

**SUMMARY OF THE  
TNI LABORATORY PROFICIENCY TESTING EXPERT COMMITTEE  
MEETING**

**JANUARY 15, 2013**

The Committee met during the Forum on Laboratory Accreditation, Denver, CO, on Tuesday, January 15, 2013, at 10:30 am MST. Chair Mitzi Miller led the meeting.

**1 – Roll call**

Stephen Arpie, Absolute Standards (Other)	Present
Kareen Baker, Veolia Water N. American (Other)	Present (on phone)
Rachel Ellis, NJ DEP (AB)	Present (on phone)
Scott Hoatson, Oregon DEQ (AB)	Present
Shawn Kassner, Phenova (Other)	Present
Roger Kenton, Eastman Chemical Co. (Lab)	Present (on phone)
Stacie Metzler, Hampton Roads San. Distr. (Lab)	Present
Mitzi Miller, Dade Moeller Assocs. (Chair; Other)	Present
Judy Morgan, Env. Science Corp. (Lab)	Present
Joe Pardue, P2S (Other)	Present
Jim Todaro, Alpha Analytical (Lab)	Present
Lisa Touet, MA DEP (AB)	Present (on phone)
Ken Jackson, Program Administrator	Absent

Associate Committee Members present included: Aaron Alger, PA DEP; Fred Anderson, Advanced; Steve Arms, FL DEP; Bob O'Brien, Sigma-Aldrich; Susan Butts, SC DHEC; Nicole Cairns (NYSDOH) (on phone); Jeff Lowry, Phenova; Keith Ward, Phenova

**2 – Introductions**

The Committee members introduced themselves. Mitzi outlined the session agenda, saying the committee would be considering the comments received on its Working Draft Standard of V1M1 and V2M2. She explained the comments were so numerous that the committee was essentially starting over again with those two modules. Many of the changes will also affect V3 and V4, which will in turn have to be modified for consistency.

**3 – Previous Minutes**

It was moved by Shawn and seconded by Joe to approve the minutes of December 14, 2012 and January 2, 2013. All Committee members were in favor.

**4 – Committee Membership**

It was moved by Judy and seconded by Jim to extend Steve, Stacie, Shawn and Roger to another term through December 31, 2014 as Committee Members. The motion passed with all Committee Members voting in favor. Stacie, however, indicated she will only continue until she has found a replacement.

Lisa's term had ended, and she indicated her willingness to continue through December 31, 2015. It was moved by Scott and Seconded by Judy to thus extend Lisa's term. The motion passed with all Committee Members voting in favor.

The Committee members had previously considered an application from Fred Anderson. It was moved by Scott and seconded by Joe to appoint Fred to a 3-year term through December 31, 2015. The motion passed with all Committee Members voting in favor, and Mitzi welcomed Fred to the Committee.

### **5 – Interest Category Balance**

Mitzi explained the Committee Membership (prior to Fred Anderson being elected) currently comprised 4 Laboratory, 3 AB, and 5 Other. In order to maintain balance there were two options. The first would add PT Providers as an additional interest group, as allowed in SOP 2-100 (Procedures Governing Standards Development). The second option would be to increase the voting membership to 15; e.g., with 5 Laboratory, 3 AB, and 7 Other. After some discussion, there was consensus to follow option 2, after Steve Arms volunteered to nominate himself as an AB. Susan Butts also indicated she might be nominated and Aaron Alger indicated she could nominate one of her staff (AB). The AB representative need not be one from a NELAP AB.

### **6 – Consideration of Comments on the WDS**

Since V1M1 and V2M2 will be put out again as Working Draft Standards, there was some discussion on whether to then work on V3 and V4 or whether to put all volumes/modules out together. Bob Wyeth (Chair of CSD-EC) suggested the committee follow the new requirements in SOP 2-100 (Procedures Governing Standards Development, that are soon to be implemented as a result of recommendations from the *Ad hoc* Corrective Action Committee. That would suggest putting them all out together. The Committee Members were in general agreement.

Individual comments were then considered.

### **Groups 1 and 3**

Scott recommended that Alger1, Cairns14, Cairns15, Cairns16, Cairns19, and Alger3 be considered persuasive. He said all the comments had been dealt with in the revised draft of the standard.

It was moved by Scott and seconded by Shawn to accept Scott's recommendations. All were in favor and the motion passed.

## **Group 17**

Scott recommended Cairns7 to be persuasive, but it was noted that the other volumes need to be checked for consistency if the definition of Scheduled Proficiency Testing Study is changed. While discussing Cairns12, the Committee considered the best manner of handling definitions in the standard and how to achieve consistency among the four PT volumes. Bob Wyeth indicated that at some time there would be a guidance document addressing this followed by a document of TNI “universal” definitions. The committee agreed it would not be necessary to define PT Expert Committee and PT Executive Committee in the Standard. The committees’ respective charters would be sufficient to characterize both committees.

It was noted, throughout Group 17, the term “participant” should be used.

It was moved by Scott and seconded by Joe to approve all of Group 17 (Cairns7, Cairns8, Cairns9, Cairns10, Cairns11, Cairns12, and Cairns13). All were in favor and the motion passed.

## **Group 19**

Mitzi explained that Cairns55 should be persuasive, and is needed because there is no supplemental PT requirement or 2-out-of-3 pass requirement for Whole Effluent Toxicity (WET). Nicole Cairns added that her comment was meant to specify that corrective action for WET PT sample failures would be available on request. This wording has been fixed in the re-written version of the standard.

In Cairns58, the language “re-establishing performance history” was removed.

It was moved by Jim and seconded by Judy to approve all of Group 19 (Cairns55, Cairns56, Cairns57, and Cairns58). All were in favor and the motion passed.

## **Group 12**

While discussing Cairns25 and Cairns28, the committee approved making the proficiency testing reporting limit (PTRL) definitions in volumes 1 and 2 consistent.

It was moved by Shawn and seconded by Stacie to approve all of Group 12 (Cairns23, Cairns24, Cairns25, Cairns28, and Cairns29). All were in favor and the motion passed.

## **Group 2**

The Committee is trying to remove most notes, and in Alger2 it was agreed to remove all the notes, as recommended by the commenter. (It was noted that Section 4.1.5 c still has a note).

It was moved by Judy and seconded by Shawn to approve Group 2 (Alger2). All were in favor and the motion passed.

### **Group 18**

Roger recommended all in this group to be persuasive. It was moved by Stacie and seconded by Joe to approve Group 18 (Cairns21, Cairns22, and Cairns27). All were in favor and the motion passed.

### **Group 15**

During the discussion of Cairns52, Susan Wyatt requested that the bullets under Section 4.3.6 of V1M1 be reformatted into text with numbered references.

Discussion of comment Cairns53 led to considering the relationship between the limit of quantitation (LOQ) and the PTRL. Laboratories whose LOQ was below the PTRL could report PT results to the LOQ. Laboratories with LOQs above the PTRL should report to the PTRL. Scott clarified that those laboratories reporting to an LOQ above the PTRL would be graded as failing the PT sample. Judy added that an explanation about the reporting alternatives should be included in the standard as a note. Susan Wyatt offered that laboratories had reporting choices, but needed to understand the ramifications of using them.

The committee agreed with the content of comment Cairns53 and agreed to simplify the language in the section to clarify that laboratories can report PT sample results either to the PTRL or the LOQ and explaining the consequences of using either option.

It was moved by Scott and seconded by Judy to approve Group 15 (Cairns47, Cairns48, Cairns 49, Cairns50, Cairns51, Cairns52, Cairns53, and Cairns54). All were in favor and the motion passed.

### **Group 10**

These comments were recommended to be persuasive. It was moved by Jim and seconded by Joe to approve Group 10 (Alger14, Cairns20, Westerman1, and Cairns42). All were in favor and the motion passed.

### **Group20**

In discussing Westerman4, the committee agreed to edit sections 4.2.3, 4.3.4, and 4.3.6 of V1M1 for consistency with the new language on reporting to the PTRL.

It was moved by Judy and seconded by Joe to approve Group 20 (Westerman4, Westerman6, Westerman7, and Westerman10). All were in favor and the motion passed.

### **Group 11**

These comments were recommended to be persuasive. It was moved by Stacie and seconded by Jim to approve Group 11 (Alger15, Westerman3, Westerman8, Westerman9, and Alger16). All were in favor and the motion passed.

### **Group 6**

These comments were recommended to be persuasive. It was moved by Judy and seconded by Shawn to approve Group 6 (Alger6, Wyatt1, Westerman15, Cairns26, Cairns27, Cairns36, Cairns39, Cairns40, Alger7, and Wyatt3). All were in favor and the motion passed.

### **Group 13**

These comments were recommended to be persuasive. In discussing Cairns13, it was agreed to remove the definition and refer to the committee charter.

It was moved by Judy and seconded by Shawn to approve Group 13 (Cairns31, Cairns34, Cairns35, Cairns37, and Cairns38). All were in favor and the motion passed.

### **Group 7**

The committee discussed comment Alger9 in detail. Two concerns had been presented.

1. Aaron Alger (PA) felt the standard attempted to limit an AB's authority to enforce some of its own PT requirements. She felt that some primary ABs could not allow timely suspensions for PT sample failures while some corresponding secondary ABs had that ability. In those circumstances, she wanted a provision that would allow the secondary AB to suspend a laboratory accredited by the primary AB when the laboratory had PT sample failures. The clause in the standard declaring that a secondary AB could not impose requirements on a primary AB seemed to prohibit the arrangement Aaron wanted.

Scott suggested calling the Primary AB and reaching an agreement on how the laboratory should be evaluated, since both ABs must evaluate in the same way. Aaron said that would work for her, but she thought some ABs would not be agreeable. Scott suggested the committee could try this in the Modified Working Draft Standard and see what comments are received from the ABs. Susan Wyatt (MN) supported Aaron's position, but both she and Aaron said the ABs had already discussed this issue and were not in general support of their position.

2. Aaron said the following language was unacceptable to PA and would force her to veto NELAP adoption of the standard: *"The Secondary AB shall not impose additional requirements for PT that are not included in this standard as a requisite for initial or continued accreditation."* As an example, she described her state's accreditation of some specialist laboratories that are accredited for Oil & Grease in Potable Water. Under NELAP she can offer any Fields of Accreditation she chooses, but there is no NELAP PT

(in the FoPT table) for this analyte in Potable Water. Therefore, she requires the laboratories to pass the Non-Potable Water Oil & Grease PT. Aaron believed the quoted language would prevent her from doing this. She stressed that taking this accreditation outside of NELAP as a state-specific accreditation was not an option for her. Scott resisted pulling the language from the standard, because that would open the door for all sorts of additional state requirements. Mitzi said what Aaron wants to do is not in conflict with the language in the standard. It is intended to prevent a Secondary AB from adding additional requirements before it will accept a PT score that the Primary AB already accepted as a passing score. It was agreed, however, that leaving the phrase in requires interpretation of its meaning. One suggestion was for Aaron to submit a Standards Interpretation Request so the issue could be clarified and posted. Mitzi suggested instead adding an explanatory note in the standard, explaining that “additional requirements” refer only to analytes that are in the FoPT tables.

At this point, it was agreed to table the issue for further discussion by the committee.

## **7 – Adjournment**

It was moved by Scott and seconded by Judy to adjourn the meeting at 4:10 pm MST. The committee voted unanimously in favor.