

## Laboratory Accreditation System Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

September 5, 2012

### 1) Roll call and approval of minutes:

Kirstin Daigle called the TNI LAS EC meeting to order on September 5, 2012, at 1:35 pm Eastern time. Attendance is recorded in Attachment A. There were 5 Executive Committee members present. A motion was offered by Dan and seconded by Carol Barrick that the 3 pending sets of minutes (February 27, August 1 and August 9, 2012) be voted upon by email; all present voted in favor of this motion and an email vote will be conducted.

### 2) Introduction of New Program Administrator

Kirstin noted that TNI has made changes to staffing assignments, and Lynn Bradley is now the Program Administrator assigned to LAS EC. Since she also staffs the NELAP Accreditation Council, this may help improve coordination with that group. Kirstin thanked Ilona Taunton for her efforts in staffing the LAS.

### 3) Committee Composition

Start dates for all committee members are noted on the August 9 minutes (and today's, as well.) Kirstin noted that the committee is presently well-balanced but a number of members have been on the committee for many years. [NOTE: SOP 1-101, section 7.3.2, states that no member shall serve more than two 3-year consecutive terms; during the discussion we were uncertain about this requirement.]

Kirstin asked if members wished to rotate off, regardless of time. Dan said that yes, he would prefer to leave LAS when the new terms begin in January 2013. Ann Marie indicated that she is willing to be replaced.

Kirstin will publicize that LAS is seeking new members as well as check with the absentees about their preference for remaining on the committee.

### 4) Follow-Up from Conference

Kirstin asked whether members who participated by telephone in the LAS meeting at conference were able to hear satisfactorily. Apparently this was so.

She characterized the meeting as a "lively discussion" with much emphasis on the SIRs, and asked Bob Wyeth for his perspective. Bob stated that the discussion about SIRs needs further development, and that as Chair of CSD Executive Committee, he seeks feedback on the corrective actions proposed by the workgroup (draft presented at conference) and especially where the LAS fits in the new scheme, since there was no discussion about the "suitability review."

Additional concerns expressed by Bob follow:

- All executive committees should review the proposed corrective actions

- Where is it most appropriate for parties beyond the expert committee to intercede into the review process
- The current staggered or unknown implementation dates for the 2009 TNI Standard by state ABs makes actual implementation of any future approved standard difficult [NOTE: several NELAP ABs intend to adopt the newest standard and simply skip over the 2009 standard.]
- Frustration that potential veto votes from the Accreditation Council when new standards are proposed for adoption may mean wasted effort
- Holds hope for having all parties working together simultaneously, once the corrective action report is finalized
- Frustration among CSD EC members exists about delaying approval, adoption and implementation of the standards in development to wait for a process that is not yet approved due to the modifications recommended by the corrective action review process, yet acknowledges that slowing down standards development now may still be preferable to continuing with the old flawed process.

Several options for where the LAS suitability review ought to occur were discussed, as well as the not-yet-well-defined differences between suitability/implementability versus the proposed “editorial board” reviews, and who will look at possible conflicts between different modules and volumes across the full package of standards. It’s important not to have recurring reviews of multiple versions of the developing standards, yet to resolve suitability issues before the newly-named Interim Voting Standard is proposed for the ultimate approval.

Kirstin also noted that the timing of the suitability review, as well as what it is eventually going to address, will impact what actually constitutes that review. There was support for LAS review of the Interim Standard before it is proposed for adoption. Bob indicated that the CSD review role should address possible conflicts, but the timing of this review was not discussed.

Kirstin noted that LAS earlier worked on an SOP for standards review, but had set that aside awaiting on the corrective action recommendations. Now, the LAS’s SOP will be revised concurrent with the CSD’s SOP to that they can complement each other, perhaps having a small workgroup of both committees to coordinate the development of both. Bob agreed to the need for maintaining communication, whether informal or formal.

Lastly, Kirstin recommended awaiting the final report, expected after the September Board meeting, but she and Bob agreed that she will participate in the next CSD call to open communications about the quality system and proficiency testing standards that are now in development. Bob also noted that expert committees are being asked to summarize their issues and flag them for consideration during standards reviews.

For the LAS’ next call, Kirstin intends to begin defining the suitability review and outlining an SOP for that.

## 5) Standards Interpretation Requests

Kirstin led a discussion of the current process for receiving and responding to SIRs. The existing SOP clearly needs revision since it does not reflect what’s currently done, but

also, the missing piece that seems to have created problems is that LAS in recent years never sees the actual interpretation from the expert committee, that is proposed for vote by the AC.

For the AC to return an SIR as unapproved, with “suggestions” for alteration, is viewed as problematic interference with the consensus standards process. Kirstin asked Lynn to review the process undertaken by the AC to rapidly clear out the backlog, and one of the 4 categories used will return about 20 SIRs as “unapprovable as written,” with suggestions for what would make them approvable, since some explanation for the return does seem necessary. Many of the backlogged SIRs are grammatically inadequate/incorrect or unintelligibly written or else contain extraneous information (such as “intent of the committee” when writing the standard, or opinions of the author.) Kirstin explained that the AC did receive for vote some interpretations that were never vetted through the consensus process. Several participants indicated that originally there was a subcommittee of LAS that reviewed interpretations prior to AC vote, but that seems to have simply faded away over time.

Bob noted that the AC “should have an SOP” for SIRs. [NOTE: the AC’s voting SOP addresses its defined role in SIRs. Backlog-clearing has been a collective effort to address multiple SIRs in a streamlined fashion, while generally following the processes outlined already.]

Kirstin raised the question of whether the LAS ought to insist on the AC’s returning to, or re-performing, its backlog clearing process with involvement of the LAS, or whether to just let that run its course and begin with a new process that includes LAS review of interpretations, from this date forward, and updating the SOP accordingly.

Lynn agreed to find ways to notify AC members that new SIRs are posted for voting. She will work with Ilona to understand what has been done to date, and be better able to explain the existing processes and possibly needed revisions to the process, once that has been accomplished. [NOTE: Ilona has done a thorough job of tracking down all the SIRs that either got misplaced or just never responded to, for her role in this transition.]

## 7) Next Meeting

The next phone conference will be planned for Wednesday, October 3 at 1:30pm Eastern. The agenda will be half standards development and half SIRs.

Action Items are included in Attachment B.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:45 pm EST. (Motion to adjourn – Ann Marie; second – Dan. Unanimously approved. )

## Attachment A

**PARTICIPANTS**  
**TNI LABORATORY ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>	<b>Present?</b>
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	No
Carol Barrick (Jan 2009) T: 813-361-6911 E: cabarrick@msn.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: <a href="mailto:dmd15@health.state.ny.us">dmd15@health.state.ny.us</a>	New York DOH, AB	Yes
Kirstin Daigle, Chair (Jan 2012) T: 802-660-1990 E: <a href="mailto:Kirstin.Daigle@testamericainc.com">Kirstin.Daigle@testamericainc.com</a>	TestAmerica, Lab	yes
Terri Grimes (Jan 2007) T: 727-582-2302 E: <a href="mailto:tgrimes@co.pinellas.fl.us">tgrimes@co.pinellas.fl.us</a>	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: <a href="mailto:rogerk@eastman.com">rogerk@eastman.com</a>	Eastman Chemical Company, Lab	no
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	no
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	yes

**Attachment B****Action Items – LAS EC**

	<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Expected Completion</b>	<b>Actual Completion / Comments</b>
2	Work on references for SIRs in 2009 SIR database.		Establish date at next meeting.	
12	Talk to Aaren about NELAP AC representation on LAS EC.	Kirstin	3-12-12	
13	Publicize that LAS is seeking new members. Check with the absentees about their preference for remaining on the committee.	Kirstin	October 2012	
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				
17				