

TNI PT Executive Committee Meeting Summary

January 19, 2012

1) Roll call and approval of minutes:

Chairman Eric Smith called the TNI PT Executive Committee meeting to order on January 19, 2011, at 1PM 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, Kelly Black, Randy Querry, Rob Knake and Jeff Lowry.

Eric welcomed the three new EC members: Patrick, Nicole, and Susan.

Joe motioned to approve the December 15, 2011 minutes. The motion was seconded by Curtis and they were unanimously approved.

2) FoPT Tables

William will be able to make the change to the website to allow for the posting of tables that are approved for implementation at a later date. Ilona will invite him to the meeting in Sarasota so he can show the committee how it works.

3) FoPT Table Management SOP 4-107 – Analyte Application

Andy motioned to approve the Analyte Application and the motion was seconded by Carl. It was unanimously approved.

The SOP will be forwarded to the Policy Committee.

4) Chair of PT Executive Committee

Eric will be stepping down as chair due to a LIMS implementation in his laboratory. The committee stated their appreciation for the excellent job that Eric performed over the past few years.

Committee members were asked to consider who will be the chair for 2012. This will be discussed in Sarasota. Carl commented that if no one is able to be chair, he would be willing to fill this roll for 1 year. People are welcome to contact Eric for any information they need to make a decision.

5) Agenda Topics for TNI Sarasota, FL meeting in January (Tues Jan 31st 1:30 – 5:00 pm)

The agenda has been finalized and forwarded to Jerry for publication.

Stacie will be supplying Eric with some bullet points regarding the WET program.

PTPA presentations.

Rob will help with the Assigned Value presentation.

6) Assigned Value

Issue Received:

Here is some additional information that we feel should be considered regarding the use of “assigned value” in the TNI world vs. the ISO world. We thought it would be easier to put in an email than try to discuss on the phone.

The TNI Volume 3 standard uses the term “assigned value” in a different way than does ISO/IEC 17043. This has led to some instances of confusion as PT providers have gotten accredited to both Standards, and now by more than one PT Provider Accreditor. In brief: TNI uses the term as the gravimetrically prepared value (or spiked value) for most analytes, although for solids it could also be the pre-existing analyte level in addition to a spiked amount, and for quantitative microbiology it is the mean of verification/homogeneity test results. ISO uses the term to be the value that is used for performance evaluation, usually the midpoint of the evaluation interval, or the “best” participant result (i.e., a result = assigned value gets a z score of zero).

In ISO usage, the “assigned value” might be the TNI defined “assigned value”, the expected mean from a b coefficients, or the study mean.

This has led to the following situations in TNI at 3 different PT providers:

- 1. One PT provider used the study means for applying the footnotes to the FoPT tables; that is, they used “assigned value” in the ISO sense, not the TNI sense.*
- 2. Another PT provider sent in the study means as “assigned values” for the database uploads of soils data; again, in the ISO sense, not TNI*
- 3. Another PT provider calculated the uncertainty of the “assigned value” as required by ISO, but used the uncertainty of the gravimetric value rather than the (much larger) uncertainty of the study mean.*

The issue is further compounded by the usage of the “assigned value” in ISO Guides 34 and 35 for Reference Materials, because several TNI PT providers are also accredited as RM producers. In ISO Guides 34 and 35, it is the value which is used for certified reference materials, and could be determined by one of 4 processes, which are (in brief):

by preparation (i.e. gravimetric) or by testing (by a primary method, by multiple methods, or by an interlaboratory study). Note that the usage of “assigned value” in ISO Guides 34 and 35 is consistent with the usage in ISO/IEC 17043.

The suggestion for the simplest resolution is to provide an interpretation to TNI Volumes 3 and 4, and the FoPT tables, wherein the term “assigned value” is replaced globally by “target assigned value”. This is currently used in Vol 3 clause 6.4.1. If necessary this interpretation could be simply a note at the beginning of the document. Then add a definition of “target assigned value” as the following: “the concentration or level of a substance or property in a PT sample, as determined according to Section 6.4 in Volume 3”, with a NOTE “that this is not the same usage of “assigned value” as used by ISO/IEC 17043 or other standards for proficiency testing or reference materials.” The term “assigned value” should be replaced immediately by “target assigned value” in the FoPT tables, which is consistent with the symbol “T” used in several of the footnotes.

These changes would not change the requirements in any way, and it would prevent future confusion of PT providers and participants. It would also resolve a major discrepancy between TNI and ISO.

Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns. Thank you for the consideration and have a nice weekend.

Sincerely,

*Rob Knake
Senior Accreditation Officer
American Association for Laboratory Accreditation*

Patrick commented that this would take more discussion and an update to the standard would be needed. This concern will be forwarded to the PT Expert Committee. Nicole agreed with this concern. Eric will forward the letter to the PT Expert Committee later today.

7) PTPA Database

A week ago Eric received an e-mail requesting a waiver that PT Providers not be required to submit data to a PT overview database. Eric stated that their data needed to be continued to submit their data to a PTPA database. Eric will prepare an e-mail to all PT Providers and PTPAs to clarify this issue.

Susan will be joining the subcommittee working on the database issue. Eric will forward any information he has to help Susan come up to speed.

8) Drinking Water Xylene Question from Wibby

The following e-mail was sent by Wibby in November 2011:

Eric,

I was going over the draft FoPT for drinking water. I noticed there was no footnote regarding the xylenes. On both the WP and SCM the xylenes has the following footnote:

Volatiles Aromatics must contain all three Xylene isomers. The concentration range of o-Xylene and m&p-Xylene is

Is this by design or should the footnote be added? Thank you for your help.

Keith Ward

Wibby Environmental

Michella sent the following e-mail on 1/19/12:

EPA does expect the DW PT to contain all three isomers of xylene.

Michella Karapondo

Environmental Scientist

USEPA OGWDW

Discussion:

Curtis asked if they wanted a total reported out. Andy commented that his lab is scored individually and collectively.

Eric will add the footnote to the current table. Nicole asked if the information included in the NPW and SCM table footnotes should be considered too.

9) Review Open Action Items and Back-Burner Items

Tables in Attachments B and C have been updated.

10) New Business

None

11) Next Meeting

The next meeting of the PT Executive Committee will be in Sarasota, FL on January 31st.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 EST.

Attachment A

Participants TNI Proficiency Testing Executive Committee

Members	Affiliation	Contact Information
Eric Smith, Chair (2010) Present	TestAmerica Laboratories, Inc.	615-726-0177 x1238 eric.smith@testamericainc.com
Ilona Taunton, Program Administrator Present	TNI	828-712-9242 tauntoni@msn.com
<i>Justin Brown (2011)</i> Present	Environmental Monitoring and Technologies, Inc.	847-875-2271 jbrown@emt.com
<i>Nicole</i> Present		
Amy Doupe (2009) Absent	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
Open	Open	Open
Michella Karapondo (2011) Absent	USEPA	513-569-7141 karapondo.michella@epa.gov
Carl Kircher (2010) Present	Florida DOH	904-791-1574 carl_kircher@doh.state.fl.us
Stacie Metzler (2009) Present	HRSD	757-460-4217 smetzler@hrsd.com
Patrick Present		
Joe Pardue (2011) Present	Pro2Serve, Inc.	423-337-3121 joe_pardue@charter.net
Dr. Andy Valkenburg (2011) Present	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.
177	Contact Dan Hickman regarding method codes.	Eric	12-15-11	Complete
178	Contact Maria Friedman with update on PT Provider accreditation status for SSAS.	Eric	12-15-11	Complete
179	Work with William on changes to FoPT table postings.	Ilona	12-31-11	
180	E-mail vote for SOP 4-107 and new membership.	Ilona	12/31/11	
181	Supply Ilona with Scope information for PTPAs.	Eric	12/22/11	
182	Forward e-mail regarding xylene question to committee.	Eric	1/15/12	
183	Invite William to Sarasota meeting to demonstrate new FoPT posting option.	Ilona	1/31/12	Complete
184	Forward Analyte SOP to the Policy Committee.	Eric	1/27/12	

	Action Item	Who	Expected Completion	Actual Completion
185	Forward Rob's written concern to the PT Expert Committee.	Eric	1-20-12	
186	Eric will prepare an e-mail to all PT Providers and PTPAs to clarify PT issue.	Eric	1/30/12	

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
10	Define a process for addition or removal of analytes from FoPT tables. Complete by 7/1/11.	10/21/10	Complete
11	Evaluate how labs are accredited for analytes that co-elute.	5-19-11	
12			