

## **Minutes for the Microbiology FoPT Subcommittee for 5/22/13**

Present: Andy Lincoff (EPA), Jennifer Best (EPA), Carol Haines (EPA), Pasty Root (IDEXX), Jeff Lowry (Phenova), Mike Blades (ERA), Bennie Cockerel (SCDHEC), Susan Butts (SCDHEC), Chris Rucinski (RTC), Jennifer Loudon (Raritan Township Municipal Utilities Authority), Viola Reynolds (EPA)

Absent: Andy Valkenbburg (Energy Laboratories)

Carol Haines motioned to accept the minutes from the 4/12/13 meeting. Patsy Root seconded. All were in favor. Motion passed, minutes approved.

### **Scope Item #1 Discussion**

- Information was received from 3 out of the 4 providers that provide microbiological PT samples. The PT providers make their P/A PTs in the 20-200CFU range so that they have the capability to use them for MPN samples and meet the MPN range requirements. Susan will follow up to verify the range with the 4<sup>th</sup> provider.
- Jennifer Best found a progress report that includes data from the contactor used to prepare the EPA PT studies. She will review this report in more detail and present a summary on the next call.
- Mike Blades provided a copy of the section in EPA's Criteria Document which includes data for WSM27. The amount of bacteria in these samples were in the  $10^5$ - $10^7$  range.
- Patsy discussed the UK expected and median ranges. Coliforms (20-204) and E. coli (20-200). These are consistent with the range currently in use. UK follows ISO Guide 34.

### **Scope Item #2 Discussion**

- The origin of the issue with strains was discussed and more detail was provided on this.
- Possibility where something had happened to a particular strain, that methods may favor one bacteria over another, PT providers are not required to test the PT samples by multiple methods.
- Different strains react differently to different media
- Inhibiting properties might cause a difference
- Failures are seen with MTF when results are evaluated with other MPN results rather than separately.
- Bimodal distributions are seen when different methods are evaluated together. The subcommittee was unclear on whether the Standard contains a minimum limit for separate evaluations.
- Discussion on the PT providers and their accreditation process. If there is a problem with a specific provider, contact the provider directly. If this does not resolve the issue, there are other avenues to take, e.g. contact PTPA or TNI

Conclusion on Scope item #2 – it was decided that this issue arose from one provider and does not encompass a problem with the program as a whole. The issue seems to lie more with changing the standard in regards to provider requirements. Other avenues for addressing this complaint such as TNI or the PT Expert Committee were discussed. In conclusion, a recommendation will be made to the PT Executive Committee to leave the Microbiological FoPT tables as they are and to not specify specific strains.

Approved by subcommittee 7/16/13