

**Summary of the NELAP Accreditation Council Meeting
February 3, 2011**

1. Roll call

The NELAP Accreditation Council (AC) met at 1:30 PM EST on February 3, 2011, during the Forum on Laboratory Accreditation in Savannah. Those members in attendance are listed in Attachment 1, according to whether they participated by phone or in person.

2. AB Renewals

Renewal letters for KS, LADHH, and NH were sent on December 22, 2010. Renewal letters for UT and NY were sent January 28, 2011. The Vice Chair signed and sent the letter to PA on January 20, 2011. Each of these ABs will be granted a 30 day extension, so that the evaluators will have an opportunity to complete their training before receiving the materials.

All necessary documents for conducting evaluations to the 2009 TNI Standard have been adopted by the AC – the evaluation SOP, the completeness and compliance (technical review) checklists, the application form and the Field of Accreditation table. These are posted to the AC website, and the SOP has been submitted to the Policy Committee for final approval before posting in the TNI documents pages of the website.

3. Implementation of the 2009 TNI Standard

Aaren gave some history, explaining that the initial AC (then the NELAP Board) vote in September 2009 was to adopt the 2009 TNI Standard, and for each AB to implement it as soon as possible. The TNI Board requested, instead, a fixed date for implementation, which was then determined to be July 1, 2011.

However, due to state governmental changes and political realities (such as a freeze on regulations by new governor, for example), as well as some needed changes to the PT module of the Standard, not all states will be able to implement the new Standard on that date, after all. It is certain that a few states will not be able to begin implementation for at least another year, so that a “rolling implementation” becomes reality after all.

Some concerns were expressed about how this might affect reciprocal recognition of the accredited laboratories, since two different standards would be in use at the same time. After some discussion, Aaren polled each state to state AB about how they would handle this situation. The results follow.

State	Status
CA	no problem with reciprocity. Unknown when TNI standard can be implemented, but is beginning the process
FL	essentially no impact. FL forms to implement new standard are in rulemaking, held up by cessation of rule promulgation in FL. Makes the point that this is parallel to the prior transition from 2001 to 2003 NELAC standards.
IL	absent

KS	no problem with reciprocity. Due to change of administration, unclear when implementation of TNI standard can begin.
LA DEQ	no problem with reciprocity. Will implement TNI standard in August 2011
LA DHH	no problem with reciprocity. Moving to TNI standard on July 1.
MN	no problem with reciprocity. Ready to implement TNI standard on July 1.
NH	no problem with reciprocity. Rules are written but now delayed one year. Will assess labs against whichever standard the lab has in use.
NJ	no problem with reciprocity. Has a "name change" underway. Has not proposed rules for implementing TNI standard, may delay
NY	no problem with reciprocity. Is rewriting regulations now, expects July 1 implementation of Modules 1 and 3, but PT issues will delay implementation of PT module
OR	no problem with reciprocity. Preparing now for July 1 implementation of TNI standard.
PA	no problem with reciprocity. PA rules reference the AD-adopted standard
TX	no problem with reciprocity. Preparing to transition to TNI standard on July 1.
UT	no problem with reciprocity. On track for July 1 implementation of TNI standard.
VA	no problem with reciprocity. Cannot adopt TNI Standard now, but can begin new regulations in 2012.

Summarizing, the language and words may vary but reciprocity will continue to exist, and all issued accreditation certificates will be recognized as valid by all ABs. Aaren also pointed out that there is no substantive change in the standard for the laboratories, going from the 2003 NELAC Standard to the 2009 TNI Standard, and that, if anything, the 2009 TNI standard offers more flexibility to the labs.

Concerns were expressed whether the TNI Board would now be willing to accept a rolling implementation, and it was agreed to seek a statement from the Board about this issue. Another commenter asked that a written policy be prepared by the AC to describe how the details of reciprocal recognition will be addressed, with the two standards in place.

4. Fields of Proficiency Testing (FoPT)

Aaren explained that four separate issues exist, as implementing the PT module of the standard proceeds. These are experimental PTs, the Level of Quantitation (LOQ) reporting, tracking PTs by analysis date, and the use of unapproved PT providers. Additionally, there are inconsistencies between the Quality System and the PT module.

For the AC, Aaren committed to sustaining better communications with the PT Executive Committee (EC), so that possible issues in the future can be addressed before they become problems. New FoPT tables will be proposed to the AC shortly, for Drinking Water, with Non-potable Water and Solids following in a couple months

Experimental PTs

One state is unable to adopt experimental PTs, and the PT EC had said that it would not be an issue, since experimental PTs would be eliminated. Since this has not yet happened, the AC will send a memo to the PT EC requesting that it please remove the experimental PT tables from the TNI website. The PT EC Chair agreed that this will be done.

Analytes meeting the criteria for PT tables will be moved into the FoPT tables; others will be dropped.

One commenter explained that the experimental PT tables were useful for “dual purpose” analytes, and that if the analytes were tabulated in only one place in the PT tables, that labs will need to know they must analyze by technologies different than that group of analytes by test method. An AC member responded, if that is the case, then the FoPT tables are being used to establish PT by technology, which is not what was intended and is a separate issue than experimental PT tables. Further, if the technology issue exists, then that analyte should be removed from the FoPT table too, as well as removing the experimental PT.

LOQ

The desired outcome is that the laboratory reports PT results in the same way that it reports “regular” samples, consistent with state AB requirements or client-specific requirements. The PT Expert Committee will consider a Temporary Interim Amendment (TIA) to the standard eliminating the requirement to report LOQs.

Tracking by analysis date

This issue did not get addressed in the meeting.

Use of unapproved/non-approved PT providers

The 2009 TNI standard says that if no approved provider exists, the laboratory must find a PT provider for PT samples anyhow. The PT Expert Committee intends to propose a TIA such that labs are not required to perform PTs unless available from an accredited provider.

5. Next meeting

The AC agreed to hold its next regular conference call on Monday, February 7, 2011, at 1:30 pm Eastern. The agenda will be to update all ABs on the outcome(s) from conference.

Attachment 1

STATE	REPRESENTATIVE	PRESENT
CA	George Kulasingam T: (510) 620-3155 F: (510) 620-3165 E: gkulasin@cdph.ca.gov	phone
	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	yes
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: 225-219-1244 F: 225-219-8244 E: Paul.Bergeron@la.gov	phone
	Alternate: TBD	
LA DHH	Louis Wales T: (225) 342-8491 F: (225) 342-7494 E: lwales@dhh.la.gov	phone
	Alternate: Ginger Hutto E: ghutto@dhh.la.gov	

MN	Susan Wyatt T: 651.201.5323 F: E: susan.wyatt@state.mn.us	yes
	Alternate: Stephanie Drier E: stephanie.drier@state.mn.us	yes
NH	Bill Hall T: (603) 271-2998 F: (603) 271-5171 E: george.hall@des.nh.gov	yes
	Alternate: TBD	
NJ	Joe Aiello T: (609) 633-3840 F: (609) 777-1774 E: joseph.aiello@dep.state.nj.us	yes
	Alternate : TBD	(Rachel)
NY	Stephanie Ostrowski T: (518) 485-5570 F: (518) 485-5568 E: seo01@health.state.ny.us	phone
	Alternate: Dan Dickinson E: dmd15@health.state.ny.us	no
OR	Irene Ronning T: 503-693-4122 F: 503-693-5602 E: irene.e.ronning@state.or.us	phone
	Alternate: Raeann Haynes E: haynes.raeann@deg.state.or.us	no
	Alternate for 2/3/11: Scott Hoatson E: hoatson.scott@deg.state.or.us	yes
PA	Aaren Alger T: (717) 346-8212 F: (717) 346-8590 E: aaalger@state.pa.us	yes
	Alternate: Dana Marshall E: dmarshall@state.pa.us	no

TX	Stephen Stubbs T: (512) 239-3343 F: (512) 239-4760 E: sstubbs@tceq.state.tx.us	phone
	Alternate: Steve Gibson E: jgibson@tceq.state.tx.us	no
UT	David Mendenhall T: (801) 584-8470 F: (801) 584-8501 E: davidmendenhall@utah.gov	no
	Alternate: Kristin Brown E: kristinbrown@utah.gov	yes
VA	Cathy Westerman T: 804-648-4480 ext.391 E: cathy.westerman@dgs.va.gov	yes
	Alternate: Ed Shaw T: 804-648-4480 ext.152 E: ed.shaw@dgs.va.gov	no
	NELAP AC Program Administrator and Evaluation Coordinator Lynn Bradley T: 703-867-5966 E: LmbTbird@aol.com	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 Judy Duncan	
	Guests: not introduced, meeting attendees participated	