

Summary of the Laboratory Accreditation Committee Meeting January 31, 2007

1. Agenda

Committee Chair, June Flowers, called the meeting of the TNI Laboratory Accreditation committee (LAC) to order on January 31, 2007, at the Forum on Laboratory Accreditation in Denver, CO. June presented the following agenda:

- Review and discussion of Committee Charter
- Discussion of LAC topics:
- Subcommittee overview
- Discussion of FAQ Management

2. Introduction of Committee Members

The following committee members were present and introduced themselves: June Flowers, Chair; Ann Marie Allen; JoAnn Boyd; Dan Dickinson; Lew Denny; Dan Hickman; Roger Kenton; Dale Piechocki; George Detsis; Marvelyn Humphreys; Jack McKenzie; Ilona Taunton, and Carol Batterton, Program Administrator. Lance Boynton, Stacy Freeburg, and Terry Grimes were absent.

3. Review and Discussion of Charter

Mission Statement

The mission of this committee is to develop a system for the accreditation of environmental laboratories that consists of the policies and procedures, interpretations, guidance documents, and any related tools (e.g., checklists and SOPs for assessments, etc.) used by accrediting authorities (needs to be changed to accrediting bodies) to implement a national environmental laboratory accreditation program.

Objectives

- Working in cooperation with the NELAP Board and the PT Board, develop the Laboratory Accreditation System
- Design and provide oversight of the national database of accredited laboratories
- Provide laboratory accreditation guidance document for non-NELAC laboratories as a flow chart with references towards NELAC (change to TNI) accreditation

Additional Charter Items

- Success measures - TBD
- Key Milestones - TBD
- Considerations - TBD
- Available Resources
 - Other TNI Committees
 - Volunteer committee members
 - Existing national and international consensus-based standards

More Resources

- EPA Cooperative Agreement
- TNI Website
- Participating organizations
- Other entities as the committee sees fit, that pertain to our mission
- Web-based teleconferencing services
- Effective and accessible member database
- Funding to build and maintain the national database

Meeting Schedule

- Anticipate:
 - Monthly Committee Teleconferences, 2nd Friday each month at 11 A.M. EST – Have had 2 conference calls
 - Additional teleconferences scheduled as necessary
 - Committee meetings during semiannual TNI Forums

A question was posed concerning whether this committee will be addressing accreditation needs for field sampling and measurements accreditation. June responded that the committee had not discussed this, but it could most be added to the charter. The committee put the issue in the parking lot.

4. LAC Topics

Jo Ann Boyd, previous Chair of INELA Accreditation Process Committee, discussed the draft guidance document. This document contains text that was previously a part of the NELAC Standards Chapter 4, but which has been removed in the new interim standards with the thought that it should be made into guidance. The purpose of the documents is to be a flow chart for laboratories seeking to be accredited.

Some changes to the initial flow chart have been made including changing from AA to AB and reference to ISO 17025:2005.

There were questions and discussion concerning whether this document would be guidance or policy adopted by this group and then be approved by NELAC – will be a guidance doc for labs not in NELAP?

Comment was made that since the language included in this document has been taken out of the interim standard, there will have to be a policy to replace this within the laboratory accreditation system. There continued to be discussion on this being a guidance document instead of policy.

Since a number of the committee members had not seen the draft document, June requested that JoAnn distribute the document to committee members.

5. Subcommittee Overview

- **Dan Hickman - Chair National Database**

Dan reported that the National Database committee had a really good meeting. The first half of the meeting was for comments on the ITQA plan and the second half was for the committee to meet and work on development plan.

Dan commented that there are more resources available to the committee under TNI, and we have ways to get more help that we didn't have in the past which turns out to our benefit. The committee plans to get the draft development plan out fairly soon. National Database Committee hope to have something to present by the August meeting.

Question was asked concerning current PT board – do you need a subcommittee for updating/adding codes – already have codes – method code request form on line

- **Ann Marie Allen - Chair Non-NELAP Accreditation Bodies**

Anne Marie stated that Non-NELAP states have not missed their opportunity to attend the committee meeting this afternoon. Non-NELAP states can be categorized as two different groups – one group is accrediting bodies & the second are those that are not. There are no formal members of the committee at this time.

If state or government agencies are not involved in accreditation, they should attend this meeting.

6. Discussion of maintaining the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and other policy development

The Laboratory Accreditation Committee needs to develop a process/procedure to answer questions to give to the TNI NELAP Board. There was extensive discussion concerning

what the TNI Board needs to include into the new standards versus what should be Policy or SOPs for accreditation bodies.

Carol made recommendation that volunteers from this committee work with Sharon Mertens to identify items that are not in standard, and that may need to be in policy or SOP. Some participants pointed out that some items have been removed from the standards that ABs may need for enforcement. There was additional discussion of this recommendation and on timelines.

Dan Dickinson, who is on the Accreditation Body Committee, and George Detsis volunteered to work with Dan Hickman. Roger Kenton & Dale Piechocki volunteered to review the Laboratory Support guidance document (previous Chapter 4) to identify needed policies and SOPs. Lew Denny will coordinate with the On site Assessment Committee and JoAnn Boyd will work with Field Activities.

7. Next meeting

The next meeting of the Laboratory Accreditation Committee will be February 9, 2007, at 10:00 am CST.