

TNI PT Executive Committee Meeting Summary

July 26, 2012

1) Roll call and approval of minutes:

Chair, Stacie Metzler, called the TNI PT Executive Committee meeting to order on July 26, 2012, at 1:00PM EST. Attendance is recorded in Attachment A – there were 10 Executive Committee members present on the call. Additional people on the call included: Carol Smith.

A motion was made by Joe to approve the minutes from the May 17, 2012 meeting. The motion was seconded by Michella and unanimously approved. There was no meeting in June.

2) Agenda for DC Meeting

Possibilities:

- PTPA On-site Assessments
- PTPA Database Subcommittee
- SOP Review Subcommittee (Curtis Wood will chair this subcommittee. Patrick will help Curtis. Stacie and Ilona will meet to determine final list of SOPs.)
- Complaint Resolution SOP Review (SOP 4-102)
- Chemistry FoPT Subcommittee Update (May tie in with PTPA Database Subcommittee report.)
- Protozoa FoPT Table – Newly finalized. (Stacie has not been able to reach Carrie Miller regarding the need to put Protozoa in place as a program or part of another program within TNI. Carrie had expressed interest in doing this previously. Stacie will continue to try to connect with her.)
- Complaint (Had hoped to address after the Complaint Resolution SOP is finalized, but this should be discussed since the SOP is not done.)

3) PTPA Database Subcommittee

The goal of the group is to come up with a way for TNI to gather information from both PTPAs to evaluate the PT program. The subcommittee is also hoping to look at ways that PT data can be more easily transferred to the FoPT Subcommittees in their work of establishing FoPTs. Subcommittee Members: Stacie, Curtis, Randy Q., Rob K., Matt Sica, Susan and Stephen Arpie.

The group has come up with a list of criteria that they think should be looked at to evaluate the PT Program. Both PTPA databases have the information needed, but formats are different. William Daystrom (TNI Webmaster) and Kelly Black (Neptune) are now involved in talking about how the data is gathered and how to get the information into one format. The PTPAs are not being asked to change their databases. They are also looking at how to pull PT data for the FoPT subcommittees.

4) PT Expert Committee Update

Joe noted that Kelly Black is heading up a subcommittee that is looking at Volume 3 of the standard. They are working on the homogenization issue. This will be discussed at their next conference call.

The PTPA database subcommittee wants to discuss the definition of “made to” and “certified value”. This concern has been passed on to the expert committee, but they have not had an opportunity to address it yet.

According to Steve, the Accreditation Council has started voting on the WET TIAs. It is being done by e-mail. There were some issues on how to incorporate them into the standard, but he believes they have been solved.

5) SOP Review Committee

Stacie will work with Ilona to pull together all the SOPs that need to be updated. Curtis asked if the procedure is to get feedback from the EC first or should the subcommittee put together recommendations for changes before the EC takes a look at the original SOPs.

Eric asked what the purpose of the subcommittee is. Stacie noted that the process the EC went through last meeting in going through the Complaint SOP indicated the need for a subcommittee. It was very time consuming to make all the changes as a committee. Eric would be able to provide comment on the SOPs, but cannot join the subcommittee.

Curtis commented that any changes made to the SOPs will be done with track changes turned on so it is clear what has been changed. Reviewing SOPs on EC calls would require that everyone do their homework and review the SOPs prior to the call.

An alternate approach to the SOPs was suggested – assign SOPs to specific groups of people and work on them at the same time. It was decided to start with the subcommittee approach. Eric preferred to talk about the SOPs and provide general feedback to the subcommittee before they start their review and initial edit on an SOP. This will be the approach used. The committee will continue with the Complaint SOP (4-102) at the next teleconference and review the complete list of SOPs to help prioritize the work. EC

members should review the May minutes and prepare for this review using the version of the SOP that was distributed before the May meeting.

6) New Business

- Susan Butts sent the following e-mail yesterday:
I was wondering if it was a standards interpretations issue, but I couldn't find the specific place where it was referenced in the standard. Unless I am missing it somewhere, I do not see where greater than numbers are addressed. And I wasn't sure where the calculation of the statistics fell since the acceptance criteria is in the FoPT table and the micro acceptance criteria is based on statistical calculations.

Stacie passed it on to the PT Expert Committee, but would like to discuss it on the call today too.

Stacie looked through the 2009 standard and could not find anything specific in the standard. Carl suggested talking to the PT Provider and then the PTPA if a response was not found to be satisfactory. The AB will make a PT decision based on the data provided by the PT Provider.

Nicole commented that this was discussed by the PT Expert Committee while working on the DRAFT of the standard update. It does address MPN and reporting a greater than value. The DRAFT states: "The result shall be scored acceptable if the numeric value is reported with a greater than sign and the numeric value reported with the greater than sign is less than the upper acceptance limit." It specifically notes MPN and ignitability as examples. Carl expressed a concern that all labs can report this way in order to pass the PT and this seems unacceptable.

Steve asked if some of the MPN tables actually recommend reporting a greater than value if the value of the sample is high? Curtis asked if the FoPT table range is too high.

Stacie asked what the next step is. Susan has already talked to the PT Provider. Carl suggested that she speak with the PTPA. She will do this, but she has some concerns about what is going into the Working Draft Standard. She feels a comment still needs to go to the Expert Committee. This will be communicated by Joe and Nicole to the Expert Committee.

- The Chemistry FoPT subcommittee is still working through NPW. They are looking at some new ways to communicate to keep things going during a time when a number of people are missing the meetings. He is providing recommendations ahead of time and this allows members to communicate by e-mail before the meetings. He may also take advantage of e-mail voting if the situation does not improve.
- Stacie will find out if a teleconference line can be made available for people who cannot attend the meeting in DC.

7) Next Meeting

The next meeting of the PT Executive Committee will be in Washington, DC at the Environmental Measurement Symposium. This will be the committee's August meeting.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 1:55pm EST. (Motion: Carl. Second: Curtis. Unanimously approved.)

Attachment A

Participants

TNI

Proficiency Testing Program Executive Committee

Members	Affiliation	Contact Information
Stacie Metzler (2009) CHAIR Present	HRSD	757-460-4217 smetzler@hrsd.com
Ilona Taunton, Program Administrator Present	TNI	828-712-9242 tauntoni@msn.com
Eric Smith (2010) Present	TestAmerica Laboratories, Inc.	615-726-0177 x1238 eric.smith@testamericainc.com
Justin Brown (2011) Present	Environmental Monitoring and Technologies, Inc.	847-875-2271 jbrown@emt.com
Amy Doupe (2009)	Lancaster Laboratories, Inc.	717-656-2300 x1812 aldoupe@lancasterlabs.com
Steve Gibson (2011) Present	Texas Comm. on Env. Quality	512-239-1518 jgibson@tceq.state.tx.us
Susan Butts (2012) Present	South Carolina DHEC	(803)896-0978 buttse@dhec.sc.gov
Patrick Brumfield (2012) Present	Sigma-Aldrich RTC	(307) 721-5488 Pat.Brumfield@sial.com
Michella Karapondo (2011) Present	USEPA	513-569-7141 karapondo.michella@epa.gov
Carl Kircher (2010) Present (1:33pm)	Florida DOH	904-791-1574 carl_kircher@doh.state.fl.us
Nicole Cairns (2012) Present	NY State DOH	nlc02@health.state.ny.us
Joe Pardue (2011) Present	Pro2Serve, Inc.	423-337-3121 joe_pardue@charter.net
Dr. Andy Valkenburg (2011)	Energy Laboratories, Inc.	avalkenburg@energylab.com 406-869-6254
Curtis Wood (2010) Present	Environmental Resource Associates	303-431-8454 cwood@eraqc.com

Attachment B

Action Items – TNI PT Executive Committee

	Action Item	Who	Expected Completion	Actual Completion
165	Follow-up on need for NEFAP EC approval of the FSMO FoPT Table.	Eric	Next Meeting	
168	Update FoPT Management SOP, distribute to EC and then distribute to NEFAP EC and NELAP AC for comment.	Eric	Next Meeting	Received from NELAP AC. Need to follow-up with NEFAP.
169	Contact Chem FoPT Subcommittee to look at the PCB data again and make sure that it supports the limits TNI has set.	Eric	Next Meeting	Eric will touch base with Carl.
170	Ask NEFAP EC and NELAP AC if they are aware of any analytes that need to be added to the table.	Eric	8/16/11	Need to follow-up with NEFAP.
181	Supply Ilona with Scope information for PTPAs.	Eric	12/22/11	
183	Update Protozoa FoPT Table and distribute.	Carl	4/19/12	
185	Send updated DW table with Footnote 15 to NELAP AC for approval.	Stacie	4/1/12	
186	Follow-up with PT Expert Committee regarding “Assigned Value”.	Susan	4/19/12	
187	Review complaint #1 included in Attachment D before the next meeting.	All	4/19/12	
188	Review SOP 4-101 in preparation for review during the next conference call.	All	On-going	
189	Review Complaint SOP and May minutes prior to the call in order to provide SOP feedback to the SOP	All	Next Teleconference (Sept)	

	Action Item	Who	Expected Completion	Actual Completion
	subcommittee.			
190	Take Susan's concern regarding reporting of greater than values to the PT Expert Committee.	Joe Nicole	8-8-12	
191	Look into teleconference line in DC.	Stacie	7-31-12	

Attachment C

Backburner / Reminders – TNI PT Executive Committee

	Item	Meeting Reference	Comments
6	DW Table Micro Total Coliform Rule Request	10/15/09	9 out of 10 vs. 10 out of 10
7	Add the Field PT Subcommittee to the limit update SOP during its next update.	3/4/10	
8	Implement all policies and procedures necessary for operation and continual improvement of a national PT program – including FoPTs for various matrices, stakeholders and accreditation programs. (Need to update SOPs – including an appeals process) – Complete by 7/1/11.	10/21/10	From 2010 Strategic Plan Review
9	Implement a process to periodically evaluate the effectiveness of the PT provider oversight program and the Fields of Proficiency Testing. Complete by 6/1/11.	10/21/10	From 2010 Strategic Plan Review
11	Evaluate how labs are accredited for analytes that co-elute.	5-19-11	
12			

Attachment D – Complaint #1

Description of Issue

Many of the State AB websites link directly to the A2LA website for the list of approved TNI PT Providers. This information is no longer correct since PT Providers can now (since January 2011) be accredited by 2 different PTPAs. This situation involves accreditation bodies in both NELAP states and non-NELAP states that use the TNI Standards. We feel that TNI is not actively or has not properly notified the states and that this situation is contributing to a restraint of trade with the state accreditation bodies defined above.

Description of Actions

1/2011 - ACLASS was approved as a TNI PTPA.
10/1/2011 – “PT PROVIDER” switched TNI PT Provider accreditation to ACLASS. Prior to this date “PT PROVIDER” was accredited by both A2LA and ACLASS. There was no lapse in accreditation during this period.
11/10/11 – became aware that North Carolina (NCDENR) had issued letters saying that “PT PROVIDER” was not an accredited provider. The NCDENR website links directly to the A2LA webpage which only shows the A2LA accredited PT Providers. “PT PROVIDER” requested that NCDENR retract the letter. NCDENR said that they would temporarily accept PT data and they would try to update their website. As of 2/16/12 the website still links to A2LA website only.
12/2/2011 - “PT PROVIDER” contacted state ABs to make sure that they were aware that ACLASS is an approved TNI PTPA and that “PT PROVIDER” is an approved TNI PTP.
12/8/11 – Received email from Minnesota (MNELAP) saying that we were not on their list of approved TNI PT Providers because their website directs laboratories only to the A2LA website. “PT PROVIDER” requested that they change this and were told that they are working on it. As of 2/16/12 the website still links to A2LA website only.
1/31/2012 – Issue was brought up in the TNI PT Executive Committee meeting. The issue did not seem to gain much traction and the consensus seemed to be that the issue should be handled by the TNI BOD.
2/15/12 – became aware that the South Carolina (SCDHEC) website directs laboratories to the A2LA website only for the list of approved TNI PT Providers. The South Carolina (SCDHEC) representative said that they were never notified of ACLASS being approved as a TNI PTPA until “PT PROVIDER” contacted them on 12/2/2011 and would change their website as soon as possible. As of 2/16/12 the website still links to A2LA website only.

Description of Remedy Sought

While we appreciate the memo issued 1/13/2012 on the TNI website regarding clarification of approved TNI PT Providers, we feel that this is not enough. We ask that TNI formally contact any NELAP State ABs or any non-NELAP State ABs that apply the TNI Standards and inform them that linking their website to only the A2LA website is misleading, outdated, incorrect and is currently restricting free trade. We additionally request that TNI inform the states that the only correct list of approved TNI PT Providers can be found on the TNI website and that any links should point to the TNI website.
