

Summary of the Laboratory Accreditation Body Expert Committee Meeting
Tuesday, June 17, 2014

1. Welcome and Roll Call

Chair Jeff Flowers opened the meeting and the roll was called. Those present are noted in Appendix A. Minutes from May 20, 2014, were approved with two minor edits.

2. SIR #254

The committee attempted to vote by email on the draft response to this Standards Interpretation Request, after our last meeting, but differences arose that needed interactive discussion to resolve. It was established that the SIR response needs only to interpret the requirements of the standard itself, and ought not to address whether and what additional actions an AB might take that are more stringent than the standard. Additionally, several references were added.

Rebecca moved to approve the draft as circulated, with the references revised, and Nilda seconded the motion. Approval was unanimous. The committee-approved response (see Attachment 2 below) now moves to the Laboratory Accreditation Systems Executive Committee's SIR Subcommittee for review prior to being posted for approval by vote of the NELAP Accreditation Council.

3. Third Party Assessor Credentials

At the committee's May meeting, participants had requested a one-page document to expedite the committee's discussion and resolve the dichotomy evident within the committee of whether to issue actual credentials or not. In the May meeting minutes, Lynn located and included the charge from the Accreditation Body Assistance Task Force and the TNI Board – both of these clearly state that a credentialing process is expected. Jeff had appointed a subcommittee of himself, Joe, Rebecca and Lynn to develop this one-pager, and the document was distributed to committee members, prior to this meeting. (See Attachment 3, without the citations from the TNI Standard, V2M1 §6.2-6.3 and V2M3 §4.0-4.2.)

Jeff discussed the one-pager and participants agreed that it was generally acceptable. This version will be discussed at conference in DC (the Monday morning LAB committee meeting.) Jeff wondered whether it could somehow be published for review beforehand, and Lynn agreed to circulate it to the identified third party assessors, the consultants as listed under "Resources" on the TNI website, and also the NELAP AC and LAS EC groups, with a cover note saying it was developed in response to the ABTF assignment and that it will be discussed at conference. It may also be distributed to the APHL-managed State Assessor Forum.

6. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the LAB Expert Committee will be Tuesday, July 15, 2014, at 11 am Eastern. A reminder will be sent the week before.

Appendix A

LAB Expert Committee Roster

Name/Email	Term ends	Affiliation	Present?
Joseph Aiello joseph.aiello@dep.state.nj.us	12/31/2016	AB - NJ State Department of Environmental Protection	No
Nilda Cox nildacox@eurofinsus.com	12/31/2014	Lab – Eurofins-Eaton Analytical Inc.	Yes
Jeff Flowers, Chair jeff@flowerslabs.com	12/31/2014	Lab – Flowers Chemical Laboratories, Inc.	Yes
Myron Getman mrg05@health.state.ny.us	12/31/2014	AB – NY Department of Health	No
Chris Gunning cgunning@A2LA.org	12/31/2014	AB – A2LA	No
Virginia Hunsberger vhunsberge@pa.gov	12/31/2014	AB – PA Department of Environmental Protection	Yes
Lucrina Jones Jones.Lucrina@epa.gov	12/31/2016	Other -- EPA Region 9 Laboratory	Yes
Carl Kircher, Vice Chair carl_kircher@doh.state.fl.us	12/31/2015	AB – Florida Department of Health	Yes
Rebecca Pierrot Rebecca.Pierrot@ALSGlobal.com	12/31/2015	Lab – ALS	Yes
Aurora Shields ashields@lawrenceks.org	12/31/2015	Lab – City of Lawrence, KS	Yes
Program Administrator: Lynn Bradley Lynn.Bradley@nelac-institute.org	N/A		Yes
Associate Members:			
Nirmela Arsem narsem@ebmud.com		Other – East Bay Municipal Utility District (San Francisco Bay area)	No
Doug Leonard dleonard@L-A-B.com		AB – Laboratory Accreditation Bureau	No
Jeff Lowry JeffL@phenova.com		Other -- Phenova (PTP)	No
Judy Quigley JQuigley@dep.nyc.gov		Lab – NYC DEP	Yes
Guests: none			

Attachment 2

SIR #254 – Interpretation by Laboratory Accreditation Body Expert Committee
Approved by LAB, June 17, 2014

2009 TNI Standard	
Volume and Module (e.g. V1M2)	V2M3
Section (e.g. C.4.1.7.4)	6.3.5
	Taking into consideration the language in: V2M1, Terms and Definitions, 3.7, 3.14 and 3.18; V2M1, 7.7.3, ISO/IEC 17011:2004 (E), Clause 7.11.3, 1st sentence; V2M3, 3.7, Assessment (ISO/IEC 17011:2004 (E), Clause 3.7 b)
<p>I have a request for a standard's interpretation of:</p> <p>V2M3, 6.3.5, ISO/IEC 17011:2004 (E), Clause 7.5.6, including the NOTE.</p> <p>My question: How must accrediting bodies implement/interpret ISO/IEC 17011:2004 (E), Clause 7.5.6 in the instance where the scope of the CAB only has one field of testing (e.g., Testing-Environmental) and the assessment team is performing a reassessment? That is, for a reassessment is it required that the assessment team assess all methods and analytical activities in the CAB's scope of accreditation or can the assessment team, via an AB procedure, select a representative number (sampling) of methods from the CAB's scope of accreditation as long as it ensures proper evaluation of the competence of the CAB? Please take into consideration the language in the NOTE to Clause 7.5.6.</p> <p>Bottomline do NELAP ABs during a reassessment have to assess: all methods in the CAB's scope of accreditation, all technologies in the CAB's scope of accreditation, or a representative number of methods from the CAB's scope of accreditation as long as it ensure proper evaluation of the competence of the CAB?</p> <p>Please cite all language in the standard that will support any response to this SIR.</p>	

Committee Comments

While all methods of all technologies do not have to be assessed during the reassessment, the AB is obligated to assure the performance of the laboratory, but the standard is not prescriptive about how that must be accomplished.

**V2M3 6.3.5 ISO/IEC 17011:2004(E),
Clause 7.5.6**

“The procedures shall ensure that the assessment team witness a representative number of examples to ensure proper evaluation of the competence of the CAB”

Response

The assessment team shall witness representative or example methods of each technology, but this does not require the evaluation of all methods in the CAB's FOAs.

The citations to the standard included in this interpretation are V2M1 §7.7, particularly §7.7.2 and 7.7.3, and V2M3 § 6.3.5, 6.3.6 and 6.3.7. The relevant citation from the NELAC standard is Chapter 3, Appendix C.4.2.

However; note that all ABs are being evaluated according to V2 of the TNI Standard, regardless of which standard is officially used for assessing laboratories.

Attachment 3

TNI Recognition of Assessors for Contracting with NELAP ABs

The TNI Board charged the LAB Expert Committee with implementing Option 4 of the Final Report of the AB Assistance Task Force (July 2011.) LAB offered a proposal to the TNI Board on January 8, 2013, for how to proceed. The Board approved the initial listing of individuals and organizations available to work as contract or third party assessors (TPAs) and LAB was asked to prepare a more detailed proposal for a program to provide a vetted credentialed community of TPAs that are qualified to conduct assessments in support of NELAP Accreditation Bodies.

This document is a suggested outline for that more detailed proposal, with steps in roughly chronological order.

1. Establish a staff position and committee to support this activity.
2. Determine how to verify the submitted credentials of existing listees, and do so.
3. Establish a matrix of suitable training and experience for assessors in the areas noted in V2M1 §6.2-6.3 and V2M3 §4 of the TNI Environmental Laboratory Sector Standard (ELSS).
 - a) Use collective knowledge of the LAB as incorporated into the templates on the TPA website plus assessor qualifications as specified in V2M3 §4.2.3-4.2.5
 - b) Survey NELAP ABs and NGABs briefly to determine what training and experience are required and offered in current contracts and for in-house assessors (per V2 ELSS) as well as how on-going monitoring of assessors is conducted. If actual written tests are used, obtain example tests, if possible, for various scopes per V2M3 §4.2.6. At minimum, the scopes would be the technical disciplines listed in the “note” of V2M3 §4.2.4
 - c) Merge that information into a preliminary checklist or matrix for assessor qualifications for lead assessor, assessor and as required expertise for the various scopes
4. Determine whether and how well the vetted credentials of existing TPAs match that matrix.
5. Vet that matrix with the existing NELAP ABs, understanding that it would initially apply ONLY to TPAs. Adapt as warranted within the language of V2.
6. Agree on appropriate personal attributes and incorporate those into a standardized interview which all TPAs would undergo (videoconference if not in person.) (*From ISO 19011 – ethical, open-minded, diplomatic, observant, perceptive, versatile, tenacious, decisive and self-reliant.*) Interview to include verbal check on credentials presented, also.
7. Determine form of recognition to be awarded and length of time it will be valid (3 years?) Recommend certificate with listing of scopes for which the individual assessor is qualified. Can only individual assessors be recognized and not organizations?
8. Establish acceptable AB/TNI evaluation techniques and tools for on-going monitoring of performance and competence of TPAs, plus settle on acceptable refresher training. Feedback mechanism to incorporate peer comments and laboratory feedback as well as the observation of assessment and continuing education.
9. Establish feedback mechanism for peers and laboratories.

10. Succession planning: Investigate necessity and practicality of identifying suitable commercial courses or establishing TNI training for future assessors, whether online or in person, for both basis assessor training as well as in the technical disciplines. **PERFORM THIS STEP CONCURRENTLY WITH STEPS 4-9.**