

On-Site Assessment Committee Minutes
October 15, 2008
1:00 PM – 2:25 PM EST

Attendance

Committee Members

Nilda Cox, Lab – absent – but represented by a colleague
 Don Cassano, other - present
 Myron Getman AB - present
 John Gumpper, other - present
 Mark Mensik, other - absent
 Faust Parker, Lab - present
 Denise Rice, EPA - present

Guests:

Laurie Carhart
 Meera Neb
 Victoria Pretti
 Czrena Truong

Meeting Minutes

Minutes from September 10, 2008 meeting were approved.

Standard Updates

The LASC review of the On-site Assessment portion of the standard will be discussed at their 10/24/08 meeting. Ms. Rice will not be able to attend. She has asked Ms. Cox to attend in her place as she is very knowledgeable about the old and new standards and prepared the crosswalk document that LASC will be using to review the standard. If Ms. Cox cannot make the meeting, Mr. Gumpper has volunteered to attend.

Laboratory Assessment Guidance Discussion of Comments Received

Comment #	Section Number	Comment and Rationale	Proposed Change	Committee response
1	Section 6 - Assessment Process	The time frame to provide or make available the documents before an audit is vague. For example, providing the Checklists at least 3 months in advance of a scheduled audit	Checklists for an audit will be provided or made available to the lab at least three months in advance of a scheduled audit.	Section 6.5 of V2M3- Accreditation Body Requirements states: “The assessment team shall provide or make available the following types of documents before a scheduled announced on-site assessment or before the conclusion of the on-site portion of the CAB assessment.” This guidance is provided to make the lab aware of what they can expect,

		will help the lab to ensure that all areas of audit are evaluated.		it does not make policy. Since a more specific timeframe is not in the standard, one cannot be placed in the guidance. Please submit this as a comment when the standard is being revised.
2	Other	The document mixes AB requirements in with laboratory requirements. It will be shorter without the AB stuff in there. I did a drafty kind of rewrite for you to show you what I mean. It is rewritten with the lab as the audience.	See the attached document..... Let me know if you can't get the document, and I'll email it to you.	The document is written to help labs know what to expect of their assessments and assessors. It makes sense to have labs aware of what is required of AB. The committee has decided to leave the document as is.
3	Section 8 - Changes in Laboratory Capabilities	Section 8.0 (Changes in Laboratory Capabilities) should be removed from the document. Handling changes to laboratory capabilities is addressed in other sections of the standards and is not relevant to performing on-site assessments.	Eliminate Section 8.0	Since retaining this section does no harm, the committee decided to keep it.

Laboratory and Assessor Survey Discussion of Comments Received

The number of responses to the assessor and lab surveys was very disappointing. Ms. Rice stated that the surveys needed to go through TNI. The invitation to take the survey was sent to all assessors of record (13 responded) and all the labs for which Mr. Parr has an e-mail address. The TNI website also posted an announcement to take the surveys and an announcement was made at the conferences encouraging people to take the surveys. Mr. Parr did not have e-mail addresses for many labs. Ms. Pretti mentioned that New York has all the e-mail addresses for their licensed labs and can either give us that list or have the invitation sent out by New York. Ms. Rice stated that if possible we could get a list of e-mail addresses from each AB and then give it to Mr. Parr. Ms. Rice will work on getting the surveys reposted with a deadline and e-mail lists for inviting people to take them. We also discussed pushing it at the Miami conference, but will try to get the survey reposted ahead of time.

We discussed the results of the laboratory survey. It did appear that everyone agreed that the data, however preliminary due to sample size, indicated that there were issues with assessor demeanor and behavior. Mr. Cassano suggested that we put something in the guidance document about teaching assessor demeanor. Mr. Gumper suggested that we could put in even stronger language, discussing how important this particular issue is to a good assessment.

Ms. Rice noted that this is a good place to start. If in the long run it doesn't work, we'll need to work to put this kind of current guidance into the standard. Let's keep these results in mind while writing the Basic Assessor Training Guidance.

Ms. Rice also noted that there was one comment regarding assessor consistency that was troubling. It would be very nice to know if this is widespread. Perhaps additional survey responses will help us to know.

Mr. Gumper noted that there was a disconnect between the assessor surveys and the lab surveys on assessor demeanor and stated that it could be due to getting a different group of assessors than perhaps the labs were discussing.

Mr. Cassano asked whether we should put out information to the ABs as a result of the survey. Mr. Gumper and Ms. Rice felt that we should not until we have more data. Additionally, Mr. Gumper suggested presenting the data at the Miami conference. Ms. Rice wants to have more data before doing that. Mr. Gumper agreed.

Basic Assessor Training Guidance Document Assignments

The following outlines should be prepared for discussion at the December meeting. Ms. Rice explained that these outlines should emphasize the quality system and documentation part of the assessment. It should discuss actually assessing to the standard and standard specific issues. This is as opposed to the technical guidance which emphasizes the technical knowledge and assessing to determine the competence of the laboratory. While the guidance will generally follow the outline of the standard, we would use our experience and judgment to emphasize the important aspects of the standard.

Volume 1: Technical Disciplines
Module 3 – Asbestos – Myron Getman
Module 4 – Chemical
 Inorganic – Nilda Cox
 Organic – Denise Rice
Module 5 – Microbiology – Don Cassano
Module 6 – Radiochemistry – Mark Mensik
Module 7 – Toxicity – Faust Parker

Next Meeting: November 12, 1PM, EST

Basic Assessor Training Guidance Document Outlines (all except Volume 1 Modules 3-7)