

## Summary of the NELAP Accreditation Council Meeting

December 12, 2016 1:30 pm Eastern

### 1. Roll Call and Approval of Minutes

The NELAP Accreditation Council (AC) met at 1:30 pm on Monday, December 12, 2016. Those members and invited guests in attendance are listed in Attachment 1. Minutes of December 5, 2016, were approved.

Aaren welcomed Steve Martin (LA DHH) and Scott Hoatson (OR) in their new roles as interim representatives to the NELAP AC, and reminded them that all Council members are willing to help when asked, as well as affirmed her personal willingness to share SOPs and so forth with the other ABs.

### 2. Action Items Pending

None

### 3. Proposed Restructuring of TNI Organization's AB Recognition Programs

Alfredo Sotomayor, who leads the Non-governmental AB (NGAB) Working Group, asked for time to discuss a proposed restructuring of TNI with the Council. He explained that both the Working Group and the TNI NGAB Recognition Committee (TNRC) have been seeking a way to reorganize TNI's multiple independent recognition activities that involve primarily the same non-governmental ABs, being recognized outside of the NELAP. The NELAP operations are not expected to change, and none of the other TNI recognition activities involve mutual or reciprocal recognitions among the recognized ABs.

Alfredo provided several documents to help explain the proposal. Two of these are included in Attachment 2, below. Essentially, for all recognitions other than NELAP, the TNRC would manage the evaluations and make a recommendation about recognitions to the Executive Committee of the relevant program. TNRC would be organizationally placed under the LASEC, for management purposes, and for NGAB recognitions to accredit to the NELAP standard, LASEC would be the recognizing Executive Committee, once the initial NGAB recognitions are overseen by the Board (in the present structure.) The concept is that the evaluating and recommending authority for each of the various TNI programs and activities recognizing NGABs would be centralized, in order to facilitate combining the various evaluations for efficiency and effective use of resources.

A number of questions arose as participants discussed the ramifications of Alfredo's proposal. These are summarized below (with thanks to Carol for documenting them clearly):

- Is the NELAP AC going to report to the LASEC or the TNI Board? Answer: The NELAP AC will remain as it is, a dotted line to the TNI Board, but with no direct oversight.
- The interaction between the LASEC and the NELAP AC is confusing. What has changed? Answer: Nothing changes between the NELAP AC and LASEC.

- How does standards adoption work? Could the NELAP AC and NGABs be accrediting to different standards? Will the NGABs be accrediting to the 2016 standard when they are recognized? Answer: That's a good question. We will need to work that out. Given the uncertain status of the 2016 standard, Aaren did ask that the NGABs not seek to accredit labs to a more recent standard prior to its actual adoption by NELAP.
- What about SIRs? Answer: the NGABs will recognize the SIRs, but do not want to be involved in the process.
- Will NGABs be recognized as different from government ABs in stakeholder balance considerations? Should we add another stakeholder category? Answer: This clearly needs further discussion, since it had not been previously considered. The group agreed that some way of balancing the different AB types in committee memberships is needed.
- Should the other executive committees have a dotted line to the TNI Board? Answer: ???
- Are the same people on the TNRC providing recommendations to all core programs other than NELAP? Answer: Yes.
- Comment: Current members of the NELAP AC pay significant fees to cover the administrative costs of LAMS, etc. We need to make sure the NGABs are paying their fair share as well – perhaps not the travel costs covered in the NELAP fees, but certainly a proportionate share of LAMS database and staffing.

Alfredo indicated his desire to have these items resolved so that a firm proposal can be presented at conference in Houston, and thanked the Council for its time.

#### **4. SIRs Needing Discussion**

SIR #144 was discussed, with the AB requesting discussion agreeing to change its vote to a “yes”.

Participants determined to return SIR #246 for reconsideration. This SIR concerns the unique identification of sample containers and participants felt that the response proposed for vote conflicts with the standard. NOTE: when Lynn discussed this with the LASEC Chair, they realized that a different (and probably acceptable) response had already been provided by Quality Systems Expert Committee, but that response was somehow misplaced and not posted properly. This will be remedied shortly.

#### **5. Letter Providing Feedback to OGWDW Technical Support Center about the Drinking Water Certification Officer Course**

No additional comments were provided from AB representatives on the content of the draft letter reviewed at the December 5 meeting. Cathy added the comment discussed on December 5, about letting the regional offices conduct the 5-year refresher training, and, as agreed, reformatted the document to be a one-page cover letter with the unchanged comments in an attachment document, and there were no objections to the cover letter wording. There being no objections from the Council, Aaren agreed to sign and send the letter, and did so on December 13.

NOTE: As discussed, the letter was copied to the Environmental Laboratory Advisory Board (ELAB) by sending it to the ELAB Designated Federal Official, Lara Phelps. ELAB discussed the letter at its December 21 meeting, with Aaren providing background for the creation of the letter and explaining how important the C.O. course is for state accreditation and certification programs. ELAB agreed that the issue falls within its charter, and formed a small workgroup

to consider the letter and perhaps draft a recommendation to OGWDW about ways to improve the usefulness of the C.O. course.

**6. Next Meeting**

The next teleconference meeting of the Council will be on Monday, January 9, 2016, at 1:30 pm Eastern time – a rescheduled meeting to accommodate the Monday holiday on the regularly scheduled meeting date. Since several votes on matters of accreditation are expected, AB representatives are asked to notify Aaren and Lynn if they will be unable to attend, so that a different day can be scheduled in order to have the required two-thirds attendance. Teleconference information and meeting materials will be distributed with the meeting reminder.

**Attachment 1**

| STATE     | REPRESENTATIVE   | PRESENT |
|-----------|--|---------|
| FL        | Carl Kircher<br>E: <a href="mailto:carl.kircher@flhealth.gov">carl.kircher@flhealth.gov</a>  | Yes     |
|           | Alternate: Vanessa Soto<br>E: <a href="mailto:Vanessa.sotocontreras@flhealth.gov">Vanessa.sotocontreras@flhealth.gov</a>                   | No      |
| IL        | Celeste Crowley<br>T: 217-557-0274<br>F: 217-524-6169<br>E: <a href="mailto:celeste.crowley@illinois.gov">celeste.crowley@illinois.gov</a> | Yes     |
|           | Alternate: TBD<br>Guest: Becky Hamaelton   |         |
| KS        | N. Myron Gunsalus<br><a href="tel:785-291-3162">785-291-3162</a><br>E: <a href="mailto:ngunsalus@kdheks.gov">ngunsalus@kdheks.gov</a>      | Yes     |
|           | Alternate:<br>Sara Hoffman<br><a href="mailto:shoffman@kdheks.gov">shoffman@kdheks.gov</a>   | Yes     |
| LA<br>DEQ | Paul Bergeron<br>T: 225-219-3247<br>E: <a href="mailto:Paul.Bergeron@la.gov">Paul.Bergeron@la.gov</a>                                      | Yes     |
|           | Altérnate: TBD   |         |
| LA<br>DHH | Donnell Ward<br>T:<br>E: <a href="mailto:donnell.ward@la.gov">donnell.ward@la.gov</a>  | Yes     |
|           | Alternate: Steve Martin,<br><a href="mailto:stephen.martin@la.gov">stephen.martin@la.gov</a><br>225-219-5235                               | Yes     |
| MN        | Lynn Boysen<br>E: <a href="mailto:lynn.boysen@state.mn.us">lynn.boysen@state.mn.us</a>   | Yes     |
|           | Alternate:<br>Stephanie Drier<br>651-201-5326<br>E: <a href="mailto:stephanie.drier@state.mn.us">stephanie.drier@state.mn.us</a>           | Yes     |
| NH        | Bill Hall<br>T: (603) 271-2998<br>F: (603) 271-5171<br>E: <a href="mailto:george.hall@des.nh.gov">george.hall@des.nh.gov</a>               | No      |
|           | Alternate:<br>Tyler Croteau<br><a href="mailto:Tyler.Croteau@des.nh.gov">Tyler.Croteau@des.nh.gov</a>                                      | No      |

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|----|--|-----|
| NJ | Michele Potter<br>T: (609) 984-3870<br>F: (609) 777-1774<br>E: <a href="mailto:michele.potter@dep.nj.gov">michele.potter@dep.nj.gov</a>  | Yes |
|    | Alternate : Rachel Ellis<br>E: <a href="mailto:rachel.ellis@dep.nj.gov">rachel.ellis@dep.nj.gov</a>  | No  |
| NY | Mike Ryan<br>T: (518) 473-3424<br>F: (518) 485-5568<br>E: <a href="mailto:michael.ryan@health.ny.gov">michael.ryan@health.ny.gov</a>   | No  |
|    | Alternate: Victoria Pretti<br><a href="mailto:victoria.pretti@health.ny.gov">victoria.pretti@health.ny.gov</a>   | No  |
|    | Included for information purposes: Lynn McNaughton<br><a href="mailto:lynn.mcnaughton@health.ny.gov">lynn.mcnaughton@health.ny.gov</a>   | No  |
| OR | Scott Hoatson<br>Agency Quality Assurance Officer<br>Oregon Department of Environmental Quality<br>503-693-5786<br>E: <a href="mailto:hoatson.scott@deq.state.or.us">hoatson.scott@deq.state.or.us</a>     | Yes |
|    | Lizbeth Garcia<br><a href="mailto:Lizbeth.garcia@dhsosha.state.or.us">Lizbeth.garcia@dhsosha.state.or.us</a>   | No  |
|    | Included for information purposes:<br>Stephanie Ringsage, Manager, Laboratory Compliance Section<br>503-693-4126<br><a href="mailto:stephanie.b.ringsage@state.or.us">stephanie.b.ringsage@state.or.us</a> | No  |
| PA | Aaren Alger<br>T: (717) 346-8212<br>F: (717) 346-8590<br>E: <a href="mailto:aaalger@pa.gov">aaalger@pa.gov</a>   | Yes |
|    | Alternate: Yumi Creason<br>E: <a href="mailto:ycreason@pa.gov">ycreason@pa.gov</a>   | No  |
| TX | Ken Lancaster<br>T: (512) 239-1990<br>E: <a href="mailto:Ken.Lancaster@tceq.texas.gov">Ken.Lancaster@tceq.texas.gov</a>  | Yes |
|    | Julie Eldredge<br>E: <a href="mailto:Julie.Eldredge@tceq.texas.gov">Julie.Eldredge@tceq.texas.gov</a>  | No  |
| UT | Kristin Brown<br>T: <a href="tel:(801)965-2540">(801) 965-2540</a><br>F: <a href="tel:(801)965-2544">(801) 965-2544</a><br>E: <a href="mailto:kristinbrown@utah.gov">kristinbrown@utah.gov</a>             | Yes |
|    | Alternate: Jill Jones<br>T: (801) 965-3899<br>E: <a href="mailto:jilljones@utah.gov">jilljones@utah.gov</a>  | No  |

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|-----------------------|---|-----|
| VA                    | Cathy Westerman<br>T: 804-648-4480 ext.391<br>E: <a href="mailto:cathy.westerman@dgs.virginia.gov">cathy.westerman@dgs.virginia.gov</a>   | Yes |
|                       | Alternate: Ed Shaw<br>T: 804-648-4480 ext.152<br>E: <a href="mailto:ed.shaw@dgs.virginia.gov">ed.shaw@dgs.virginia.gov</a>  | No  |
| NELAP AC<br>PA and EC | Lynn Bradley<br>T: 540-885-5736<br>E: <a href="mailto:lynn.bradley@nelac-institute.org">lynn.bradley@nelac-institute.org</a>  | Yes |
| EPA<br>Liaison        | Donna Ringel<br>T: 732-321-4383<br>E: <a href="mailto:Ringel.Donna@epa.gov">Ringel.Donna@epa.gov</a>  | Yes |
| California            | Christine Sotelo<br><a href="mailto:Christine.Sotelo@waterboards.ca.gov">Christine.Sotelo@waterboards.ca.gov</a>  | No  |
| Oklahoma              | David Caldwell<br>E: <a href="mailto:David.Caldwell@deq.ok.gov">David.Caldwell@deq.ok.gov</a>   | Yes |
| Guests:               | Alfredo Sotomayor, Chair, TNI Board of Directors and Leader of NGAB Working Group, <a href="mailto:asotomayor@mmsd.com">asotomayor@mmsd.com</a><br>Judy Morgan, Chair, TNRC, <a href="mailto:Judy.morgan@pacelabs.com">Judy.morgan@pacelabs.com</a><br>Carol Batterton, Program Administrator, <a href="mailto:carbat@beecreek.net">carbat@beecreek.net</a> |     |

Attachment 2  
Proposed Reorganization Scheme

TNI Reorganization

- Rebranding environmental laboratory accreditation program.
  - TNI Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program (TELAP)
  - Includes NELAP as it is currently, and a non-government component, the NGAB side, to be named.
- TNRC will report to LASEC
  - Currently, the TNRC reports to the TNI Board of Directors (BOD), but makes recognition decisions independently of the TNI BOD.
- NGABs wishing to become recognized in all TNI core programs will apply to LASEC and would be evaluated concurrently.
- First round of NGAB recognitions will follow current system: TNRC will grant recognition.
- In the future TNRC would make a recommendation for recognition to each of the Executive Committees of the TNI Core Programs offering recognition.
  - TELAP
  - NEFAP
  - PT
  - SSAS (?)
- NELAP AC would be the only entity recognizing GABs.
- A GAB that would be able to recognize a NGAB would do that under its own authority, independent of the NELAP AC.
- Proposal preserves most of the current TNI structure.
- TNRC composition will be evaluated to comply with new scope after this first set of recognition decisions.

| ENTITY                 | FUNCTION   | REPORTS TO         |
|------------------------|--|--------------------|
| LASEC                  | Recognizes NGABs applying to NG side of TELAP.   | NA                 |
| NEFAP EC               | Recognizes GABs and NGABs applying to NEFAP.   | NA                 |
| NELAP AC               | Recognizes GABs applying to NELAP.   | NA                 |
| GAB Evaluator          | Provides information for making a recommendation decision for GABs applying to TELAP.              | NELAP AC           |
| NGAB Evaluator         | Provides information for making a recommendation decision for NGABs applying to TNI core programs. | TNRC               |
| PT Executive Committee | Recognizes GABs and NGABs to become PTPAs.   | NA                 |
| TNRC                   | Recommends recognition of NGABs applying to TNI core programs.                                     | Core Programs' ECs |