

Laboratory Accreditation System Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

October 3, 2012

1) Roll call and Approval of Minutes

Kirstin Daigle called the TNI LAS EC meeting to order on October 3, 2012, at 1:35 pm Eastern time. Attendance is recorded in Attachment A.

There were only 6 Committee members present, not enough to vote on approving minutes. Lynn noted that there is no requirement for a formal vote, and that at least one other committee simply distributes the minutes for comment and after a week, if no comments are received or comments are addressed, the minutes are considered to be final and then posted. Kirstin determined that LAS EC will use this process henceforth.

2) Standards Interpretation Request Process

Kirstin asked Lynn to discuss her understanding of the current process, as she has spent time with Ilona trying to understand that as the transition in staff takes place:

- When the SIR is entered on the website, an automatic email goes to the Program Administrator (PA), the LAS EC Chair and the AC chair. These individuals determine whether it is a valid SIR, and if so, which expert committee should address it.
- A response is sent to the submitter, saying that the request is being forwarded to that specific committee, or else that the request is not a SIR but with some explanation of other possible ways to obtain answer to the question posed, where possible.
- The response from the expert committee has been going directly to the PA and LAS EC Chair, at the same time as to the AC voting site, but according to Kirstin, she gets a notice that the response was posted for AC vote where she isn't able to see the response itself, due to secure login for AC only, so that there is no opportunity for LAS EC to review or perform oversight.
- The AC voting site is subject to the AC Voting SOP 3-101. When there are 2/3 "yes" votes with no vetoes or requests for discussion, the PA notifies the AC that there are two final weeks to cast votes and if there is no veto or discussion request, the SIR will be considered accepted and then posted to the website.
- The backlog is due to "needs discussion" requests, which are made for many reasons by AC members, sometimes with a vote and sometimes without one.

Kirstin's concerns for revising the SIR SOP are:

1. to have a consensus group perform initial review of the SIR,
2. to impose an oversight step where LAS reviews the expert committee's interpretation response before it is posted to the AC voting site, and
3. to address what should happen when a SIR is returned unapproved from the AC.

For reviewing the SIR, Kirstin asked the LAS participants to consider a consensus process where a small workgroup of LAS members (Chair, PA, and 2 others representing different groups than the chair) would review the incoming request, and that same group would review the expert committee's interpretation response. She would prefer to abandon the current practice where the AC Chair has a determining role in accepting the request at the outset, to avoid having knowledge that a SIR is being

submitted due to a dispute with one of the NELAP ABs become a determining factor in declining – that decision is better made by a consensus group.

Participants discussed whether this group would serve for a year, or be appointed individually for each incoming SIR; workload concerns arose, as well as time constraints, since the turnaround times for decisions need to be short. It was agreed that the Chair should be able to appoint an alternate or additional workgroup member at her discretion. JoAnn, Carol Barrick, and Roger volunteered to be on this workgroup.

Participants also discussed whether the expert committees are meeting the current 60-day timeline for providing interpretations, and if not, how to speed things up. Data on this were not available during the call. [NOTE: review of the SIR tracking spreadsheet indicates that interpretations are historically completed anywhere from 2 to >12 months from the date sent to the expert committee, but most recently, 2-3 months is the norm.]

Participants also discussed and decided against publishing the interpretation to the SIR website as “preliminary,” prior to the AC vote.

Kirstin offered to prepare a draft revision of the SIR SOP and distribute to LAS members by October 17, in time to allow for thorough review and comment, and additional discussion at LAS EC's November 7 meeting. She also indicated that applying this new process to SIRs going forward seems appropriate, with the backlogged SIRs being dealt with on a cast-by-case basis, as they return from the AC's currently underway review process.

3) Review of Standards -- Changes from the Corrective Action Workgroup's Recommendations

For now, the LAS' role in suitability review remains at the end of the process, but the extent of the actual review is uncertain and the final process still unclear. Kirstin advises waiting until the CSD EC SOP is completed to begin formulating the LAS' process for its review.

4) Request for New Items for LAS Consideration

Kirstin inquired whether LAS members had other items that would benefit from the committee's attention. In response, Lynn mentioned a request from the AC, sent in the spring while LAS was inactive, asking for consensus recommendations on how to address changes to an AB's operations that might require a full evaluation outside of the normal 3-year cycle, such as shifting to use of a contract accreditation body making accreditation recommendations for accreditation to the state. Lynn will re-send the request to Kirstin for consideration of how to proceed.

Kirstin noted that the Accreditation Body Task Force Two (ABTFII) is beginning to consider asking LAS EC to become the oversight and approval body for a TNI program that may be developed where non-governmental ABs (NGABs, formerly third-party ABs) become authorized to use a TNI logo on their accreditations to the TNI Environmental Laboratory Sector Standard, the same standard as used by NELAP.

She also noted that Jerry has requested that LAS EC develop a formal budget for the overall NELAP program, and that she will be working on that issue in coming weeks.

5) Next Meeting

The next phone conference will be planned for Wednesday, November 7 at 1:30pm Eastern. The agenda will be to review the draft revisions to the SIR SOP 5-101.

Action Items are included in Attachment B.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:53 pm Eastern time.

Attachment A

PARTICIPANTS
TNI LABORATORY ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE

Member	Affiliation	Present?
Ann Marie Allen (Jan 2007) T: 978-682-5237 x333 E: ann.marie.allen@state.ma.us	Massachusetts, Non-NELAP AB	yes
Aaren Alger (2009) T: 717-346-8212 E: aalger@pa.us	Pennsylvania DEP, NELAP AB, Accreditation Council Chair	No
Jo Ann Boyd (Jan 2007) T: 210-522-2169 E: jboyd@swri.org	Southwest Research Institute, Lab	Yes
Carol Barrick (Jan 2009) T: 813-361-6911 E: cabarrick@msn.com , Carol.Barrick@mosaicco.com	Mosaic, LLC, Lab	yes
Kristin Brown (Jan 2010) T: 801-965-2540 E: kristinbrown@utah.gov	Utah Bureau of Lab Improvement, NELAP AB	no
George Detsis (Jan 2007) T: 301-903-1488 E: george.detsis@eh.doe.gov	Department of Energy, Government	no
Dan Dickinson (Jan 2007) T: 518 485-5570 E: dmd15@health.state.ny.us	New York DOH, AB	No
Kirstin Daigle, Chair (Jan 2012) T: 802-660-1990 E: Kirstin.Daigle@testamericainc.com	TestAmerica, Lab	yes
Terri Grimes (Jan 2007) T: 727-582-2302 E: tgrimes@co.pinellas.fl.us	Pinellas County Utilities, Municipal Lab	yes
Carol Haines (Aug 2012) T: 360-871-8878 E: Haines.Carol@epa.gov	EPA Region 10 Laboratory	no
Roger Kenton (Jan 2007) T: 903-237-6882 E: rogerk@eastman.com	Eastman Chemical Company, Lab	Yes
Judy Morgan (Jan 2007) T: 615-773-9657 E: jmorgan@envsci.com	Environmental Science Corporation, Lab	no

Mitzi Miller (Jan 2011) T: 509-531-0255 E: mitzi.miller@moellerinc.com	Dade Moeller & Associates, other	no
Julia Sudds (Jan 2010) T: 951.653.3351 E: jsudds@babcocklabs.com	E.S. Babcock & Sons, Inc., Lab	Yes
Lynn Bradley T: 540-885-5736 E: lynn.bradley@nelac-institute.org	TNI Program Administrator	yes
Guests: Bob Wyeth,	Chair of Consensus Standards Development Executive Committee	No

Attachment B**Action Items – LAS EC**

	Action Item	Who	Expected Completion	Actual Completion / Comments
2	Work on references for SIRs in 2009 SIR database.		Establish date at next meeting.	Is this still needed?
12	Talk to Aaren about NELAP AC representation on LAS EC.	Kirstin	3-12-12	Was this done?
13	Publicize that LAS is seeking new members. Check with the absentees about their preference for remaining on the committee.	Kirstin	October 2012	Publicizing completed -- TNI newsletter article, 10/15/12
14	Distribute current copy of SIR SOP to Kirstin.	Ilona	9-4-12	Completed (8/24/12)
15	Discuss existing SIR process w/ former Program Administrator	Lynn	asap	Completed Sept 7, 2012
16	Draft revisions to SIR SOP 5-101	Kirstin	10/17/12	
17	Send AC request regarding response to changes in AB operations to Kirstin	Lynn	10/3/12	10/3/12