

Summary of the NELAP Accreditation Council Meeting
December 17, 2012

1. Roll call and Approval of Minutes

The NELAP Accreditation Council (AC) met at 1:30 pm EDT on Monday, December 17, 2012. In Aaren's absence, Stephanie Ostrowski ran the meeting. Minutes of the November 19 and December 3 meetings were approved. Those members in attendance are listed in Attachment 1.

A quick poll of attendees indicates that only 5 ABs will "definitely" be sending representatives to conference in Denver. Another 5 have travel requests pending, with status uncertain.

2. Action Items Pending

- Discuss w/ full AC whether and how to address different practices among ABs that came to light during the December 3, 2012, meeting
- SIR workgroup to modify recommendation for SIR #81 and add citations from TNI ELSS to SIRs #101, 129 and 139; upon AC consideration of SIR 81 modifications, Lynn to transmit full package from AC back to LAS EC
- Follow ABTFII addressing NGAB option – involvement of NELAP AC no longer under consideration, following for general interest only
- Final Response to Complaint from ACIL – pending completion of evaluation process for the AB (site report in final preparation)
- Policy Committee Review and request for revisions to Voting SOP (3-101)

3. Recommendation for Renewal of Recognition for OR

The vote occurred after the two-thirds quorum for accreditation matters was reached, midway through the meeting. There was brief discussion about confusion that the recommendation letter was actually the text of the email, rather than being attached as a pdf of a letter, but this was resolved and Cathy, as lead evaluator, assured all present that OR has indeed completed all corrective actions. A motion to approve the evaluation team's recommendation for renewal was offered by Bill Hall and seconded by Michelle Wade. During the meeting, 9 "yes" votes and one abstention were recorded; absent members were polled by email. NOTE: The total vote count was 14 "yes" votes and one abstention. The final vote was cast on December 21, 2012.

4. Follow-Up Discussion on December 3 Assessor Call

The initial issue presented concerned how the AC ought to handle the different practices that came to light during the discussion – where different ABs do not have require identical versions of compliance for a few items of the standard. No decision was reached, but all felt that understanding the differences is an important step. The AC needs to further discuss whether and how these differences should be handled, but with less than a full quorum for most of the meeting, this was deferred to a future date.

Other points raised are listed below.

- Cathy had selected aspects of traceability that were expected to be controversial; not all were shown to be so
- The AC might choose to use the approach of sharing “best practices” rather than attaining total consistency of assessor activities – simply learning what works well, rather than identifying differences and leaving them unresolved. Sometimes even assessors within an AB will have different practices, and labs often express frustration about that
- An evaluation form could be modified to assess the effectiveness of these assessor calls. Paul Bergeron shared the form used by LA DEQ
- Participation was excellent!
- Helpful for addressing complaints of inconsistencies
- All ABs offered kudos to Cathy and VELAP’s assessors for the presentation

Dates for future training sessions are planned to be March 4, June 3, September 16 and December 2, 2013.

5. Microscopic Particulate Analysis – Analyte Code 2560

Dan Hickman, TNI’s Database Administrator, had inquired about the need for retaining this code, since there is no regulatory requirement for the analysis. An earlier email inquiry about its use brought varied results from ABs, many of whom were not familiar with the method or the analyte. Steve arms explained that it refers to a groundwater test, and is used as a measure for “ground water under the direct influence of surface water.” It was a method introduced in EPA’s Enhanced Surface Water Treatment Rule [Note: this is a correction after the meeting.] and continues to be used in certain circumstances to determine whether the groundwater has been affected by surface water, even though not a regulatory requirement. Apparently there are a few scattered labs that request certification for the method.

6. Method Update Rule Implementation

Cathy requested discussion of how other ABs will handle this item, as she prepares a notification for Virginia labs about Virginia’s implementation. Because of varying implementation dates across the ABs and also the ABs that don’t track method versions on accreditation certificates, she seeks to be as clear as possible with labs obtaining primary or secondary accreditation in VA.

VA’s certificates do show the method revision number (version), and for labs requesting secondary accreditation, the version is checked. If the lab does not have a primary certificate showing compliance with the EPA-required version, then how should VA determine compliance with the required version?

TX noted that its accreditation program cannot implement the MUR, that it’s up to the wastewater program. It does remind labs of the need to use MUR-required methods and method versions or else they risk jeopardizing the client’s data. FL noted that its DEP program has not adopted the MUR so that if labs are using MUR methods, that might be jeopardizing client data. FL only accredits the version of the method requested by the laboratory, but does not try to be directive about what version is required. KS noted that its certificate does not specify a version but they are insisting that KS-accredited labs shift to the latest or MUR-approved method.

This variability creates difficulties for VA while some other ABs seem to be unaffected. One AB noted that if the application for accreditation has 2003 NELAC wording, the lab will be obligated to comply with MUR method requirements. For the 2009 TNI Standard, labs would still be required to serve the client's need with the "correct" method. VA may just need to notify labs that it interprets their application signature as certifying compliance with MUR. No immediate resolution was proposed.

7. Other Business

An AB asked whether the issue of using method code extensions for accredited methods was ever resolved, and how that use of extensions would apply to adding a new analyte to an existing method for a lab's scope of accreditation. No answer was immediately available.

8. Next Meeting

The next AC meeting will be Monday, January 7, 2013, at 1:30 pm Eastern. A reminder and tentative agenda will be sent the week before.

Items to be addressed at the AC's January 7 meeting are:

- Discuss needed documents and possible revisions for old policies and SOPs to make them current and usable, including Policy Committee feedback on the AC's Voting SOP (held over from November 19)
- Other items that may arise.

On Tuesday morning, January 15, at conference, there will be a meeting with EPA's Technical Services Center (Drinking Water) representatives to discuss changes to certification processes for laboratories monitoring for *Cryptosporidium*. A conference line will be set up for this once the meeting time is set firmly.

The AC will meet at conference in Denver on Tuesday afternoon, January 15. A teleconference line has been set up, from 3:00 pm until 6:30 pm Eastern time. That number is 1-213-342-3000, passcode 1152013#. A reminder will be sent the week before that meeting.

On Wednesday, January 16, at conference, there will be tables set up for individuals or firms willing to work as third party assessors, so they can meet and discuss their services with various ABs. Some of these will be staffed for part of the time, but all will have brochures and other printed materials available.

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	Yes
	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: 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
	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@state.pa.us	no
	Alternate: Dwayne Burkholder E: dburkholde@state.pa.us	No
TX	Steve Gibson E: jgibson@tceq.state.tx.us	yes
	Alternate: (temporary) Melissa Peters-Kelly E; Melissa.Peters-Kelly@tceq.texas.gov	yes
UT	Kristin Brown T: (801) 965-2540 F: (801) 965-2544 E: kristinbrown@utah.gov	

	Alternate: Robert Aullman T: 801-965-2541 F: 801-965-2544 E: raullman@utah.gov	
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	no
NELAP QAO	Paul Ellingson T: 801-201-8166 E: altasnow@gmail.com	yes
	Oklahoma: David Caldwell	yes