

**Quality System Expert Committee (QS)
Meeting Summary**

June 13, 2016

1. Roll Call and Minutes:

Paul Junio, Chair, called the meeting to order at 1 pm Eastern by teleconference on June 13, 2016. Attendance is recorded in Attachment A – there were 10 members present. Associate Members: Jacob (CA ELAP), Robin Cook, Anne Ryals (Alabama testing laboratory), Eric Denman, Carl Kircher, Nirmela Arsem, and Bill Ray.

Paul checked to make sure everyone received the agenda and distributed it to anyone on the call that did not have it.

Committee balance is back in order. Patty, Dale and Matt's terms end in December, but each are able to renew for another term. Paul asked each to let him know by October whether they would like to continue.

The meeting minutes from May 9, 2016 were reviewed. Paul added the number of members present on the call (9) and included an updated Table of Contents for the Handbook. Sara will be working on the Handbook instead of Michelle Wade. A motion was made by Jessica to approve the May 9, 2016 minutes as distributed and that included the updates mentioned above. The motion was seconded by Silky and unanimously approved. Paul will forward the final version of the minutes to Ilona and they will be posted to the TNI website.

2. Standard Interpretation Request (SIR) #302

Paul sent the SIR to everyone today as part of the meeting preparation material. Paul suggested responding that it is a combination of a minimum of 16 hours and not 32 hours.

It was asked why it is a minimum of hours instead of a degree requirement? Paul noted that someone with a degree would easily meet these requirements. Robin noted that it prevents exclusion if the degree title is not what is required. The important thing is to have the hours of certain types of classes.

Jessica asked if someone has to have at least a certain number of hours of microbiology. It can't all be biology. Robin commented that you generally can't reach the 16 hours in just biology classes – they are not available. It turns out to be a combination. The standard does state "and", so it has to be a combination of both. Paul did not think this needed to be included in the response. Robin noted this could be included in the Small Laboratory Handbook.

The SIR, comments and response can be found in Attachment D.

A motion was made by Shari to approve the response in Attachment D. The motion was seconded by Matt and unanimously approved. Paul will forward the response to Lynn Bradley.

Patty asked what is considered a Chemistry class. Matt said it has to be coded as a Chemistry class on the transcript. Patty thinks there are ABs that don't accept some classes that are designated as CHEM by the college. There are also chemistry classes in the environmental departments in some colleges, but they are not designated as CHEM. She thinks this is becoming a bigger problem because the Standard has been in place for a while and some of the Technical Directors that were grandfathered in are needing to be replaced. Jessica had an Analytical Chemistry class get coded as a Biology class. Robin had a Biochemistry class that was not coded as CHEM, but it was counted towards her minor in Chemistry. All colleges handle this differently.

Carl said his state looks at the course and determines how it should be designated. It has not come up in the past. Sara looks at the course title as much as the designation code.

Paul commented that it would be great if there were an over site committee to address these types of issues. There is a grievance process, but Paul would like to see something less formal.

Carl suggested asking what NY is requiring. You are not going to get the same answer from all the ABs. He also suggested waiting to push this until it is really needed. Patty and Robin think it is a problem now.

Bill noted that CA currently requires 3 years of a science degree – biology, chemistry, physics, etc ... For publicly owned utilities (generally water and wastewater), they can substitute a California Water Environment Association's lab analyst certificate. There is a table that is available to note which grade is allowed for what type of analysis. This accounts for small labs that don't have the resources to hire a degreed analyst to be the Lab Director/Technical Director. Jacob noted that CA will be looking at whether they will continue to do this in the future.

Labs could look at giving people options for continuing education. Robin noted that she has an analyst with 20 years of experience that she has more confidence in than analysts with less experience and degrees. The Chemistry Technical Director requires 24 hours and this is a problem for people that don't have a chemistry degree. Dale thinks it should be up to the lab. Maybe the Standard could be changed to only require a science degree instead of being so specific. A lab is not going to hire someone into a Technical Director role that is not competent – too much business risk. Sara noted that the Standard is written in a way to deal with situations where a lab may not make a good decision.

Robin asked if there is a way that the labs can set up written procedures for selecting a Technical Director and then the AB would have to review it during their assessment and

agree or disagree with the procedures. The lab would have to show equivalency. This would be similar to what is now being done with DOCs. Paul is not sure ABs will want to do this. It may also cause consistency problems.

Sara asked if it can be added to the Standard in a way that leaves more of it to the State's decision. Robin expanded on this thought and Paul asked that she write down her thoughts and send them to him.

Silky is concerned. It was originally put in the Standard simply because some AB needed it in order to continue to support NELAP. For example, NY may not continue to be an AB if another state's requirements were less stringent in this area. They couldn't support secondary accreditation.

Patty noted that in some cases she has seen a state suggest that when a supervisor does not have all the chemistry hours they should, but the Lab Director or some other person above this supervisor in the management hierarchy does ... just list the person with the correct number of chemistry hours as the Technical Director. Silky pointed out that many labs have multiple Technical Directors because not one person meets all the requirements for all the technical disciplines.

A number of people would like this section of the Standard to include options of work experience and not just course hours. Paul will follow-up with Bob Wyeth and Jerry Parr to see if there are any other options.

There was continued discussion about perhaps sending in a SIR about this topic. Ilona suggested looking to see if there are any SIRs on this topic already. She remembers numerous questions, but could not recall if any were accepted as SIRs.

3. Small Laboratory Handbook

Paul sent an update with the Agenda. He has not had a chance to work on the handbook this last month and he has not received anything from anyone else.

How to Get Accredited Section

For PTs – Can a lab send the PT results to the AB? No, it has to come from the PT Provider directly.

4. Action Items

A summary of action items can be found in Attachment B.

5. New Business

Ilona noted that QS will be giving a training in Orange County, CA. She asked if the PPT will be reviewed at the next meeting with the committee. Paul confirmed that this will be on next month's meeting agenda.

6. Next Meeting and Close

The next meeting is planned for July 15, 2016. Ilona will send out conference call and Webex invitations. *(Addition: Meeting was changed to 7/22/16 by email.)*

A summary of action items and backburner/reminder items can be found in Attachment B and C.

Paul adjourned the meeting at 2:21 pm Eastern.

**Attachment A
Participants
Quality Systems Expert Committee (QS)**

Members (Exp)	Affiliation	Balance	Contact Information	
Paul Junio (2018) (Chair) Present	Northern Lake Service	Lab	262-547-3406	paulj@nslab.com
Kristin Brown (2016) Present	Utah DOH	AB	801-965-2530	kristinbrown@utah.gov
Patty Carvajal (2017*) Present	San Antonio River Authority	Lab	210-227-1373	pmcarvajal@sara-tx.org
Chris Gunning (2018*) Present	A2LA	Other	301-644-3230	cgunning@a2la.org
Sara Hoffman Present	Kansas Health and Environmental Laboratories	AB	785-291-3162	shoffman@kdheks.gov
Jessica Jensen (2018*) Present	A&E Analytical Laboratory	Lab	316-618-8787	jessica@aelabonline.com
Silky S. Labie (2018) Present	Env. Lab Consulting & Technology, LLC	Other	850-656-6298	elcatllc@centurylink.net
Shari Pfalmer (2018*) Present	ESC Lab Sciences	Lab	615-773-9755	spfalmer@esclabsciences.com
Dale Piechocki (2017*) Present	Eurofins Eaton Analytical	Lab	574-472-5523	DalePiechocki@eurofinsUS.com
Matt Sowards (2017*) Present	ACZ Laboratories, Inc.	Lab	970-879-6590	matts@acz.com
Lizbeth Garcia (2017*?) Absent	Oregon Health Authority	AB		lizbeth.garcia@state.or.us
Janice Willey (2018) Absent	NAVSEA Programs Field Office	Other	843-794-7346	Janice.willey@navy.mil
Ilona Taunton (Program Administrator) Joined after training – 2pm – Recording	The NELAC Institute	n/a	(828)712-9242	Ilona.taunton@nelac-institute.org

Attachment B

Action Items – QS Expert Committee

	Action Item	Who	Expected Completion	Actual Completion
9	Look at the Handbook Table of Contents and volunteer for sections.	All	8/10/15	
12	Send update to Lynn regarding SIR #290.	Paul	9/21/15	
20	Follow-up on potential committee members.	Paul	2/8/16	
22	Send membership vote out by email.	Paul	3/14/16	
23	Check with Richard Burrows regarding their committee doing the update on the Handbook.	Paul	3/14/16	
24	Summarize format for Handbook and send to committee members and other Expert Committee Chairs.	Paul	6/10/16	
25	Follow-up with Bob Wyeth and Jerry Parr about experience vs. course hours for Technical Directors.	Paul	TBD	
26	Provide in writing, thoughts regarding options for Technical Director approval.	Robin	TBD	
27				

Attachment D.

SIR #302, referred to Quality Systems Expert Committee

Standard	2009 TNI Standard
Volume and Module (eg. V1M2)	TNI V1M2
Section (eg. C.4.1.7.4)	5.2.6.1.c
Describe the problem:	<p>Please clarify 16 hours of microbiology and biology Is it 16 hours combined total of microbiology and biology? Is it 16 hour of microbiology and 16 hours of biology 32 hours total?</p>
Comments:	<p>From the Standard: Any technical manager of an accredited environmental laboratory engaged in microbiological or biological analysis shall be a person with a bachelor's degree in microbiology, biology, chemistry, environmental sciences, physical sciences or engineering with a minimum of sixteen (16) college semester credit hours in general microbiology and biology and at least two (2) years of experience in the environmental analysis of representative analytes for which the laboratory seeks or maintains accreditation. A master's or doctoral degree in one of the above disciplines may be substituted for one (1) year of experience.</p> <p>A person with an associate's degree in an appropriate field of the sciences or applied sciences, with a minimum of four (4) college semester credit hours in general microbiology may be the technical manager(s) of a laboratory engaged in microbiological analysis limited to fecal coliform, total coliform, E. coli, and standard plate count. Two (2) years of equivalent and successful college education, including the microbiology requirement, may be substituted for the associate's degree. In addition, each person shall have one (1) year of experience in microbiological analyses.</p>
Response:	<p>The requirement is for a combined minimum 16 hours of microbiology and biology, not for 16 hours of each.</p>
