

On-Site Assessment Committee Agenda
April 20, 2007
11AM – 12:25 PM EST

Attendance

Laurie Carhart
Don Cassano
Nilda Cox
Myron Getman
John Gumpper
Margo Hunt
Mark Mensik
Denise Rice
Betsy Ziomek

Approval of Minutes

The misspelling of John's last name was corrected. The minutes from the April 6, 2007 meeting were approved.

Discussion of Metals Technical Curricula (Betsy & John)

Ms. Ziomek explained her outline and mentioned that we might want to include 40 CFR changes on all of the outlines. Mr. Gumpper had some additions to the outline. Mr. Gumpper brought up the question of how prescriptive the outlines should be. Ms. Hunt commented that she would rather have too much detail than not enough. Ms. Rice explained that it is a guidance document and hopes it will be like the Certified Chemistry College Curricula that the American Chemical Society has. While ACS's criteria are not binding or required of any educational institution, employers ask about it because it is considered the benchmark and gives them some assurance of the quality of your education. Since this is guidance vendors can add or subtract things to meet the needs of clients. Ms. Hunt mentioned that too many assessors don't have the technical background to adequately assess laboratories. That is a complaint she gets all the time: an assessor takes one micro course and then try to audit a lab. Ms. Ziomek said we need a balance. We discussed that the prerequisites require that a person already know the methods and have had the basic assessor course. If a vender felt a need to add more technical details, he/she could. Mr. Gumpper wanted to reiterate this is not supposed to be the basic assessor course but could say here are the highlights as they pertain to the discipline.

The discussion digressed a bit into the number of days required to cover everything. Mr. Cassano mentioned not being able to be covered all of these things in two days. He suggested adding some wording to the introduction of the guidance document: Some specific topics may be covered by homework assignments and/or handouts supplemented

by discussion as needed. Ms. Hunt mentioned this is how the drinking water course is done; with homework assignments for writing reports.

Mr. Gumpper asked if a person thought they had sufficient experience could they opt out from course. We all said no. The courses ensure consistency. Everyone can always learn something and there is value in learning other ways to do things from your peers. Also, just because a person thinks they're an expert doesn't make them one. There is a difference in the skill needed to be a good analyst and a good assessor. Mr. Gumpper wanted to add something in the introduction to the guide about the intended purpose and use of the document and how even experienced people can benefit from the courses. Noted, and shall be added.

These outlines would be presented at the August TNI meeting for comment, they would get posted on the website and then the committee would consider the comments after the meeting before finalizing the document. Everyone was on board with that approach.

Ms. Cox said that the IDC vs. TNI standard coverage should be added to the non-metals outline. She also observed that we don't have the measurement of uncertainty in either inorganic outline.

Under program specific criteria, the outline was missing Standard Methods 1000, 3020, 4020 etc. that cover the QC requirements. Ms. Rice stated for now they would go in as examples and then after looking at the Organics outline where the methods are more defined, the committee could decide how prescriptive to get in this area.

Discussion of Microbiology Technical Curricula (Margo & John)

Ms. Hunt explained that the course should be four days because of the volume of material to be covered. She wanted to keep the EPA requirements. Ms. Rice suggested using TNI requirements only under Section V to be consistent with the other outlines and put the EPA criteria under program specific requirements.

Continued Discussion of Assessor Survey

This was not discussed due to lack of time.

Next Meeting: May 4th 11 AM EST – Toxicity and Organics (Faust, Denise, John)

Mr. Gumpper has a conflict but will e-mail his part ahead of time.