

**TNI Policy Committee Meeting Summary
Friday July 10, 2015**

1. Welcome, Roll Call and Announcements

The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 11 am Eastern. Attendance is recorded in Attachment 1. Alfredo noted that any changes to the previous meeting's minutes should be requested within a week.

2. Review of NELAP Mutual Recognition Policy 3-100

This policy was posted on the website since 2010 (not 2014, as stated in the meeting), but somehow was never voted upon by the Accreditation Council. Once that oversight was discovered, the document was brought up to date and the expectation that labs apply for accreditation in their home state, if that state is a NELAP AB, was added. Policy Committee members offered the following comments:

- Since it was never previously approved, but has undergone several iterations, a decimal revision number is appropriate
- §IV-4 -- replace example in parentheses with new sentence. Suggested wording is "For instance, an AB may grant a waiver to the state's primacy laboratory from having to apply to its own state agency for accreditation." This rearrangement avoids possible confusion as experienced by several participants, without altering meaning
- §V-2b – request rephrasing for clarity, to better define what a secondary AB is and is not allowed to do. This stemmed from anecdotal information that one lab whose site visit from its primary was greatly overdue, was told by its secondary AB that the secondary AB would "perform the site visit itself" in order to maintain the secondary accreditation status for the lab. Since that would be inappropriate, participants sought clarity on what information a secondary AB could and could not request.
- §VII – to avoid confusion among labs that might read this and misunderstand, please add an additional sentence that "disputes between a lab and an AB shall be resolved according to the AB's policies"

Bob moved and Mei Beth seconded to return the policy to the NELAP AC with these comments. Approval was unanimous.

3. CSDEC Proposal to Develop Guidance

Bob provided background, that from the summer meeting in 2010, a task force was formed and headed by Jane Wilson (NSF) to pull together document style directives from the various TNI SOPs, into one consolidated location. These bits and pieces were then adapted into a variation of ANSI's style document, but considered basically to be guidance rather than mandatory. The proposal, requesting approval, is an afterthought, since the document is essentially complete already.

While no one expressed opposition to TNI having a style guide, considerable discussion transpired about how to get buy-in from the community and what form such a style guide ought to take. Since a guidance document is not mandatory, some other form might better serve the purpose

Bob asked that Policy Committee review the document at its current "final draft" stage. Alfredo agreed to this, but in return, the committee asks that CSDEC halt work and distribution on the guidance document, since in the form of "guidance," the original goal of consistent style cannot be met.

Participants recommend that SCDEC wait until Policy Committee investigates the best way to implement such guidelines, in a manner that can be enforced and maintained by TNI – some higher level of endorsement than one program’s guidance is envisioned. Mei Beth made a motion to that effect, and Eric seconded; approval was unanimous.

Since Policy Committee will be the group undertaking this effort, it may be slow but as CSDEC has already spent several years on the effort, it is considered important but not urgent. This activity will be carried forward as an Action Item in the minutes, with updates at least every six months, until resolved.

4. Advocacy Committee Proposal to Develop Guidance

Advocacy Committee seeks approval to develop a white paper, with plain English guidance about why the public should use accredited laboratories, that also contains information needed to understand the rudiments of the NELAP accreditation program – spelling out abbreviations and acronyms, defining common terms such as analyte, analyte group, method, technology, and proficiency testing and then explaining how those concepts fit into the scheme of accreditation.

Bob moved and Lynn Boysen seconded to accept this proposal; approval was unanimous. The Chair noted that the Policy Committee Recommendation on the form, to be returned to Advocacy Committee, should indicate that Policy Committee requests to review the final document.

5. Next Meeting

Policy Committee will meet again on August 7, 2015, at 11 am Eastern. Documents and teleconference information and an agenda will be circulated in advance of the meeting. Unless another priority arises, we will continue reviewing the Internal Audit documents related to the draft final TNI Quality Management Plan.

Action Items are included in Attachment B and Attachment C includes a listing of reminders.

Attachment A

Name/Affiliation	Representing	Present
Alfredo Sotomayor, Chair Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewer District Milwaukee, WI asotomayor@mmsd.com	TNI Board	Yes
JoAnn Boyd Southwest Research Institute, San Antonio, TX jboyd@swri.org	Lab and FSMO	Yes
Lynn Boysen MN ELAP Lynn.Boysen@state.mn.us	NELAP AC	Yes
Silky Labie, Vice Chair Env. Lab. Consulting & Technology, LLC Tallahassee, FL elcatllc@centurylink.net	At Large	Yes
Calista Daigle Dade Moeller, Inc. calista.daigle@moellerinc.com	NEFAP Executive Committee	No
Mei Beth Shepherd Shepherd Technical Services mbshep@sheptechserv.com	At Large	Yes
Eric Smith ALS eric.smith@alsglobal.com	PTP Executive Committee	Yes
Bob Wyeth Retired rwyeth@yahoo.com	CSD Executive Committee	Yes
Jerry Parr (ex-officio) Executive Director, TNI Jerry.Parr@nelac-institute.org		No
Lynn Bradley, Program Administrator The NELAC Institute (Staunton, VA) lynn.bradley@nelac-institute.org		Yes
Ilona Taunton, Program Administrator Ilona.taunton@nelac-institute.org	Will continue to participate until QMP review is completed, at Chair's invitation	No

Attachment B

Action Items – TNI Policy Committee

	Action Item	Who	Expected Completion	Comments/Completion
60	Send request for review of POL 5-100 to NEFAP EC	Alfredo	April 2014	?
73	Complete and transmit to PTPEC Chair a package of Policy Committee Review Forms for SOP 4-102, 4-105 and 4-107, accompanied by a note that review of the PTPEC Evaluation SOP 4-104 will be postponed pending its revision after V3&V4 of the TNI ELSS standard is completed	Alfredo	November 2014	Materials sent to AST at his new email for processing
81	Verify Board approval/adoption of QMP Appendices 1&2	Jerry	By final approval of QMP	Appendices 1 &2 updated to approved version.
82	Provide language for NEFAP Recognition Committee to be added to NEFAP section of Appendix 3 to QMP	Ilona	By final approval of QMP	
83	Take Committee comments on Pol 3-100 back to NELAP AC, for revision	Lynn -- verbal transmission	September 2015	
84	Transmit approval of Guidance Request to Advocacy Committee	Alfredo – likely verbal affirmation	July 2015	Note that Policy will review the final
85	Explore possible paths for finalizing and implementing the draft style guide for TNI, currently residing with CSDEC	Alfredo, Jerry, Bob, Lynn,	TBD – began 7/10/15	Review progress @ 6 month intervals
86				

Attachment C

Backburner / Reminders – TNI Policy Committee

	Item	Meeting Reference	Comments
1.	Look into need to include something about review schedule in all SOPs.	3/20/12	
2	Include mention of abstentions in SOP 1-102 revision (or elsewhere,) to ensure that intentional choice of appropriate wording is made in committee decision making choices	10/5/12	
3	In SOP 1-101, "Committee Operations," or else SOP 1-102, "Decision Making..." some mention of "default" decision making rules would be beneficial, since most committees do not have documentation of their decision processes.	10/22/12	SOP 1-102 discusses various options and situations where one might work better than others, but SOP 1-101 refers to 1-102 as if it sets a default.
6	New Committee Charter format should include listing for Executive Director as ex officio member for all committees (per Bylaws.)	9/20/13	Charter format to be upgraded to address committee annual budgets later this year
7	Next revision of Pol 1-122 include addition of a sentence addressing the possibility of additional stakeholder categories.	2/21/14	Committees may add an additional stakeholder category with approval of TNI Board
8	When the CSD PEC charter is next updated, it should clarify which committees have added stakeholder categories and note that Board approval is required and was obtained for including those additional representatives in the committee(s.)	2/21/14	
9	Revise SOP 1-100 (SOP on SOPs) to address use of bullets and alternative numbering systems	9/5/14	
10	Revise Guidance SOP 1-105 to note that a new approval request is required for updates to existing guidance products	10/3/14	
11	Create SOP for document review of Policy committee documents (which will automatically require Board review)	10/17/14	Grew out of streamlining the approval process for SOPs and Policies
12	Revise how TNI refers to its own training courses, prepared and presented to train individuals for the accreditation and peer review (evaluation) processes. Typically, these are courses required in order to perform a specific function, yet are not referred to as a credential, per se, but are designed and presented under contract to TNI and thus implicitly endorsed by	1/23/15	From discussion about language used in SOP 5-101 (TNI-recognized training) versus usage elsewhere as just "TNI training" (e.g., NELAP Evaluation SOP 3-102)

	the organization.		
13	Changes to Appendix 3 of the QMP should be reflected on the web pages of the various committees as well as in their charters	5/15/15	Random thought by PA