

Non-Governmental Accreditation Body Working Group
July 15, 2015

1. Roll Call

Alfredo Sotomayor called the Non-Governmental Accreditation Body (NGAB) Working Group and the TNRC meeting to order at 4:00 pm CDT on July 15, 2015, in Chicago. The following members were present:

Non-Governmental Accreditation Body (NGAB) Working Group:

Name	Stakeholder Group	Present
Alfredo Sotomayor, Chair	TNI Board member	√
Kristin Brown	NELAP AB	√
Jim Todaro	Laboratory	Absent
Cheryl Morton	Non-governmental accreditation body	Absent
Steve Arms	Chair, TNI Advocacy Committee	√
Dave Speis	Chair, TNI Finance Committee	√
Carol Batterton	TNI staff support	√
Jerry Parr	TNI Executive Director	√
Ilona Taunton	TNI EC	√

TNI Non-governmental Accreditation Body Recognition Committee (TNRC):

Name	Stakeholder group	Present
Kim Watson	Accredited FSMO, NEFAP EC	√
Judy Morgan	Laboratory, LASEC Chair	√
Daniel Lashbrook	Laboratory	√
Marlene Moore	Other, NEFAP Recognition Comm.	√
Vacancy		

Minutes of the previous meeting were not considered at this meeting.

2. Overview of NGAB program and progress to date

Alfredo asked all meeting attendees to introduce themselves. He then reviewed the handout (Attachment 1) summarizing the NGAB task force and TNRC activities to date. Alfredo noted that Ilona Taunton would be serving as the Evaluation Coordinator (EC) for this program. **He also noted that the proposed window for applicants to become a TNI recognized NGAB in the first round was August 1 to September 15.**

Questions and comments from attendees included:

- The webcast for evaluator training needs to be scheduled. Marlene Moore suggested that the end of August would be a good time.
- Is it acceptable for an NGAB to give a state accreditation and their own accreditation at the same time? Answer: Yes. It is a competitive advantage, but not unfair.
- Can TNI coordinate NEFAP and NGAB evaluations? Answer: Yes, eventually, but not in the first round. TNI needs to make sure the NGAB process works first.
- Who is the arbitrator of standards interpretation? Answer: TNI through the standards interpretation process. What about a challenge to an accreditation decision? Answer: The challenge goes to the NGAB, then to TNRC. If the challenge concerns ISO 17025 accreditation, it goes solely to the NGAB.
- How will labs accredited by NGABs be tracked? Answer: In LAMS
- Next steps should include contacting the non-NELAP states and letting them know what the NGAB program is about and how they can use it. This could be done through a webinar or by a mail out to state contacts.
- Judy Morgan requested information about which states cannot accept an NGAB accreditation.
- TNI needs a marketing strategy for NEFAP and NGABs.
- Has TNI allocated enough resources to process applications and run this program? Answer: Yes, we believe we have. What about SOPs for complaints, TNRC operations, etc? Answer: These SOPs already exist for TNI operations.
- TNI should explore how to partner with other national organizations.

6. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the NGAB Working Group and NGAB will be scheduled as needed.

Attachment 1

Update on Non-Governmental Accreditation Bodies

Judy Morgan, Chair, TNRC

Alfredo Sotomayor, Chair, NGAB working Group

Overview

- TNI began developing the process to recognize non-governmental accreditation bodies (NGABs) in 2013 with the formation of the NGAB working group chaired by Alfredo Sotomayor
- In 2014, the TNI Board appointed the TNI Non-governmental Accreditation Body Recognition Committee (TNRC) to approve NGABs according to the evaluation SOP
- These two groups have been working jointly and are very close to full implementation of the program

NGAB Working Group

Alfredo Sotomayor, Chair
Steve Arms
Kristin Brown
Marlene Moore
Cheryl Morton
Jim Todaro
David Speis
Jerry Parr and Carol Batterton, Staff Support

TNI Non-Governmental Accreditation Body Recognition Committee (TNRC)

Judy Morgan, Chair
Daniel Lashbrook
Marlene Moore
Kim Watson
Vacancy (to be appointed by TNI Board of Directors)
Jerry Parr and Carol Batterton, Staff Support

Key Concepts

The NGAB working group will develop the SOPs and policies necessary for TNI to approve NGABs to grant laboratory accreditations in conformance with the applicable TNI standards, and to assure that the NGABs are capable of managing an accreditation program in a consistent, uniform manner.

Key Concepts

- The process to evaluate NGABs should be no less rigorous than that used currently for NELAP recognition.
- The TNI Board will appoint a Recognition Committee reporting to the Board to evaluate NGABs for conformance with the TNI Environmental Laboratory Standard.

Role of the TNRC

- The TNRC is composed of five members elected by the TNI Board to grant the final decision on the recognition of NGABs.
- The TNI Board appoints the chair of the committee.

TNRC members:

- Are from representative groups of the program to ensure a balance of interest from the affected communities
- Serve a three year term
- Are TNI Members in good standing

Activities to Date

- Developed Evaluation SOP for NGABs using the NELAP and NEFAP evaluation SOPs as a model
- Appointed a Lead Evaluator (LE)
- Posted SOP and application form on TNI website under TNI Board tab

- Held evaluator training
- Established budget and fees for program

Lead Evaluator

- No proposals received in response to RFP for Lead Evaluator (LE)
- TNI Executive Director appointed Ilona Taunton, TNI staff member, to serve in this capacity

Budget and Fees

- Fixed application and renewal fee of \$1000
- Evaluation cost to be determined based on travel and hourly effort
- Travel costs reimbursed directly to LE and evaluation team by the NGAB

Next Steps

- Create logos for program. Develop agreement for use of logos.
- Establish/facilitate communication between NELAP AC and NEFAP
- Create web page for NGABs
- Repeat evaluator training as a webcast
- Begin accepting applications from NGABs

Next Steps

- Set deadline for applications for first group of recognized NGABs
- Conduct evaluations
- Make recommendations for recognition
- Grant recognitions for first class of NGABs
- Create database for tracking labs accredited by NGABs
- Provide yearly report to the TNI Board appraising activities and offering improvement suggestions

Timeline

Activity	Date
Accept NGAB applications	August 1- September 15, 2015
Conduct on-site evaluations	Fall 2015
Recommendations to TNRC	Fall - Winter 2015-2016
NGAB Recognitions	Winter meeting 2016