

TNI PT Board Meeting Summary
Cambridge, MA
August 21, 2007

1. Roll call and approval of minutes.

Chairman Carl Kircher called the TNI PT Board to order on August 21, 2007, in Cambridge, MA. The following members were present: Curtis Wood, Bill Ingersoll, Eric Smith, Gary Dechant, Matt Sica and Richard Sheibley.

The minutes from the July 17, 2007 meeting were approved for posting on the TNI website.

Carl Kircher presented the following meeting agenda:

- Report on activities of TNI PT Board since the Winter meeting (Gary Dechant)
- Update from the PT Expert Committee (Matt Sica, Kirsten McCracken, or Curtis Wood)
- Report from NELAC PT Board (Bill Ingersoll)
- Method code presentation (Rachel Gehrett)
- Report from A2LA on PT oversight and international developments (Randy Querry and Dan Tholen)
- Old business/new business

2. Summary of TNI PT Board activities.

Gary Dechant summarized the activities of the TNI PT board as follows:

- Approval of General Operating SOP
- Approval of Voting SOP
- Approval of PT Caucus SOP
- Approval of PT Criteria SOP
- Approval of SOP for evaluation of PTOB/PTPA
- Accepted NELAC approval of A2LA as TNI PTOB

Issues in progress include working with the PT Expert committee to define the roles and responsibility of the TNI PT Board, and coordination with the NELAC PT Board on the formulation footnotes in the PT tables.

Carl added that the TNI PT Board participates in the NELAC PT Board meetings. The NELAC PT Board will eventually be phased out.

Questions/comments:

Who should A2LA contact for arrangements to do the on-site evaluations of PT providers? Answer: Both the TNI PT board and NELAC PT Board for now. Carl chairs both. Joint process will help make a smooth transition.

3. Summary of TNI PT Expert Committee Activities.

Matt Sica reported that the TNI PT Expert committee addressed comments received following the Denver meeting and completed a draft interim standard which was voted on this month. The committee received 250 comments mostly on the laboratory portion of the standard. They will focus on editorial and consistency comments and put forth the standard as interim before the winter meeting.

Questions/comments:

Does the TNI PT Board have a position on the roles described for them in the standard? Answer: Carl reviewed and voted affirmative. However, PT Board has not formally reviewed the standard. That would be a good topic for the next meeting.

4. NELAC PT Board Activities.

Bill Ingersoll reported that the NELAC PT Board had completed the following activities:

- Approved minor revisions to the drinking water and solid and chemical materials FoPT Tables
- Approved radiochemistry drinking water PT acceptance criteria

They are currently dealing with PT formulation issues in order to retire the EPA criteria document. They are also adding quantitative microbiology FoPT acceptance criteria to accommodate other requirements. A micro FoPT has been appointed to make recommendations.

Questions/ comments:

Should PT formulations be a technical, consensus, or PT board decision? Matrix plays a large role in radiochemistry samples. States need to consider what challenges are appropriate.

Need to determine how much can be specified and still be acceptable to the providers.

How has the PTOB monitored the rotation of multiple analytes in PT samples?

Where do non-NELAP states get information about changes to PT program?

This matter will be discussed on the next NELAC PT Board conference call on Sept. 5, 2007. Guests are welcome to call in.

5. Method Codes

Rachel Gehrett delivered a presentation on the work of the Method Codes Subcommittee. (Presentation will be on TNI website by Sept. 15, 2007). The Method Codes Subcommittee (MCS) was formed by the NELAC PT Board to review and revise the existing Method Codes list. MCS reviewed all test methods used by accrediting authorities. MCS established new codes using the same numbering convention as the existing list.

The committee has proposed a system to add new methods requested via the web form. The web form is hosted by the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) at <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/phl/cert/methodformreq.cfm>
The form can be used to add technologies, such as GC, GCMS and LCMS to each method.

Questions/comments:

Who is (should be) responsible for assigning method codes as requested? Answer: for short term, MN is handling.

Will the method codes be published on the TNI website and where?

How do you add a laboratory developed method?

6. Report from A2LA

Randy Query reported that A2LA has completed 7 of 8 annual reviews of accredited PT providers. An annual review is a records review which includes review of the provider's internal audit records, management review records, and the review of significant changes to staffing and operations of the PTPs. A2LA is currently reviewing and revising their assessor checklists for the on-site assessments. During the initial assessment we used four checklists. We plan to reduce the number of checklists and redundancies by creating a management system checklist, followed by more concise technical checklists resulting in a more streamlined approach for both the assessors and the PT Providers.

A2LA plans to meet with PT providers in November to introduce the PT Providers to A2LA's vendor for the PT database. The goal is to have database testing begin in early 2008 with plans to have the database up and running by summer 2008.

Questions/comments:

Is the intent to capture each individual datapoint in the database? No.

What is the timeline? Begin receiving summary data this fall in spreadsheets while refining the database. Data reports should be done by January if even if they have to be done by hand. Maybe a sample report could be provided in Newport. Do PT provider's comments on confidentiality have merit? A2LA understands that it is a critical issue and we will ensure that it is addressed.

Dan Tholen provided an update on development of international PT standards. He reported that ILAC G13 has been revised and approved and is now available for free at www.ILAC.org. He reported that there were no significant changes. He indicated there would be some changes to Guide 43, but the changes were at least 3 years away from being finalized.

7. Next Meeting/New Business.

The next meeting of the TNI PT Board will be held on September 20, 2007 at 12 Noon Central time. Issues identified for further discussion include:

- Ongoing oversight of PT providers
- Proficiency testing for WET labs
- Consideration of method codes

This meeting was then adjourned.