

Minutes, PT Frequency Subcommittee
DATE: October 24, 2008 at 1:00 p.m. EDT

Subcommittee members in attendance (6): D Tholen (chair), J Lowry, R Haynes, J Morgan, G DeChant, C Wibby
Guest, ex officio: K McCracken: Chairman PT Committee
Associate members: A VanLangenhove, J Flowers
Subcommittee members absent (2) M Karapondo, R Karimi

Dan Tholen opened the meeting at 1:05p.m. (EDT). He noted that with six members present there is a quorum and decisions can be made.

The Agenda and seven documents had been distributed prior to the meeting:

- Draft minutes from July 25 teleconferences
 - Draft notes from teleconferences on 9/12, 9/18, and 10/2
 - Study analysis from J Lowry (3 data files, one study progress update)
 - Document that describes
1. Minutes from July 25 meetings were approved, with typing corrections.
 2. Notes from 9/12 were revised to reflect that the meeting was not official; other notes were acknowledged. The notes are appended to these minutes.
 3. Dan informed the committee that the New Jersey files had been posted. Jeff Flowers noted that the document that is posted with the study results, in the Conclusions section, contained a phrase “better performance” that implied an interpretation of the study results. A motion was made (J Lowry, 2nd by R Haynes) to retain the Conclusions as written. The motion failed on a 3-3 vote of committee members and objections by 2 associates. After lengthy discussion the group agreed that the section should be revised to more exactly state that unacceptable rates were lower in the 2PT group and the standard deviation of recovery was also lower. The section should also note that average recovery was the same in the 2 groups.
 4. It was noted that the New Jersey raw data had not been posted; Dan will check with TNI to see that the raw data get posted.
 5. The group then discussed the impact of duplicate results in the New Jersey data. This had been noted early in the analysis, but the decision had been made to retain all submitted results. Jeff Lowry has investigated the impact of removing the duplicates and demonstrated, for every class that he reviewed, the conclusions did not change, or in fact the differences between groups became larger. The group agreed to add a paragraph to the description document (as revised, in item 3 above) to explain the duplicates and also to add the spreadsheet showing the class summary with and without duplicates. Jeff Lowry will add the VOA (WP) class to the spreadsheet. Dan will circulate the revised document to the subcommittee and then send it to TNI for posting, in replacement of the current document.
 6. The status of the Maine lab study was discussed. Dan has made a request to PT providers to provide summary data on unacceptable rates for labs approved in Maine that are certified by the State of Maine, compared with NELAP labs that are approved in Maine. Jeff Lowry noted that there are a lot of NELAB labs (over 50)

and a great deal of data in the ERA files. In discussion it became apparent that there may be no real differences in the groups, since Maine uses the NELAC 2003 standard in their accreditation program. Dan will write to Matt Sica to resolve this question, and Dan will write to the PT providers to alert them to not investigate Maine laboratories until further notice.

7. Dan will contact Diane Drinkman at Wisconsin to request data on 3 groups of laboratories:
 - a. Labs that test samples from their facility (primarily municipal laboratories), that are required to take PT once per year;
 - b. Labs that take samples from outside sources (primarily commercial labs) that are required to take PT 2 times per year;
 - c. Labs that are accredited by NELAP (PT 2 times per year).
8. Judy Morgan reported that she has not yet written a report about her survey of State accrediting authorities.
9. The group reviewed the questions about PT that Judy will circulate to NELAP accredited laboratories. Several changes were suggested and accepted. It is likely that the survey will be circulated in the next few weeks, and Kirstin agreed to complete it for her laboratory as a beta test.
10. Reza informed Dan by e-mail that he has not completed the draft of the discussion paper on economic impact of a change in PT frequency. This paper is intended to present the major issues and request that the PT Expert Committee clarify their request to the Frequency subcommittee.
11. Dan will prepare a report for the PT Committee's January meeting to review activities so far. The report will include an update of international activity concerning frequency of PT.
12. The next conference call will be on Nov. 7.

Call adjourned at 2:45 pm EDT

Item	Action Item activity	Person Resp.	Date to be completed
1	Revise call 6 minutes, send to Kirstin	Dan	10/24
2	Append call 7,8,9 notes to minutes	Dan	10/24
3	Revise descriptive document, send to subcommittee for review	Dan	10/25
4	Remove duplicates from VOA (WP), add to spreadsheet, send to Dan and TNI	Jeff L	11/06
5	Request TNI post raw data from NJ	Dan	11/06
6	Ask Matt Sica to clarify Maine certification standards	Dan	10/24
7	Alert PT providers to not conduct Maine summary	Dan	10/24
8	Contact Wisconsin concerning data summaries for 3 groups of labs	Dan	11/06
9	Report on AA survey	Judy	1/11/09
10	Discussion paper on economic impact, 1 st draft	Reza	11/06
11	Report on activity to PT Committee, 1 st draft	Dan	11/14
12	Schedule next conference call for November 7	Dan	10/25

Agenda, PT Frequency Subcommittee - call 10
October 24, 2008 1:00 EDT

1. Greetings, roll call
2. Approval of agenda
3. Approval of minutes for call 6 (July 25, 2008) <attached>
4. Review of Action items from last calls, September 12 and 19 and Oct 2 (not official meetings) <attached>:
 - i. AI1 and AI2: Status of release of NJ data and spreadsheets (Tholen, Lowry) and duplicates (Lowry, Flowers) <attached>
 - ii. AI3: Progress on study of Maine labs (Tholen, Lowry)
 - iii. AI4: Progress on study of Wisconsin labs (Tholen, Wibby)
 - iv. AI5: Status of Report for Survey of State AAs (Morgan)
 - v. AI6: Status of Discussion Paper on Economic Impact (Karimi)
5. Questions for inclusion with ACIL survey (Morgan) <attached>
6. Report to PT Committee at TNI meeting (Tholen)
7. Next calls November 7 ?
8. Other business
9. Adjourn

Notes, PT Frequency Subcommittee teleconference
DATE: September 12, 2008 at 1:00 p.m. EDT

Subcommittee members in attendance (5): D Tholen (chair), M Karapondo, J Lowry, C Wibby, R Karimi (late)
Associate member: J Flowers, A vanLangenhove
Subcommittee members absent (3) R Haynes, J Morgan, G DeChant

Dan Tholen opened the meeting at 1:02p.m. (EDT). He noted that with four members present there is not a quorum and decisions could not be made. He also noted that since there was little activity since the TNI meeting, this call was to bring the group together and get activity started again.

New Associate member Agnes VanLangenhove introduced herself to the group and expressed the interest of EPA Region 1 in the activities of the subcommittee.

The discussion started with release of New Jersey data (from ERA to NJ) and posting the data on the TNI website. Jeff has prepared the data and returned it to New Jersey. The data have not been sent to TNI for posting.

Following a discussion, it was decided that data should be sent from NJ to TNI, not from ERA. Dan to send a message to Joe Aiello to request that he forward it to TNI for posting (AI1).

Dan will send the spreadsheets to TNI for posting, along with the explanatory material for the spreadsheets and data analysis (AI2).

The group attending the call agreed that no further action is needed on these data at this time. Efforts should be directed to further studies, starting with the review of data from Maine. Following a discussion, it was agreed that there could be confidentiality issues on use of PT provider results, and they may need to contact their participants to get permission to use the data. This would not be the case if the data were provided by the State. Chuck and Jeff will review their internal confidentiality policies. Jeff will contact Matt Sica to see if Maine has a database from which appropriate data can be extracted for analysis (AI3).

Chuck suggested that Wisconsin might have similar data and this should be investigated. The group agreed this could be a valuable study in addition to the Maine study. Chuck to send contact information to Dan (AI4).

The group agreed that it would be useful to ask Judy prepare a brief report of the results of her survey of State AA's regarding PT Frequency. This will be discussed at the next call.

Dan requested a call on Thursday or Friday, Sept 18-19. Most attendees are available on Thursday, so Dan will schedule a call, after he checks with Judy on her availability (AI5).

The call was adjourned at 1:50 pm EDT.

Notes, PT Frequency Subcommittee conference call
DATE: September 18, 2008 at 1:00 p.m. EDT

Subcommittee members in attendance (3): D Tholen (chair), J Lowry, R Karimi
Associate member: A vanLangenhove
Subcommittee members absent (5) R Haynes, J Morgan, G DeChant, C Wibby, M Karapondo

With few members in attendance the discussion centered on what can be accomplished in the near term. Dan reviewed action items from the past call.

AI1: Dan has requested that NJ release the data to TNI.

AI2: Dan is working at revising the instructions. Jeff will edit the spreadsheets to eliminate unneeded columns and will prepare pdf copies for posting.

AI3: Jeff has contacted Matt Sica at Maine, and has obtained a list of Maine labs, with the Maine ID. The list did not include the number of PTs required for each lab, so Jeff has requested that information.

AI4: No action on contact with Wisconsin

AI5: Judy intended to attend the call, and she is working on a report summarizing her Poll of state Accrediting Authorities.

During the discussion an additional action item was generated: (AI6) Reza will write the first draft of a discussion paper on the economic impact of a change in PT frequency. The purpose of the paper is to request clarification of the scope of the subcommittee charter to investigate the economic impact of a change in frequency. This discussion paper will cover the impact on labs, PT providers, accrediting bodies, and society for the cost of changes in quality.

Next call, Thursday October 2, 1:00 pm

Notes, PT Frequency Subcommittee conference call
DATE: October 2, 2008 at 1:00 p.m. EDT

Subcommittee members in attendance (3): D Tholen (chair), J Lowry, G Dechant
Associate member: K McCracken
Subcommittee members absent (5) R Haynes, J Morgan, R Karimi, C Wibby, M Karapondo

With few members in attendance the discussion centered on what can be accomplished in the near term. Dan reviewed action items from the past call.
NJ has released the data to TNI.

Dan is working at revising the instructions for interpretation. Jeff has edited the spreadsheets to eliminate unneeded columns and has prepared pdf copies for posting.

Jeff has obtained a list of lab IDs and NELAC status for Maine labs. ERA does not have sufficient numbers of non-NELAC labs for a reliable study to compare performance, so we will request assistance from the other PT providers. Dan will write to the providers to request unacceptable rates on results for NELAC analytes, from NELAC and non-NELAC labs.

No report from Judy on the report of State AB opinions.
No report from Reza on the position paper on economic impacts of a change in frequency.

Next call, Friday October 24, 1:00 pm