SUMMARY OF THE
TNI LABORATORY PROFICIENCY TESTING EXPERT COMMITTEE MEETING

NOVEMBER 1 , 2013

The Committee met by teleconference on Friday, November 1, 2013, at 11:00 am EST. Chair Shawn Kassner led the meeting.

1 – Roll call

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

Associate Committee Members present: Susan Butts, SCDEC; Audrey Cornell, ERA; Mark Hammersla, NSI; Jeff Lowry, Phenova; Bob O'Brien, Sigma-Aldrich; Brian Stringer, ERA

2 – Previous Minutes

It was moved by Scott and seconded by Judy to approve the October 4, 2013 minutes. All were in favor.

3 – Standards Interpretation Requests (SIR)

Shawn had been asked by LASEC whether the committee had approved and sent on SIRS 168 and 176. The committee had approved SIR 168 by e-mail, but Ken reported there was no record in the minutes of SIR 176 having been addressed.

4 – Subcommittees

The Microbiology subcommittee was established, and Shawn said it would hold its first meeting the following week. Since Virgene was not on the call, there was no update on the Radiochemistry Subcommittee.

5 – Volume 4

Following a meeting with Randy Query and Mitzi on the structure of volume 4, Shawn suggested it should follow a similar style to Volume 3 by requiring PTPAs to be accredited to ISO 17011, and then only including additional TNI-specific language in the volume. There was general agreement on this approach.

6 – PT reporting by method

Rachel initiated a discussion on laboratories' difficulties when they choose to report their PT results by method as well as by technology; e.g., if a laboratory reports metals by both Methods 200.7 and 6010, and passes one but fails the other, it loses accreditation for both methods since it failed the technology (ICP-AES). Scott pointed out this had been discussed extensively in the past, with no change being recommended. In proficiency testing by technology, laboratories are saved the expense of running as many methods. The problem is exacerbated by the TNI PT program being used by many non-NELAP states which require reporting by method, so commercial laboratories accredited in those states as well as NELAP states have to report by method. Shawn suggested the Accreditation Council would not be receptive to making a change to the standard in this area. Roger agreed, saying the matter should be tabled if the committee is to meet the deadline of a 2015 standard, and all were in agreement.

7 – The 2015 Standard

The committee considered timelines for having a new standard in place by 2015. Volumes 1 and 2 are essentially complete and can be quickly presented as Voting Draft Standards. It was felt that Volume 3 could be ready as a Working Draft standard for discussion at the January 2014 Forum on Laboratory Accreditation, and Volume 4 could be presented as a Working Draft Standard at the Summer meeting in Washington DC.

8 – Volume 3

This committee had asked the NELAP Accreditation Council (AC) for feedback on the following proposed wording in Section 4.5.3 of the Volume 3 WDS: *"If the laboratory informs the PT provider that a supplemental PT sample is being used for corrective action purposes for a specific qualitative (presence/absence) test, whether the analyte of interest is spiked into the sample shall be randomly determined by the PT provider so that the laboratory will not automatically know that it is present or not."* The current standard requires the analytes to be spiked into the corrective action PT, whether the laboratory missed the PT due to a miss-quantification or as a false positive. The AC had not yet discussed this at length, but they offered the following suggestions submitted by Carl Kircher:

"(1) If the lab orders a make-up or quick-response quantitative PT for a single-component analyte, that analyte must be present in a non-zero amount so that the laboratory can be graded based on quantitative as well as qualitative criteria.

(2) If the laboratory orders a make-up or quick response PT for an analyte that is part of an analyte group such as PCB's, then the laboratory must analyze and turn results for all analytes in the group (e.g., all 7 PCBs). The lab must not be provided information on which analyte(s) of the group are spiked as present (e.g., which 1 of the 7 PCBs was actually spiked). Please note that Total Xylenes, Total Trihalomethanes, and Total Haloacetic Acids may also be considered in this fashion (particularly if the AB is using the 75% or 80% criteria provided for in prevailing regulations).

(3) If the laboratory orders a quick-response or make-up PT for qualitative presence-absence tests for Drinking Water Microbiology, then the laboratory must receive, analyze, and submit results for all 10 samples provided in the testing round for Total Coliform and Fecal Coliform or E. coli.".

The committee discussed this suggested language. Judy saw no value in requiring the analyte to be present. Rachel commented if the laboratory failed by reporting a false positive, then if they get a repeat sample and they know it will be present that does not address their problem (though the AB may want to see if the laboratory can quantitate correctly). Shawn suggested leaving the new language in the draft standard until the AC gives a more definitive answer. Carl had also requested, on behalf of the AC, that the PT committee consider requiring PCBs to be treated as an "analyte group" such that if the lab misses one of the compounds in the PT sample, they are considered to fail the entire analyte group. Judy said a laboratory has to be accredited for all the PCBs anyway if they want to do any work, so by default they are already treated as an analyte group.

The remainder of the call centered on a brief discussion of a modified draft of Volume 3 that Shawn had circulated. He had removed all the items the committee had decided were already covered in ISO 17043. He drew the committee's attention to the following:

1. Microbiology scoring would be based on the study mean and standard deviation;

2. Bimodal/multimodal distributions by method had been changed to "by technology". Jeff said both are needed, because method is needed for drinking water. He suggested writing "method/technology".

Yumi asked for section 5.9.3.2.2 to be removed as redundant. It was agreed the sentence "*Note that the PTP verifies the analytes that are less than the PTRL, at half the PTRL*." should be removed.

It was pointed out that ">" values should not be used in statistical calculations.

Shawn asked everyone to consider the above comments and to read and verify if all ISO 17043 requirements had been removed.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:05 pm EDT.