accrediting Authorities
4. Written Application for NELAP Recognition

5. Required Technical Elements of a NELAP-Recognized Accrediting Authority's Program
6. Application Technical Review Report
7. Notification of Changes to An Accrediting Authority's Program
8. Scheduling on-site evaluations
9. Conducting the On-Site Evaluation
10. On-Site Evaluation Reports
11. Accrediting authority's request for extension of time to comply with the NELAC standards
12. Certificate of recognition to the accrediting authority
13. Requirements of the NELAP
14. NELAP evaluation team
15. Appealing findings based upon differences in standards interpretations
16. Appealing decisions to deny or revoke NELAP recognition
17. Questions of uniformity procedure

Jeff asked for comments and suggestions concerning the issue's home, priority of the various issues, and how the committee should approach this task. The committee received the following comments:

- TNI needs to be careful with policies; they are open to interpretation.
- NELAP needs balance input from consensus committees on policies and SOPs.
- This activity needs to be coordinated with LASC.
- New policies need to be written better than current ones.
- Does any of this need to be adopted in rule by ABs? (Most seems to apply to ABs, therefore not needed in rule).
- V2M1 is the only module that does not have a conflict of interest statement. Does it need one?
- Policies and SOPs need to be clear that they apply to all ABs. This is not a selective process.
- Will V2M1 allow for regional accreditation bodies?

4. Next Steps

The committee's next steps will be to produce SOPs and Model Policies in conjunction with the LASC and NELAP board to allow implementation of V2M1 of the TNI standard.

The committee will continue its monthly conference calls on the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 12 Noon EST.