

TNI PT Board Meeting Summary August 12, 2008

1. Roll call and approval of minutes:

Chairman Carl Kircher called the TNI PT Board to order on August 12, 2008, at 1PM EST in Washington, DC. Attendance is recorded in Attachment A. Associate member Randy Querry and Dan Tholen were also present.

Minutes from the July 17, 2008 meeting were approved for posting on the TNI website after the expiration date for Eric and Kirstin are switched. Eric Smith rotates off the PT Board on 12/31/09, and Kirstin rotates off the PT Board on 12/31/08.

Motion: Gary Dechant Second: Matt Sica Approved

2. General PT Board Activities

Evaluating A2LA

- Kirstin M and Gary D attended A2LA's on-site visit of NYDoH. They were there only to observe.
- A2LA's Quality System Manual has been received. They also have SOPs and other system documents.
- A2LA on-site still needs to be performed.
- A final report will be submitted to A2LA after the on-site visit.
- Concerns raised: 1) Do we have specificity defined so they can do inspections of PT Providers. 2) Do we have specificity so that we can evaluate the assessors (A2LA.)

Report From PT Expert Committee

- Details can be found in the PT Expert Committee minutes that can be viewed on the TNI website.
 - Highlighted changes to the 2003 Standard vs. the new TNI standard.
 - PT Frequency Subcommittee
 - Air Emissions – Developing standard for preparing outsourcing of PTs. It will be a consensus standard for PT Providers (it will include what is needed, but not specify the provider they must use – it does not have to be TNI.) EPA is transitioning to external providers. PT Board may be needed to develop concentration ranges and acceptance criteria. There will be an accrediting portion to the production of these PTs and someone will be needed to oversee this. A2LA has applied to do this. The Committee's first priority is to externalize the preparation and then look at the accreditation.

Renewal Assessments of PT Providers (A2LA Report)

- Many renewals have an anniversary date of 7/31, so a back-log was created. They updated the checklist to streamline the process and gave 90 day extensions.
- Need to look at the EPA criteria document to make changes. A2LA will propose changes to the PT Board for the next round of evaluations.
- 6 out of 8 provider assessments are done. There have not been any new applicants, but many providers have expanded their scopes. Common deficiencies center on management systems which were not looked at as closely previously. They are also looking more closely at preliminary reports.

PT Oversight Database (A2LA presentation)

- Doug from Neptune and Company, Inc gave a presentation to show the membership how the database works.
- Each PT Provider has been given a template to use so they can begin uploading data to the website.
- A2LA and Provider get an e-mail with a PDF of what has been uploaded.
- The website only allows the PT Providers to change passwords and upload data. It is meant to be an easy system to use.
- PT Providers are now uploading data and more testing of the system will be done as it is populated. Uploading will be required by October and the database will be fully effective and being used for monitoring by January 2009.
- A third party will provide the server and storage, though A2LA will have ownership. There were concerns expressed by the membership regarding what would happen if A2LA were to step out of its current role. Will the database be transferred? This is being worked on with Jerry Parr, but it should not stop the process from moving forward.
- The membership asked about the use of the oversight data. Is there value in keeping it? Can anymore be done with it? Could the data be used to develop summary data? Could it be used to monitor performance range vs. existing acceptance criteria?
- Items for PT Board to consider:
 - Should the PT Board consider asking A2LA to do this type of comparison (performance range vs. existing acceptance criteria)? A2LA is open to providing additional information. The expense for doing this would need to be worked out.
 - If another PTPA were brought in, they will have their own database. How do you handle this? Or do you only have one PTPA, but multiple auditors? Need to review procedures and determine whether the current standard addresses more than one PTPA.

3. Experimental PTs

Eric Smith and Curtis Wood prepared a PPT to present this topic and discuss options for moving forward (Attachment B.)

The following comments and discussion items were raised based on the presentation:

- How many analytes are on the list where there is now sufficient data to establish limits, etc.?
- PAH, Nitroaromatics – put on the Table in 2005. A committee needs to be formed to address getting supportable limits and adding these to the Table. The soil Table was put together to report info to EPA to show they don't work.
- Steve Arpie provided Carl K. with a recommendation for an alternative to dealing with experimental PTs. Discussed during his NEMC presentation earlier in the week.
- Recommendation that ISO 17043 be carefully reviewed for how to assign a value for a PT. This procedure could cover experimental too. This expanded to a discussion on how to assign a value – median? True value? Some expressed that the data for the experimental analytes are based on the performance of multiple labs and based on median.
- Can you accredit an analyte you can't measure? If we have analytes or methods that can't give us the info we need – are we misleading?
- Like Option #3, but would like to take extraction into account. It is not right to compare labs doing a shake-out to labs doing continuous. This is already an issue for other analytes that are already on the Table.
- NY stated they would support a national effort to include prep methods. NY does collect prep methods in their PT data. They would be agreeable to provide this information to the PT Board. The Board agreed that this information might be helpful to determine whether the use of different extraction methods is an issue that needs to be addressed.
- There are analytes on the current Table where there are no participants using them. Should these be taken off? It was mentioned that the last time the Chemistry FoPT Subcommittee took some analytes off the Table and downgraded some to the Experimental Table.
- Need to consider concentration ranges of analytes. Ranges in some cases are not appropriate for environmental work.
- It was determined that the PT Board will vote on whether to reform the Chemistry FoPT Subcommittee with the following goals:
 - Look at reducing the number of analytes.
 - Look at the extraction prep issue raised during the meeting.
 - FoPT ranges.

The following individuals volunteered to be a part of this subcommittee – Steve Arpie, Eric Smith/alternate, Brian, RaeAnn.

3. Microbiology FoPT Subcommittee

- New FoPTs for Microbiology have been recommended and approved. Action Item: Put a note about the updated Tables in the newsletter. Need to also consider ways to communicate beyond TNI so other users are

aware of this update. Contact the Technical Assistance Committee (TAC) for help with this.

- Quantitative 10 out of 10 – Board has approved, but it won't go into effect until the new Standard is in effect.

4. WET FoPT Subcommittee

RaeAnn provided a PPT summary that is included in Attachment C.

- The subcommittee hopes to present acceptance criteria to the PT Board by the Miami meeting.
- Some concerns were expressed that the Table needs to be made robust.
- Need to look at adding things to the Table – did all organisms live? Die?

5. Air and Emissions (AE) FoPT Subcommittee

- Carl provided an update and passed out a DRAFT AE PTs Table to subcommittee members.
- This subcommittee has been in existence for 2 months and has been mainly collecting information. Once the information has been collected they will determine what Tables are needed: ambient, stack emissions, etc. Carl K contacted NELAP accredited labs for air proficiency data.
- EPA set fixed limits that are currently used.
- Next subcommittee meeting is set for 8/27/08 (Wed – 2 weeks.)

6. Next meeting

The next meeting of the PT Board is Thursday, September 18, 2008, at 1PM EST.

Action Items are summarized in Attachment D.

Attachment A

**Participants
TNI
Proficiency Testing Board**

Members	Affiliation	Contact Information
Carl Kircher, Chair Present	Florida DOH	904-791-1574 carl_kircher@doh.state.fl.us
Ilona Taunton, Program Administrator Present	TNI	828-712-9242 tauntoni@msn.com
Gary Dechant Present	Analytical Quality Associates, Inc.	970-434-4875 gldchant@aol.com
Steve Gibson Present	Texas Comm. on Env. Quality	512-239-1518 jgibson@tceq.state.tx.us
RaeAnn Haynes Present	Oregon DEQ Laboratory	503-693-5757 haynes.raeann@deq.state.or.us
Svetlana Isozamova Absent	Accutest Laboratories – Southeast Division	407-425-6700 svetlani@accutest.com
Michelle Karapondo Present	USEPA	513-569-7141 karapondo.michella@epa.gov
Kirsten McCracken Present	TestAmerica	802-655-1203 x216 kirstenl.mccracken@testamericainc.com
Matt Sica Present	State of Maine	207-287-1929 matthew.sica@maine.gov
Eric Smith Present	TestAmerica	615-726-0177 x1238 eric.smith@testamericainc.com
Curtis Wood Present	Environmental Resource Associates	303-431-8454 cwood@eraqc.com

Attachment B

Presentation: Experimental PTs

INI PT Board Session

August 12, 2008
Washington, D.C.

Agenda

- Introductions
- General PT Board Activities
- Experimental Analytes (Open Forum)
- Break (~3:00)
- Microbiology FoPT Subcommittee
- Air and Emissions FoPT Subcommittee

Experimental Analytes

- Current Implementation:

'The purpose of experimental analytes is to gather data in order to develop acceptance criteria so these analytes can be added when these acceptance limit tables are revised in the "future".

Experimental Analytes

- Current Implementation, cont.:

'Laboratories accredited or seeking accreditation in the corresponding Fields of Accreditation must participate in proficiency testing study rounds at the required frequency for the Experimental Fields of Proficiency Testing.

Experimental Analytes

- Current Implementation, cont.:

' However, accreditation status will not be based on whether the laboratory received an acceptable or not acceptable result for the Proficiency Test Sample..

Experimental Analytes

- Current Implementation, cont.:

'Laboratory participation data will be used to determine if these Fields of Proficiency Testing should be moved to the Accreditation Table in the "future".

Source: <http://www.nelac institute.org/PT.php>

Experimental Analytes

- Current Requirements:
 - The requirement to establish experimental PTs is in the 2003 NELAC standard, C.1.1.3.
 - The requirements for laboratory and AB treatment of experimental PTs is established by policy.

Experimental Analytes

- Future Requirements
 - 2007 TNI Standard, V1M1 4.2.2 requires laboratories to analyze experimental PTs twice FoPTs for which they are accredited or are seeking accreditation.
 - 2007 TNI Standard, V2M2 5.2.3 requires ABs to ensure experimental PTs are analyzed, but states that successful performance is not a requirement.

Experimental Analytes

- Future Requirements
 - The 2007 TNI standard does not require experimental PTs to be established, it only provides a structure for their use if they are implemented by the PT Board

Experimental Analytes

- Determining of Experimental Analyte Tables
 - Over the course of the past year, various discussions have been held regarding the issues associated with the Experimental Analyte Tables.
 - The PT Board has listened to these issues and is now poised to make a decision regarding what action to take.
 - Prior to making that decision, however, the Board would like to provide the TNI membership with an opportunity to comment on which of the possible courses of action currently on the table for consideration should be implemented.

Experimental Analytes

- The four options currently under consideration are:
 - Leave Experimental Analyte Tables as they currently are.
 - Leave the Experimental Analyte Tables as they currently are. However, do not provide associated acceptable/not acceptable evaluations for these parameters in the PT vendor study report to NELAP accrediting authorities that require only participation. The final report would provide those NELAP accrediting authorities with just a listing of what Experimental analytes were reported.
 - Discontinue the use of Experimental Analyte Tables. Each new analyte would now be added directly to the accreditation tables and a default study mean of ± 3 standard deviations would be applied to that parameter until sufficient data is generated to determine better analyte specific acceptance criteria.
 - Discontinue the use of Experimental Analyte Tables. Each new analyte would now be added directly to the accreditation tables and fixed limits of $\pm 100\%$ around the true value would be used until sufficient data is generated to determine better analyte specific acceptance criteria.

Experimental Analytes

- Are there any other options the Board should consider?

Attachment C
WET Presentation

WET FOPT
SUBCOMMITTEE
UPDATE

MEMBERS

- RaeAnn Haynes Chair, Oregon DEQ
- Jim Pletl, Hampton Roads Sanitation District
- Jeff Lowry, Environmental Resource Associates
- Chris Rucinski, RTC
- Faust Parker, PBS&J Environmental

Associate Members

Data

Current Status

Future Goals

Conclusion

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Attachment D
Action Items

	Action Item	Who	Expected Completion	Actual Completion
1	Post July Meeting Minutes to Website	Ilona	8/15/08	
2	Consider asking A2LA to provide additional data: Monitor Performance Range vs. Existing Acceptance Criteria	Carl	Discuss at 9/18/08 Meeting	
3	Consider asking NY to provide the information they collected regarding extraction/prep methods.	Carl	Discuss at 9/18/08 Meeting	
4	Establish Chemistry FoPT Subcommittee	Carl	Discuss at 9/18/08 Meeting	
5	Examine processes for communicating to users beyond TNI.	Board Members	Discuss at 9/18/08 Meeting	