Summary of the NELAP Accreditation Council Meeting

October 21, 2013

1. Roll call and Approval of Minutes

The NELAP Accreditation Council (AC) met at 1:30 pm EDT on Monday, October 21, 2013. Minutes of the October 7, 2013, meeting were approved. Those members in attendance are listed in Attachment 1.

2. Action Items Pending

- Teleconference among Aaren, Paul B. and Bob Wyeth, CSD EC Chair.
- Prepare and issue new certificate to LDEQ for renewal date 9/10/13, to expire November 16, 2015; PA will notify the Regional Office once copy of certificate is available.
- Final Response to Complaint from ACIL – pending completion of evaluation process for the AB (response deadline letter sent to CA)

3. Request from PT Expert Committee for Feedback on WDS Language

Shawn Kassner, Chair of PT Expert Committee, requested feedback on proposed modified wording of section 4.5.3.23 of the Working Draft Standard for Volume 3, as follows*: "If the laboratory informs the PT provider that a supplemental PT sample is being used for corrective action purposes for a specific qualitative (presence/absence) test, whether the analyte of interest is spiked into the sample shall be randomly determined by the PT provider so that the laboratory will not automatically know that it is present or not."*

Shawn explained that the requirements of the current standard are that the analytes must be spiked into the corrective action PT, regardless if the lab missed the PT due to a miss-quantification or as a false positive. The WDS standard has removed that requirement, but the PT Expert Committee asks for AC perspective so that the standard will appropriately test the laboratory's corrective action process. The committee believes that the new language (above) will allow the PT Providers to select randomly whether the analyte is spiked or not for qualitative analyses. They especially seek feedback on whether this is appropriate for quantitative analyses for organic PT's. If the laboratory is doing corrective action PT's for a false positive, should the analyte not be spiked to test the laboratory's ability to determine a non-detect and conversely should a missed quantitation analyte be present to test the laboratory's ability to quantitative an analyte?

Unfortunately, Shawn was not able to be on the call as planned, but since the next opportunity to discuss the issue is a month away, the AC determined to try and offer feedback in more timely fashion. Several ABs commented that whether the analyte in question is spiked into the sample should always be random, and suggested that comments provided by Carl Kircher, the FL "alternate," in advance of the meeting should be helpful to the committee also. Carl's comments are quoted below:

"(1) If the lab orders a make-up or quick-response quantitative PT for a single-component analyte, that analyte must be present in a non-zero amount so that the laboratory can be graded based on quantitative as well as qualitative criteria.
(2) If the laboratory orders a make-up or quick response PT for an analyte that is part of an analyte group such as PCB's, then the laboratory must analyze and turn results for all analytes in the group (e.g., all 7 PCBs). The lab must not be provided information on which analyte(s) of the group are spiked as present (e.g., which 1 of the 7 PCBs was actually spiked). Please note that Total Xylenes, Total Trihalomethanes, and Total Haloacetic Acids may also be considered in this fashion (particularly if the AB is using the 75% or 80% criteria provided for in prevailing regulations).
(3) If the laboratory orders a quick-response or make-up PT for qualitative presence-absence tests for Drinking Water Microbiology, then the laboratory must receive, analyze, and submit results for all 10 samples provided in the testing round for Total Coliform and Fecal Coliform or E. coli.
(4) The language that Shawn provided below would be fine, but only for the DW "PCB Screen" PT."

The AC also offered a request that the committee consider requiring PCBs to be treated as an "analyte group" such that if the lab misses one of the compounds in the PT sample, they are considered to fail the entire analyte group. (NOTE: this information has been transmitted to Shawn.)

4. Request from PT Executive Committee for an Additional AB Representative

Stacie Metzler, Chair of PT Executive Committee, asked that the AC try to provide one or two AB representatives to the PT Executive Committee. Stephanie Ostrowski indicated she thought that NY State could benefit from representation there, and offered to ask others in the program if they could take this on. Aaren recommended that she contact Stacie directly, and Stacie has been advised of this outcome.

5. Request from CSD EC for Read-Only Access to AC SIR Voting Site

Bob Wyeth, Chair of the Consensus Standards Development Executive Committee, had contacted Lynn to ask whether all of the Expert Committee Chairs (who comprise the CSD EC) could have read-only access to the AC's SIR Voting site, since Paul Junio was given read-only access during conference in San Antonio.

The AC had discussed this in February and consensus was not to oppose such access, but Lynn asked them to discuss it again, just to be check whether further thoughts needed considering. After reflecting on the previous discussion and acknowledging that all of the AB comments on the voting site represent preliminary internal discussion that is subject to change (i.e., deliberative), participants still don't grasp what value there could be and have concern that opening these comments to others is more likely to generate mis-understandings than to be helpful. It is absolutely not acceptable for individual chairs to have committees prepare revised responses without receiving a request to do so from the LAS EC, which coordinates SIR activities. (NOTE: at its October 25 meeting, the LAS affirmed its desire to let the new process have time to be implemented and see how well it works before making any adjustments. See the revised SIR SOP 3-105 on the LAS web

page,
http://www.nelac-institute.org/docs/comm/lasc/SOP3-105%20SIR%20Management%20-%20092913-PROVISIONAL.pdf).
Lynn will set up a conference call between Aaren, Paul Bergeron and Bob to further discuss the request. One alternative might be to provide the collected comments (without names) to the committee chairs after the SIR is approved.

6. SIR Discussions

A number of Standards Interpretation Requests have outstanding "Needs Discussion" votes. The requests and responses were circulated in advance of the meeting.

#26 – this is an old question that remains unresolved, but the present answer is heading in the wrong direction, since the group headers in PT tables are technology-related, and there is nothing in the standard about technology-specific PTs. At least one AB tries to use the headers but finds that it's not a straightforward process; there is not a 1:1 correlation between the PT samples (method-analyte) and the analyte-technology categorization of the group headers. Consensus of the AC is that, if the PT folks want technology-specific PTs, then the standard must be rewritten accordingly. Based on a years ago ruling by Barbara Burmeister of Wisconsin (then on the PT Board), the "group headers" have no meaning, and that continues to be the practice of all ABs. At least one AB is prepared to vote "veto" if necessary, but since the current interpretation has too many "against" votes and will never be approved, that seems like just unnecessary work.

#71 – COI is a real issue but the request is for an application of the standard and not an interpretation. There are enough votes for this to pass, so it should be subject to 2-week notice, and discussion has occurred, but perhaps it should also join the list of FAQs being prepared by LAS EC.

#104 – return to LAS, it won't pass as written, and likely is not a genuine SIR, but a specific response to the example provided, so an application of the standard, rather than a general response. Also, "that should be sufficient" is not suitable language for an enforceable standard.

#112 – the vote count is close; the 2 outstanding AB representatives agreed to vote "soon." The TNI standard reference appears to be incorrect.

#132 – The TNI standard specifically mentions purchased water, but one AB representative states that their regional Certification Officer will not accept a vendor certificate but requires in-lab validation of the information. The last 2 sentences of the response as currently revised are all that is needed as response.

#133 – the standard is clear, twice per day, and the requirement is to monitor. As for adapting application of the standard to alternative work schedules, the laboratory needs to discuss with its AB, but this ought not to be a SIR. This discussion is directly opposite the previous discussion but the proposed revised response of leaving the definition of "day of use" up to the lab is not acceptable either. (Note: Lynn will refer this to LAS EC for consideration as a FAQ.)

Discussion of SIRs 171, 172 and 202, plus any additional SIRs needing discussion by

then, will resume at the November 17 AC meeting.

7. Next Meeting

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the AC will be the Assessor Call on Monday, November 4, 2013, at 1:30 pm Eastern. A final reminder with teleconference information and the briefing materials will be distributed prior to the meeting.

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Attachment 1

STATE	REPRESENTATIVE	PRESENT
CA	Fred Choske 510-620-31745 F: 510-620-3471 E: fred.choske@cdph.ca.gov	yes
	Alternate: Dave Mazzera T: 510-449-5600 E: david.mazzera@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: Janet Cruse T: 217-785-0601 E: Janet.Cruse@illinois.gov	No
KS	Michelle Wade E: MWade@kdheks.gov Ph: (785) 296-6198 Fax: (785) 296-1638	no
	Alternate: N. Myron Gunsalus ngunsalus@kdheks.gov 785-291-3162	yes
LA DEQ	Paul Bergeron T: 225-219-3247 F: 225-325-8244 E: Paul.Bergeron@la.gov	yes
	Altérnate: 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	no

	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	yes
	Alternate: TBD	
NJ	Joe Aiello T: (609) 633-3840 F: (609) 777-1774 E: joseph.aiello@dep.state.nj.us	no
	Alternate : Rachel Ellis E: rachel.ellis@dep.state.nj.us	no
NY	Stephanie Ostrowski T: (518) 485-5570 F: (518) 485-5568 E: seo01@health.state.ny.us	Yes
	Alternate: TBD	
OR	Gary Ward T: 503-693-4122 F: 503-693-5602 E: gary.k.ward@state.or.us	yes
	Shannon Swantek T: 503-693-5784 E: Shannon.swantek@state.or.us	no
	Included for information purposes: Scott Hoatson T: (503) 693-5786 E: hoatson.scott@deq.state.or.us	No
PA	Aaren Alger T: (717) 346-8212 F: (717) 346-8590 E: aaalger@pa.gov	yes
	Alternate: Yumi Creason E: ycreason@pa.gov	no
TX	Alice Colt T: (512) 239-3927 Alice.Colt@tceq.texas.gov	Yes
	Ruth Wedig Ruth.Wedig@tceq.texas.gov	No
UT	Kristin Brown T: (801) 965-2540 F: (801) 965-2544 E: kristinbrown@utah.gov	yes

	Alternate: Robert Aullman T: 801-965-2541 F: 801-965-2544 E: raullman@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 PA and EC	Lynn Bradley T: 540-885-5736 E: lynn.bradley@nelac-institute.org	Yes
EPA Liaison	Marvelyn Humphrey T: (281) 983-2140 E: Humphrey.Marvelyn@epa.gov	yes
NELAP QAO	Paul Ellingson T: 801-201-8166 E: altasnow@gmail.com	yes
Oklahoma	David Caldwell	yes
Guests:		