

**Microbiology Expert Committee (MEC)
Meeting Summary**

November 12, 2013

1. Roll Call and Minutes:

Robin Cook, Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:30pm EST. Attendance is recorded in Attachment A – there were 6 members present. Associate Members present: Carl Kircher.

The October 8, 2013 minutes were reviewed but people were not ready to vote. They will be reviewed and approved by e-mail.

(Addition: Deb motioned by email to approve the 10-8-13 minutes as distributed. The motion was seconded by Elizabeth. Vote: 8 – For (Deb, Elizabeth, Dwayne, Patsy, Karla, Donna, Mary, Robin) 0 – Against 2 – No Vote (Colin, Po). The motion was approved.)

Associate members need to let Robin and Ilona know they own a copy of ISO 17025 so they can be included in distributions of the draft working standard updates.

2. Charter

Robin reviewed the changes to the charter. She is still trying to reach 3 committee members to confirm they will be staying on the committee and then she can complete the committee membership section. It will be approved by e-mail once this section is completed.

Dwayne asked if the 2015 target is realistic. The committee decided this is doable.

3. Standard Review

The following message was received by e-mail from Deb Waller:

At my recent EPA-LCO refresher course, the point about having to take two readings each day with four hours apart was addressed. EPA states in its handouts that weekend and holiday readings are required if samples are being run.

No one intends for folks to have to read the temp of an empty incubator or water bath.

So based on all of this I offer the following language for consideration:

TNI Standard 1.7.3.7.b.v for Incubators, Water Baths, Ovens

The uniformity of temperature distribution in incubators and water baths shall be established. Temperature of incubators and water baths shall be documented twice daily, at least four hours apart, on each day of use when samples are under test. Under test is defined as the time period that the sample is in an incubation phase of the method testing.

When planning for microbiological sample analysis, the laboratory should avoid the analysis of samples that would be under test on days when the laboratory facility is not staffed whenever possible.

For tests that routinely require incubation periods of greater than 48 hours where samples would be under test routinely during weekends or holidays, the laboratory must have a system in place to ensure that the temperature requirements meet all of the method requirements for incubation for the entire test period. Data loggers, continuous temperature devices, or other approved temperature monitoring equipment can be used as long as they can be calibrated at least annually in accordance with TNI, Volume 1, Module 2, Section 5.5.13.1b) for Support Equipment.

The following message was received by e-mail from Dwayne Burkholder:

TNI Standard 1.7.3.7.b.v for Incubators, Water Baths, Ovens

The uniformity of temperature distribution in incubators and water baths shall be established **prior to first use**. Temperature of incubators and water baths shall be documented twice daily, at least four hours apart, on each day of use when samples are under test. Under test is defined as the time period that the sample is in an incubation phase of the method **testing**.

When planning for microbiological sample analysis, the laboratory should avoid the analysis of samples that would be under test on days when the laboratory facility is not staffed whenever possible.

For tests **that routinely require incubation periods of greater than 48 hours** where samples **are** would be under test routinely during weekends or holidays, the laboratory must have a system in place to ensure that the temperature **monitoring** requirements **are** meet **all of the method requirements for incubation** for the entire test period. Data loggers, continuous temperature **monitoring** devices, or other approved temperature monitoring equipment can be used as long as they can be calibrated **at least annually** in accordance with TNI, Volume 1, Module 2, Section 5.5.13.1b) for Support Equipment.

The committee reviewed the language above and after discussion decided on the following:

v) Incubators, Water Baths, Ovens

1. The uniformity of temperature distribution in incubators and water baths shall be established prior to first use. Temperature of incubators and water baths shall be documented twice daily, at least four hours apart, on each day of use when samples are under test. Under test is defined as the time period that the sample is in an incubation phase of the method.
2. For tests where samples are under test during weekends or holidays, the laboratory must have a system in place to ensure that the temperature monitoring requirements are met for the entire test period. Data loggers, continuous temperature monitoring devices, or other temperature monitoring equipment can be used as long as they can be calibrated in accordance with TNI, Volume 1, Module 2, Section 5.5.13.1 for Support Equipment.

The following was deleted: Ovens used for sterilization shall be checked for sterilization effectiveness monthly with appropriate biological indicators. Records shall be maintained for each cycle that include date, cycle time, temperature, contents and analyst's initials.

Comments:

- Carl asked who approves the temperature monitoring equipment? This procedure is included in the last sentence.
- Carl asked if there would ever be a reason an incubator would be in use if there are no samples in it. Robin commented that this is why "in use" needs to be better defined. Deb thinks the language should be "in test". Are there samples in the incubator?
- Deb noted that Colin is doing some research to find appropriate temperature monitoring equipment. Deb is talking to EPA (Jen) about use of the min/max instead of the two checks. Colin is looking for a min/max that can go down to 0.2. Deb also noted that data loggers need to meet the required accuracy.

Robin asked if there are other topics the committee would like to discuss before they start going through each section in order.

Carl commented that the group might consider protozoa, viruses and other emerging technologies. Will the standard cover this? Is there something that needs to be added to be forward thinking? Patsy noted that ELAB has had conversations with EPA about the applicability of the standard to some of these topics. EPA has concluded that the standard as written is sufficient to cover laboratories that are doing cryptosporidium – the methods cover the QC and the systems in the TNI standard are sufficient.

Dwayne thinks information on centrifuges needs to be added to the standard. Some methods don't have any information, so it may be appropriate to discuss checks. Carl pointed out that Section 5.5.13.1 includes information on centrifuges. Dwayne will look at this and see if anything in addition is needed in the Microbiology module. Robin volunteered to talk to Paul Junio from the Quality Systems Expert Committee and see if it is more appropriate to add specifics to this committee's module or to Module 2. Dwayne thought the centrifuges might need to be checked with a tachometer. There are methods that have no instructions for how to check rpms or how often.

Robin will distribute the changes to the standard to the committee members and associate members who own ISO 17025. This document will include the changes discussed today and changes made in previous meetings. She turned off tracking of changes from the 2009 to the 2012 standard. These have already been approved, so they don't need to be tracked anymore. Robin asked that people review the information and let her know which sections they think need to be addressed next.

Robin also asked people to start thinking about whether the use of ovens for sterilization needs to be moved to the autoclave section of the standard. Robin suggested changing the heading of the section to Sterilization and include ovens below it. The committee agreed to change the heading of 1.7.3.7 b) ii) to Sterilization Equipment. There is now a section for a) Autoclaves and b) Ovens. The information under Ovens includes: Ovens used for sterilization shall be checked for sterilization effectiveness monthly with appropriate biological indicators. Records shall be maintained for each cycle that include date, cycle time, temperature, contents and analyst's initials.

3. Webinar

The committee would like to meet with stakeholders and discuss the standard in Kentucky. Could this replace the need for a webinar at this time? Ilona will check into this.

4. Action Items

A summary of action items can be found in Attachment B. The action items were reviewed and updated.

5. New Business

None.

6. Next Meeting and Close

The next meeting will be 12-10-13 at 1:30pm EST.

A summary of action items and backburner/reminder items can be found in Attachment B and C.

A motion to dismiss the meeting was made by Patsy, seconded by Deb and unanimously approved. The meeting ended at 2:40 pm EST.

Attachment A
Participants
Microbiology Expert Committee (MEC)

Members	Affiliation	Balance	Contact Information	
Robin Cook (Chair) Present	City of Daytona Beach EML	Lab	(386)671-8885	cookr@codb.us
Patsy Root (Vice-chair) Present	IDEXX Laboratories, Inc	Other	(207)556-8947	patsy-root@idexx.com
Karla Ziegelmann- Fjeld Present	Microbiologics, Inc	Other		kfjeld@microbiologics.com
Donna Ruokonen Absent	Microbac Laboratories, Inc	Lab	(219)769-8378 Ext 110	druokonen@microbac.com
Colin Fricker Absent	Analytical Services, Inc	Lab		colinfricker@aol.com
Deb Waller Present (Added 1:40)	NJ DEP	AB	(609)984-7732	debra.waller@dep.state.nj.us
Dwayne Burkholder Present	Pennsylvania DEP	AB	(717)346-8213	dburkholde@pa.gov
Mary Robinson Absent	Indiana State DOH	AB	(317)921-5523	mrobinson@isdh.in.gov
Elizabeth Turner Present	North Texas Municipal Water District	Lab	(972)442-5405 Ext 535	eturner@ntmwd.com
Po Chang Absent	Texas Commission on Environmental Quality	AB	(512)239-4876	Po.chang@tceq.texas.gov
Ilona Taunton (Program Administrator) Present	The NELAC Institute	n/a	(828)712-9242	Ilona.taunton@nelac-institute.org

Attachment B

Action Items – MEC

	Action Item	Who	Expected Completion	Actual Completion
1	Review Method Codes and send comments to Robin for Dan Hickman.	Deb	TBD	
4	Review Handbook and Method Codes before next meeting.	ALL	5/7/13	Handbook Complete.
10	Update language regarding chlorine checks in V1M2: Section 1.7.5 b).	Elizabeth	Next Meeting	Complete
11	The issue of how to recertify media will be looked at by Colin.	Colin	January Meeting	He will be working on it during the holidays and getting input.
12	Research possible effects of using bromine and whether it needs to somehow be included in the standard. Does not look like it.	Deb	November Meeting	
13	Send updated copy of Standard that includes the changes discussed to date.	Robin	10/31/13	
14				

