

Summary of the Laboratory Accreditation Body Expert Committee Meeting Tuesday, July 15, 2014

1. Welcome and Roll Call

Vice Chair Carl Kircher opened the meeting and the roll was called. Those present are noted in Appendix A. Minutes from June 17, 2014, were approved with Myron abstaining. During the conversation about the Third Party Assessor proposal, Chair Jeff Flowers joined the call and Carl handed off the moderator role.

2. Third Party Assessor Credentials

As agreed during the June 17 meeting, on July 1, Lynn circulated the approved proposal to all 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. That email also included a request that it be shared with the State Assessor Forum and others who might be interested.

Considerable feedback arrived by email within the next few days. Much of it was from individuals working as Third Party Assessors (TPAs) who objected to the concept, but also a few from NELAP state program managers stating that they have no use for such a credentialing system. Further comments from committee members during this meeting follow:

- discomfort with the concept of TNI issuing any form of credentials
- perception that establishing criteria for contract assessors would be taking decision authority from the NELAP ABs
- TNI is much more than a “standards-setting” organization, and continues to seek ways to expand its role in the environmental measurement community
- mixed reaction about whether our proposal will conserve AB resources
- labs might benefit from a similar model for choosing vendors
- at some point in the process, the credentials of TPAs must be vetted, prior to establishment of any contract.

At this point, Jeff joined and assumed the moderator role. He indicated concern over the email comments received but also noted that a face-to-face conversation would have much easier interaction and exchange of ideas, rather than the issuing of ultimatums by email. Jeff also believes that the draft proposal may have been misunderstood as being somehow mandatory and expected to apply to state employees, and this may have been the source of some of the angst in the email comments. All agree that feedback from the assessors is important, and that maintaining an atmosphere of consensus building during the discussion at conference will be essential.

Jeff asked which committee members expect to be in DC for conference – himself, Rebecca, Joe, Lucrina, Nilda, and possibly Joe. Carl will arrive later in the week, but will not be present for our Monday morning, August 4, session. The committee then discussed the content of an introductory presentation for the TPA proposal, and Lynn agreed to draft that for Jeff to refine. (NOTE: this was sent to Jeff already.)

3. New Business

Rebecca had some items that the Information Technology (IT) Committee requested she discuss with LAB. First was the actual time-sharing of the Monday morning session, which we affirmed to be the IT meeting (9-10 am), then after break, a presentation of the Generic Application (10:30 – 11 am, overlaps both committees) and then the discussion of the TPA proposal (11 – noon.)

The IT Committee is working to build awareness and use of the LAMS database, and now that most NELAP ABs have uploaded their Fields of Accreditation (FoAs,) IT is seeking feedback on a concept under consideration, to build a function that would permit labs to download their FoA or scopes of accreditation into an Excel file. Presently the labs must work through the full list of possibilities that resides in LAMS.

There was no objection to this concept, and participants generally agreed that setting it up as a “canned query” might be useful. IT may need help with outreach when this is available. NOTE from Lynn: LAB seemed willing to assist, but other TNI groups such as the Advocacy Committee might be more effective, and possibly part of a Mentor Session devoted to this would be helpful, once the query is available. (Mentor Session resides within LAS EC.)

4. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the LAB Expert Committee will be Monday, August 4, at conference in Washington, DC. Teleconference lines will not be available.

The next committee teleconference will be Tuesday, September 16, 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	Yes
Nilda Cox nildacox@eurofinsus.com	12/31/2014	Lab –Eurofins-Eaton Analytical Inc.	No, but Shoo Liu Attending as Associate Member For info purposes.
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	Yes
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		No
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	No
Guests: none			