

Summary of the NELAP Accreditation Council Meeting
September 6, 2011

1. Roll call and Approval of Minutes

The NELAP Accreditation Council (AC) met at 1:30 pm EDT on September 6, 2011. Minutes of the July 18, August 1, and August 18 meetings were approved. Those members in attendance are listed in Attachment 1. Dennis Dobson noted that this would be his last AC call, as he is retiring from KS, later in September.

2. Updates on AB renewals

Lynn reported on the status of ongoing evaluations:

- CA – renewal letter received; requested and was granted a 30-day extension to submit its application
- FL – completeness review results awaiting transmission to Florida
- KS – team review of both the onsite report and Technical Review responses underway, approaching completion
- LA DHH -- Onsite occurred the week of July 25; observation is scheduled for November. The Team Leader was encouraged to provide a draft report of the site visit, and not wait for completion of the observation, so the AB could begin work on its corrective actions (if needed.)
- NH – onsite completed, delayed observation now completed. Onsite report is in development, delayed until team leader could catch up from MN shutdown.
- NJ – transmission of results of completeness review accomplished; NY identified Team Leader and one additional person for the team.
- NY – onsite and observation performed August 22-26; report being drafted
- PA –technical review response is in review. The site visit possibly early October.
- UT – onsite and observation completed, report in preparation.

Steve Arms raised a question about accreditation renewals that might impact evaluations. FL has 3 labs that are known to be changing to a different primary AB, so FL determined not to perform site visits to them. Now, all 3 have had site visits from their “new” primary AB, but accreditation isn’t granted yet; this leaves them with FL as primary AB but showing long-overdue site visits. The files do indicate the reason for the situation, but he was wondering if this might be called out as a finding by the evaluators. Lynn indicated that she would keep an eye out for such a situation and if it shows up in the site report from the evaluation team, she’ll discuss with the Lead Evaluator.

ABs were also reminded that the PT Executive Committee requested comments on its SOP concerning FoPT table management, as sent out on July 21. Susan requested that it be re-sent to her, since that was during the MN shut-down.

3. Discussion of conference activities

Several general information items from conference were presented to the AC.

The Consistency Improvement Task Force is wrapping up its activities and will soon make its recommendations to the TNI Board. One of these recommendations will be that ABs prepare “consistency plans” to help ensure that all lab assessments are performed consistently within an AB and across ABs as well. Many of their recommendations will overlap with those of the AB Assistance Task Force, such as creating and utilizing a standardized lab application form. (NOTE: Susan shared MN’s draft consistency plan by email, after the meeting.)

The draft Laboratory Bill of Rights, prepared by a working group of the CITF, and discussed at the CITF meeting. A copy of the draft was shared before this meeting, and it provoked strong reaction from several ABs, and a few indicated that they intended to comment to the CITF directly. Comments were that there are even a few inaccurate terms (biannual instead of biennial, for instance) and that calling out items that are already specified in the standard is perhaps more aggressive than needed. The CITF had indicated that it will recommend that ABs provide a copy of the final Bill of Rights to labs; ABs indicated that they would be comfortable with TNI posting the final document, and that it might be used internally for training, to illustrate the concerns of labs, but that it is unlikely to be independently promoted by individual ABs. The Board of Directors will need to review all recommendations from the CITF, including this one, before any are implemented.

Regarding AC requests about SIRs (discussion from several meetings ago), the IT Committee was prepared to consider our request for a closed discussion board for hashing through SIRS, but met with unexpected opposition, and a strong suggestion that the “comment” field in the SIR voting site. While it was noted that this is cumbersome, requiring repeated log-ins if one needed to refer back to the actual SIR language and response, it was left that the AC ought to try and see if this tool would be adequate to accomplish the discussion needs. Lynn was also asked to remind ABs to check the SIR site for such comments and discussion; a notice will also be provided when new SIRs are posted for voting. (None have been, since May 2011.)

Aaren noted that the last set of AB demographic data has been entered into the LAMS database, since conference. It had been noted then, that only one was outstanding, although the AB was never publicly named, and will not be here.

4. Accreditation Body (AB) Task Force Recommendation 5: Use of Assessments by Other Organizations

This item was discussed at both August meetings, and Lynn asked if it was yet time to invite the federal representatives to interact with the AC. However, we learned that Kristin and several others from the LAS Executive Committee are working on it as well, so it seems reasonable to see what input they provide. Apparently, the LAS picked this up as an assignment from a mis-numbered (and since replaced) version of the TF report, posted to the TNI web site. Federal representatives have indicated complete willingness to cooperate and interact with the AC as we address this issue.

5. PT Issue

With the provided agenda complete, Aaren asked if there were any other issues needing discussion. Cathy raised an issue about PTs, and has provided the following explanation (for clarity in the minutes, sent to Lynn after the meeting)

“Hexachlorobenzene is listed on the NELAC FoPT NPW table under "Base/Neutrals". Typically this is part of an EPA 8270 or 625 analysis, but the analyte can also be run under EPA 8081, a pesticide method. A laboratory has inquired about the applicability of the PT sample for EPA 8081 after finding it to be very problematic. A chemist from a popular PTP has advised the lab that the sample is not appropriate for testing under 8081. The lab has asked for an exemption from this PT requirement (or, clarification about its requirement.) This question came to VA and is VA's first lab with this analyte by the pesticide method. VA had 4 labs with secondary accreditation for Hexachlorobenzene by 8081, 2 from NJ and 2 from PA. Discussions have shown that NJ does not require the PT for this analyte, and PA does. The analyte has been problematic for one of the 2 PA labs. Discussion has also brought to light that there is an unfinished SIR on this issue. “

This brought the larger issue of the FoPT titles and headers – and the fact that some believe the categorization of PT samples is actually setting a standard by FoPT table, when in fact, that categorization is a convenient way for PTPs to identify multi-analyte samples in their catalogs. For example, if hexachlorobenzene is in the “pesticide” PT sample, does a lab need to purchase a separate PT sample for it, if a different method (than pesticide multi-residue method) is used for analysis?

ABs were urged to examine SIR#80 and vote if they have not already.

7. Next meeting

The next AC meeting will be Monday September 19, at 1:30 pm EDT. Agenda items (thus far) will be:

- Welcome and Roll Call
- Approval of Minutes
- Update on Renewals
- Discussion and Vote on Adoption of FoPT tables for Drinking Water (DW) and Solids and Chemical Materials (SCM) – Eric Smith and Carl Kircher invited as resource people
- CITF Bill of Rights

Attachment 1

STATE	REPRESENTATIVE	PRESENT
CA	George Kulasingam T: (510) 620-3155 F: (510) 620-3165 E: gkulasin@cdph.ca.gov	yes
	Alternate: Jane Jensen E: jjensen@cdph.ca.gov	no
FL	Stephen Arms T: (904) 791-1502 F: (904) 791-1591 E: steve_arms@doh.state.fl.us	yes
	Alternate: Carl Kircher E: carl_kircher@doh.state.fl.us	no
IL	Scott Siders T: (217) 785-5163 F: (217) 524-6169 E: scott.siders@illinois.gov	no
	Alternate: TBA	
KS	Dennis L. Dobson 785-291-3162 E: ddobson@kdhe.state.ks.us F: (785) 296-1638	yes
	Alternate: Michelle Wade E: MWade@kdheks.gov	no
LA DEQ	Paul Bergeron T: 225-219-3247 F: 225-325-8244 E: Paul.Bergeron@la.gov	yes
	Alternate: TBD	
LA DHH	Donnell Ward T: E: donnell.ward@la.gov	yes
	Alternate: TBD	
MN	Susan Wyatt T: 651.201.5323 F: E: susan.wyatt@state.mn.us	yes

	Alternate: Stephanie Drier E: stephanie.drier@state.mn.us	no
NH	Bill Hall T: (603) 271-2998 F: (603) 271-5171 E: george.hall@des.nh.gov	no
	Alternate: TBD	
NJ	Joe Aiello T: (609) 633-3840 F: (609) 777-1774 E: joseph.aiello@dep.state.nj.us	no
	Alternate : TBD	
NY	Stephanie Ostrowski T: (518) 485-5570 F: (518) 485-5568 E: seo01@health.state.ny.us	yes
	Alternate: Dan Dickinson E: dmd15@health.state.ny.us	no
OR	Gary Ward T: 503-693-4122 F: 503-693-5602 E: gary.k.ward@state.or.us	yes
	Alternate: Raeann Haynes E: haynes.raeann@deq.state.or.us	no
	Scott Hoatson T: (503) 693-5786 hoatson.scott@deq.state.or.us	no
PA	Aaren Alger T: (717) 346-8212 F: (717) 346-8590 E: aaalger@state.pa.us	yes
	Alternate: Dwayne Burkholder dburkholde@state.pa.us	
TX	Stephen Stubbs T: (512) 239-3343 F: (512) 239-4760 E: sstubbs@tceq.state.tx.us	no

	Alternate: Steve Gibson E: sgibson@tceq.state.tx.us	yes
UT	David Mendenhall T: (801) 584-8470 F: (801) 584-8501 E: davidmendenhall@utah.gov	yes
	Alternate: Kristin Brown E: kristinbrown@utah.gov	no
VA	Cathy Westerman T: 804-648-4480 ext.391 E: cathy.westerman@dgs.virginia.gov	yes
	Alternate: Ed Shaw T: 804-648-4480 ext.152 E: ed.shaw@dgs.virginia.gov	no
	NELAP AC Program Administrator and Evaluation Coordinator Lynn Bradley T: 540-885-5736 E: lynn.bradley@nelac-institute.org	yes
EPA Liaison	Arthur Clark T: 617-918-8374 F: 617-918-8274 E: clark.arthur@epa.gov	yes
	Quality Assurance Officer Paul Ellingson T: 801-201-8166 E: altasnow@gmail.com	yes
	Oklahoma: David Caldwell	David Caldwell
	Guests: none	