

Summary of the NELAP Accreditation Council Meeting

March 7, 2016

1. Roll Call and Approval of Minutes

The NELAP Accreditation Council (AC) met at 1:30 pm Eastern time on Monday, March 7, 2016. Minutes from January 4 and January 27 were approved. Those members in attendance are listed in Attachment 1.

The votes to accept the renewal recommendations for TX and VA were completed January 18. Each motion carried with 13 “yes” votes and the state being considered abstained from voting. The vote initiated during the AC meeting at conference and completed by email, concerning the AC’s acceptance of LASEC’s recommendation of approval for the Calibration Standard, was completed on February 10 with 13 “yes” votes and one AB not voting.

2. Action Items Pending

None at present

3. Follow-Up from Conference

There were no discussion items that directly resulted from the conference in Tulsa.

4. Follow-Up to December 7, 2015, Assessor Call

Carl noted that Florida is primary AB for a number of TestAmerica laboratories that use the (overseas) remote data review operation, as discussed for the December Assessor Call, and requested additional discussion about whether current lab assessment practices are adequate to encompass the offsite data review. In particular, he noted that there are several items in the 2003 NELAC standard that would be applicable to offsite operations, and inquired whether 1) there is a need to physically visit the offsite location and 2) whether the data review (wherever performed) is considered part of “running the method.” He explained that he sought assurance that other NELAP ABs are willing to accept Florida’s primary accreditations of TestAmerica laboratories without an actual visit to the remote data review location.

Points made during the discussion are noted below:

- Without the data review and analysis, there would be no analytical result, so those two functions are part of “running the method.”
- A Demonstration of Competency for the individuals performing data review and analysis should be required, and the personnel should be available for interviews, but it ought not to be necessary to physically observe them at the computer doing the task.
- OK noted that its regulations require a separate accreditation and site visit if the physical facilities are more than one mile apart. FL noted that in one case, a TestAmerica lab has its reports issued by a separate TestAmerica facility, but both are accredited by FL.
- Concerns were expressed about the integrity of the data, with the expectation that

the data are transported to the offsite facility and then transported back to the US-based laboratory. Lynn noted that the presenters for the Assessor Call had described that remote personnel are logging in to US-based servers to perform their review, rather than having the data physically transported (even electronically) to the remote locale, so that physical custody of the data remains with the US-based laboratory facility.

While no definitive conclusions were articulated, there were no adverse comments about continuing to assess the affected TestAmerica labs in the same fashion as other laboratories not using remote data review. Any further comments or questions should be directed to Carl.

5. LASEC Recommendations for Additional Standards Modules

Judy Morgan, LASEC Chair, had verbally presented the recommendations of LASEC concerning the Asbestos (V1M3,) Radiological Chemistry (V1M6) and Aquatic Toxicity (V1M7) modules for the 2016 standard. Those recommendations approved the revised Asbestos and Rad Chem modules, but recommended retaining the current (2009) version of V1M7, as requested by the recently formed WET Expert Committee. Written versions of these recommendations were distributed with the agenda for this meeting and are included in Attachments 2, 3 and 4 to these minutes.

Aaren asked that each AB critically evaluate these standards and be prepared to vote on acceptance of the LASEC recommendations at the April Council meeting.

6. Concepts for Revising the NELAP Evaluation SOP 3-102

A small group composed of Aaren, Kristin, Cathy and Ken had volunteered in the fall of 2015 to work on revising the Evaluation SOP. At Cathy's request, Lynn compiled all findings to date from the current evaluation cycle, and Cathy grouped them by topic to establish that virtually all findings could have been identified through records review.

Cathy distributed a summary of the group's progress to date, including a meeting with TNI's and Finance Committee. She discussed the concepts in this summary and asked for feedback from the AC, noting that any changes to the SOP will need to be finalized immediately after the next conference in southern California, in early August. Several participants noted that they felt uncomfortable providing feedback on the summary and the discussion until they had time to evaluate the material and the suggestions provided.

Aaren noted that the Council needs to reach consensus on the basic issues to be modified by the end of April's AC meeting, so that the SOP revisions can be initiated, and asked that all AB representatives be prepared to discuss the proposal at that time. Comments by email before then are welcome. NOTE: the summary document is not attached to these minutes, since Aaren sought to keep the discussion within the AC for the present. Once the concepts are agreed upon, that summary will be included in the minutes.

7. Advance Notice of Opportunity to Review Internal Audit Checklist to Accompany The Upcoming TNI Quality Management Plan

Lynn Boysen represents the NELAP AC on TNI's Policy Committee, which has been reviewing and finalizing the draft Quality Management Plan (QMP) that was presented

during the fall 2014 Strategic Planning Meeting in Milwaukee. Among the items being finalized are self-audit checklists for each of TNI's committees, including the AC, which will comprise the annual internal audit. These checklists will consist of items from the TNI-wide administrative SOPs (like posting minutes, maintaining updated committee rosters) as well as from committee-specific SOPs and policies.

We anticipate that the AC's checklist will be available for the April meeting, and we will have no more than one month in which to review and accept or revise that checklist.

8. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the AC will take place on Monday, April 4, 2016, at 1:30 pm Eastern. An agenda and teleconference information will be sent out before the meeting.

Attachment 1

STATE	REPRESENTATIVE	PRESENT
FL	Carl Kircher E: carl.kircher@flhealth.gov	Yes
	Alternate: Vanessa Soto E: Vanessa.sotocontreras@flhealth.gov	No
IL	Celeste Crowley T: 217-557-0274 F: 217-524-6169 E: celeste.crowley@illinois.gov	Yes
	Alternate: Janet Cruse T: 217-785-0601 E: Janet.Cruse@illinois.gov	Yes
KS	N. Myron Gunsalus 785-291-3162 E: ngunsalus@kdheks.gov	Yes
	Alternate: Sara Hoffman shoffman@kdheks.gov	Yes
	Included for information purposes: Nick Reams nreams@kdheks.gov	Yes
LA DEQ	Paul Bergeron T: 225-219-3185 E: Paul.Bergeron@la.gov	Yes
	Altérnate: TBD	
LA DHH	Donnell Ward T: E: donnell.ward@la.gov	Yes
	Alternate: TBD	
MN	Lynn Boysen E: lynn.boysen@state.mn.us	Yes
	Alternate: TBD	
NH	Bill Hall T: (603) 271-2998 F: (603) 271-5171 E: george.hall@des.nh.gov	Yes
	Alternate: Tyler Croteau Tyler.Croteau@des.nh.gov	No

NJ	Michele Potter T: (609) 984-3870 F: (609) 777-1774 E: michele.potter@dep.nj.gov	No
	Alternate : Rachel Ellis E: rachel.ellis@dep.nj.gov	No
NY	Mike Ryan T: (518) 473-3424 F: (518) 485-5568 E: michael.ryan@health.ny.gov	No
	Alternate: Victoria Pretti victoria.pretti@health.ny.gov	No
	Included for information purposes: Lynn McNaughton lynn.mcnaughton@health.ny.gov	No
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	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	Ken Lancaster T: (512) 239-1990 E: Ken.Lancaster@tceq.texas.gov	Yes
	Julie Eldredge E: Julie.Eldredge@tceq.texas.gov	Yes
UT	Kristin Brown T: (801) 965-2540 F: (801) 965-2544 E: kristinbrown@utah.gov	No
	Alternate: Jill Jones T: (801) 965-3899 E: jilljones@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	Donna Ringel T: 732-321-4383 E: Ringel.Donna@epa.gov	No
California	Christine Sotelo Christine.Sotelo@waterboards.ca.gov	No
Oklahoma	David Caldwell E: David.Caldwell@deq.ok.gov	Yes
Guests:	none	

Attachment 2

Recommendation of LASEC to NELAP AC TNI Standard V1M3, Asbestos Testing, 2012 revision APPROVED BY LASEC November 24, 2015

The LASEC has reviewed the Asbestos Module (V1M3) as revised and approved in 2012, and recommends that the NELAP AC adopt this module as presented.

LASEC did suggest to the Consensus Standards Development Executive Committee that the next revision of this module address asbestos testing beyond that in drinking water, but there is no way to expand the module for that breadth of testing in the current revision cycle. The 2012 version does represent an improvement over the 2009 version.

Attachment 3

**Recommendation of LASEC to NELAP AC
TNI Standard V1M6, Radiological Chemistry, approved August 14, 2015
APPROVED BY LASEC November 24, 2015**

The LASEC has reviewed the Radiological Chemistry Module (V1M6) as revised and approved in 2015, and recommends that the NELAP AC adopt this module as presented.

Attachment 4

Recommendation of LASEC to NELAP AC TNI Standard V1M7, Aquatic Toxicity Testing (WET or Whole Effluent Toxicity) APPROVED BY LASEC December 22, 2015

The LASEC has reviewed the Aquatic Toxicity Testing (WET) Module (V1M7), both the 2009 version currently implemented and the 2012 version as revised and approved by TNI vote.

LASEC received a recommendation from the WET Expert Committee that the 2009 version of V1M7 be retained in the 2015 package of standards revisions, based on two issues. First, that the demonstration of capability requirements as revised in the 2012 version are not consistent with WET laboratory practices and would require extensive and abnormal accommodation to accomplish. Second, the new requirement in the 2012 version that all chemistry analyses be conducted according to the requirements of V1M4 (Chemistry) is impractical and inconsistent with the basic reason for conducting WET testing, which is to determine whether a given effluent is sufficiently toxic to aquatic organisms that it warrants additional testing. The chemistry parameters measured in a WET lab are typically pH, dissolved oxygen, conductivity, and temperature – measured to establish acceptable ranges for survival of the test organisms, not for chemical identification of the material being analyzed – and if chemical composition is needed, then the analyses would be sent to an accredited contracted chemistry laboratory. While the 2012 version of V1M7 is “auditable” and “implementable” from the perspective of ABs, LASEC agrees that these two issues prevent it from meeting the “suitability” criteria as defined in the LASEC Standards Review SOP 3-106. The 2012 version of V1M7 is not an improvement over the 2009 version, and the 2009 version is adequate for use until a different revision can be prepared.