

Summary of the NELAP Accreditation Council Meeting

December 2, 2013

1. Roll call and Approval of Minutes

The NELAP Accreditation Council (AC) met at 1:30 pm EST on Monday, December 2, 2013. Minutes of the November 18, 2013, meeting were approved. Those members in attendance are listed in Attachment 1.

2. Action Items Pending

- Possible teleconference among Aaren, Paul B. and Bob Wyeth, CSD EC Chair – awaits feedback from Bob.
- 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. Update on TNI Bylaws Revision

At its November meeting, the TNI Board asked that committee chairs update their committees on the revisions being considered for the Bylaws. Lynn and Aaren provided a verbal description of these, and Aaren shared the draft mark-up that was circulated prior to the Board meeting, by email.

4. Approval of Evaluation Team Compositions

Lynn had circulated the tentative assignments of state AB representatives to the various evaluation teams, for the AC's consideration. The Lead Evaluator decision (from proposal reviews) has not yet been made, and responses from the EPA regional offices about their preference to participate or not are still incomplete, but those team members will be announced as soon as possible. The AC agreed by consensus that the tentative assignments are acceptable. It appears that both LA DEQ and IL should be able to travel out of state for this upcoming round of evaluations.

Aaren inquired about the lengthy process of evaluations, and whether the timeline could be shortened by eliminating the preliminary exchange over the technical review (compliance) checklist, so that all findings were wrapped into a single report. Lynn explained that, in the revised Evaluation SOP recently adopted and undergoing Policy Committee review now, there is no requirement for a response from the AB to correct the technical review findings, but rather any needed but still-outstanding corrections from that checklist will be included with the findings of the site report. Also, the provision for off-site document review may shorten the timeline as well. Overall timelines have not been modified for the upcoming round of evaluations, but if, as expected, the evaluations DO get completed faster, the renewals may certainly occur a few months ahead of the

certificate expiration date, and for the following round (beginning December 2016,) the overall timeline can be shortened appropriately.

5. Use of Evaluation Form for Evaluation Team Members

The informal working group of NELAP evaluators (both federal and state participants) suggested this mechanism as a way of establishing that the new contract evaluator – who will serve as Lead for all teams – is performing satisfactorily. Upon seeing the form, the group recommended using it for all team members and including the AB undergoing evaluation as a potential source for completing the form as well.

Lynn proposed to utilize this mechanism as a “pilot” project for the overall evaluation process, since modifying the lengthy evaluation SOP and working it through the approvals process again will be burdensome, but when feedback from the Policy Committee gets addressed, use of the form can then be incorporated into the SOP.

Discussion focused on whether the evaluations could be anonymous (likely not, truly, due to the few people involved) and when in the process the completed forms should be submitted (distribute at the beginning, submit at the end.) Consensus was that use of such an evaluation form is an excellent idea, and the feedback should also be used for future training of evaluators.

6. Preparations for Review of New Standards

The TNI Board, at its October meeting, requested that both the Laboratory Accreditation Systems EC (LAS PEC) and the AC be fully prepared to review the new standard(s) for adoption and implementation once they are approved by TNI, probably in 2015. The CSD Executive Committee (CSD PEC, comprised of all the technical Expert Committees, or TECs) has completed its incorporation of the corrective actions (from the Corrective Action Task Force) into its Standards Review and Development SOP 2-100, and now the LAS PEC is beginning to update its Standards Review SOP 3-106. LAS PEC has worked with both CSD PEC and the Policy Committee to identify its role in the new scheme of reviews, and has just begun its own update.

The AC favors asking LAS PEC to update the NELAP Standards Acceptance SOP 3-103 to conform to the corrective actions as well as to work in complementary fashion with the LAS PEC's updated SOP. The AC will have the flexibility to modify that draft before adoption, if it sees the need, but will have an updated document that meshes with the new overall framework. NOTE: This request has been transmitted, asking LAS PEC to work on our SOP after Louisville conference is over, since they plan to discuss the LAS' SOP in Louisville.

Discussion about this activity included whether the AC even needs an SOP, since the review by each individual AB is unique to its state's laws and regulations, but finally the need for basic timelines and interactions with the TECs developing the standards won out. Plus, having an SOP will be a way to keep the AC's focus on monitoring the development of new standards throughout the process, such as having a status report become a regular agenda item.

7. Planning for Conference in Louisville

Aaren inquired who thought they would be present in Louisville. By a roll call, probably 9-10 ABs will have representatives there. The AC session is presently scheduled for Tuesday afternoon, and Paul Bergeron made an urgent plea for a functioning teleconference line for the meeting.

Various possibilities for discussion were raised. One concern is that several ABs will have undergone complete staff turnover before the upcoming evaluation, and perhaps a panel discussion of how to prepare would be useful. Susan indicated that she and Stephanie Drier have begun preparing a “how-to” document for future MN staff, about this very topic, and offered to share that when completed.

Another option was an open discussion of whether it is worthwhile, now, to adopt the 2009 TNI Standard (for those ABs previously unable to complete that regulation-writing) or would it be preferable to wait and transition rapidly to the 2015 standard, instead. ~~Essentially, this would signify that the AC is addressing adoption and implementation as a whole body rather than piecemeal, state-by-state — at least discussing publicly the possibility of what would work best for the overall program.~~ **Some individual states that have not yet implemented TNI 2009 may determine that they will wait until the next revision is available and pursue a more rapid implementation of the revision, skipping TNI 2009.** A 2015 standard would ideally be implemented in 2017, and without “rolling implementation” as we have now, that’s not a huge delay from present status.

As part of the discussion, Lynn noted that the Advocacy Committee is beginning to develop a plan to re-open the conversation about the future of accreditation for environmental labs – probably a series of webinars culminating in a discussion forum at one of the upcoming Washington, DC, meetings. Advocacy will discuss this in Louisville (and at its December and January meetings, too), so perhaps the AC or its members will want to take an active role in those discussions about redrafting the vision for national accreditation.

8. Next Meeting

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the AC will be on Monday, December 16, 2013, at 1:30 pm Eastern. A reminder with teleconference information and the agenda will be distributed prior to the meeting. The CA Evaluation Team’s recommendation will likely be a major agenda item for this call.

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	Yes
	Alternate: Janet Cruse T: 217-785-0601 E: Janet.Cruse@illinois.gov	No
KS	N. Myron Gunsalus ngunsalus@kdheks.gov 785-291-3162 Fax: (785) 296-1638	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	no
	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	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 : 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	no
	Shannon Swantek T: 503-693-5784 E: Shannon.swantek@state.or.us	yes
	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	yes
TX	Alice Colt T: (512) 239-3927 Alice.Colt@tceq.texas.gov	Yes
	Ruthie Wedig Ruth.Wedig@tceq.texas.gov	Yes
UT	Kristin Brown T: (801) 965-2540 F: (801) 965-2544 E: kristinbrown@utah.gov	No
	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	No
NELAP QAO	Paul Ellingson T: 801-201-8166 E: altasnow@gmail.com	Yes
Oklahoma	David Caldwell	Yes
Guests:		