

**Summary of the On-Site Assessment Committee Meeting  
Cambridge, MA  
August 23, 2007**

**1. Introductions**

Denise Rice, Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM, August 23, 2007. The following committee members were present: Margo Hunt, Betsy Ziomek, Mark Mensik, Nilda Cox, Don Cassano, and John Gumper. Laurie Carhart stood in for Myron Getman.

**2. Status Report on Committee Activities**

Denise reviewed the assessor survey that will be sent out for the NELAP ABs and others to complete. The categories included in the survey include: trainings needs, time management, implementation, assessment reporting, ethics, and inappropriate practices.

Denise also reported that the committee had completed a draft of the Assessor Technical Course Guidance which was reviewed in detail later in the meeting. The contents of the guidance include:

- Introduction
- Asbestos
- Inorganic Metals
- Inorganic Non-metals
- Microbiology
- Organics
- Radiochemistry
- Toxicity
- Examination Guidance

In addition, the previous Volume 1, Module 2, has been turned into a guidance document on how laboratories are assessed from the lab's point of view. This will be posted for comments as well.

**3. Assessor Technical Course Curricula**

The outlines for the Assessor Technical course curricula will be posted for comments. Denise emphasized that in developing these outlines the committee assumed that the assessor would have knowledge of the analytical methods. The courses are designed to make assessors out of technical experts and not vice versa.

In most cases, the courses are designed to last at least two days and sometimes longer times are recommended. The courses are also designed to allow some

vendor flexibility to meet the specific needs of the audience. The topics highlighted in blue in the document are topics that the committee feels are very important.

Question/comment: Is technical training required in the standard?

Response: Technical training is required by the standard, but the specific course criteria are not detailed in the standard. The committee hopes to set up an approval process for training providers and have the accreditation bodies require the assessors to take an approved course.

*Laurie Carhart reviewed the outline for the Asbestos Technical Course.*

*John Gumpfer reviewed the outline for the Organic Chemistry Course.*

Comments/questions included:

Does this outline allow time to discuss biological tissues?

Does this course include radioactive waste? Response: It is covered in a different course.

The committee should consider adding instruction on specific instrumentation and software reporting systems.

In creating these outlines, did the committee take into consideration worker safety? Response: No, safety is outside the scope of TNI and its standards. Other agencies have the lead on safety issues. If someone feels strongly, could try to introduce safety into the next round of standards.

What about sample contamination issues in radioactive samples? Response: this issue is covered in the Radiochemistry course.

Training is a good opportunity to share experiences. Need more time in training to share experiences. (This may be a vendor specific concern)

Will there be only one course for each technical area? Response: It is up to the vendor to decide the structure and how to best meet the client's needs.

*Nilda Cox presented the course outline for Inorganic Non-metals.*

Comments/questions included:

This course may take longer than two days.

Section VIII is not specific to this technology. It is general and could be removed, so that focus is just technical.

Is there thought for training vendors to assure consistency of training? Response: In the future, the committee will recommend a training approval process. Training guidance is the first step.

A straw poll was taken and the attendees thought each training course should be at least three days.

*Betsy Ziomek presented the course outline for Metals.* Comments/questions included:

Some technologies may be deleted from this training because they are no longer used.

Do program specific criteria (CLP) need to be included?

Committee should think about developing a standardized exam. Concerned that goal of consistency may not be achieved.

*Margo Hunt presented the Microbiology course outline.* Comments/questions included:

There should be a section dealing with microbiology calculations.

*Mark Mensik reviewed the radiochemistry course outline.* Comments/questions included:

There may be a need for assessors to understand radioactive materials license requirements.

*Don Cassano reviewed the Toxicity course outline.* He indicated that this was a very specialized area and the committee is looking for more input.

Following the presentations, Denise clarified that the vendor does not have to present the course in order of the outline. Another commenter thought that method modification should be added to the courses.

The meeting was adjourned at 12 noon.