

# TNI Board of Directors Meeting Summary September 8, 2010

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## 1. Roll Call and Approval of August Minutes

Directors	Present
Joe Aiello	
Aaren Alger	X
Steve Arms	X
Susan Boutros	X
Judith Duncan	
Robert DiRienzo	X
Zonetta English	X
Jack Farrell	X
Ken Jackson	X
Sharon Mertens	
Judy Morgan	X
Matt Sica	
Alfredo Sotomayor	X
Dave Speis	X
Elizabeth Turner	X
Curtis Wood	X
Bob Wyeth	X
Ex-Officio Directors	
Brenda Bettencourt	X
Brooke Connor	X
George Detsis	
Edward Hartzog	X
Staff	
Carol Batterton	X
Jerry Parr	X
Ilona Taunton	X
Jane Wilson	X
Janice Wlodarski	X

**Approve Minutes from 8/13/10 meeting:**

**Changes:**

- >>Correct spelling of Bob DiRienzo's name
- >>Item #3 – deferred to Executive Committee report, however, add that A2LA was approved as a SSAS provider Accreditor.

**Motion to approve Minutes with changes:** Dave Speis  
**Second:** Aaren Alger  
**Approved:** Unanimous

## 2. SOPs for Consensus Standards Development

### SOP 2-100

**Motion to Approve with changes to cover page:** Ken Jackson  
**Second:** Jack Farrell  
**Approved:** Unanimous

### SOP 2-101

**Motion to Approve with changes to cover page:** Ken Jackson  
**Second:** Jack Farrell  
**Approved:** Unanimous

## 3. SOP 1-105: Process for Creating Guidance

The first version of this SOP was not endorsed by the Board. The Policy Committee has revised the SOP based on comments from the Board.

**Motion to Approve with changes:** Bob Wyeth  
**Second:** Jack Farrell  
**Approved:** Unanimous

## 4. Implementing the New Standard for Laboratories

As summarized in the NELAP Accreditation Council report in Attachment 3, it appears a number of ABs have issues with implementing some sections of the new TNI standard, most notably some of the PT requirements. In addition to what is described in that report, anecdotal information indicates some ABs may not be prepared to implement the standard by July 1, 2011. Jerry is working to try and summarize some of these issues in a draft white paper that may be ready by noon on Wednesday.

### **Questions and Discussion:**

- >>How did we get a Standard approved and now find ourselves in this situation?
- >>Florida and Texas worried about something that would never happen.
- >>Maybe a "changing of the guard", where someone new sees something differently (New York?)
- >>Difficulty/uncertainty some of the states have in getting it thru their regulatory process in time.
- >>Some pressure to vote for all or nothing [Standard]. No one wanted to feel like / or it to be a failure.
- >>Is the question on the merit of the Standard or the timing of implementation?

### ***Discussion on the issues...***

1. What is the extent of the problem?
2. How do we resolve it?
3. Who should be working on this?

Suggestion: Someone from the Board should talk to New York. PTRL reporting is ok as a program requirement as long as we can come up with a way to handle the secondary accreditations.

Jerry and Aaron will talk to Stephanie and Dan.

## **5. Strategic Planning**

Thank you to everyone who participated in our June meeting in Orlando. Thanks to Carol's leadership, we have a draft plan of Strategies and Objectives. Using this document, all of the objectives have been organized into a table showing the responsible group, and a proposed deadline.

### **Review and Changes:**

- >>Need to add goals from Strategy 4
- >>#4 – “AB” Task Force
- >>#33 – “17025” instead of “17024”? Jerry to check
- >>Draft table has not yet been shared with Committee Chairs for review, comment, and commitment
- >>#32 – revise date

**Next Steps** – Jerry will send the Table to Committee Chairs for review and comment and request feedback by end of month. This topic will be placed on the Agenda in October to review comments and approve plan.

## **6. Program Reports**

See Attachment 1.

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**Attachment 1**  
**PROGRAM REPORTS**

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**CONSENSUS STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT**

- We'll be trying to get back on a regular meeting schedule for the CSDP EC.
- The SSAS Expert Committee will be meeting Sept 13 to discuss the final EPA rule, which was released in late August. The text of the rule has been distributed to the Committee for review. The discussion will focus on alignment with the completed TNI standards and whether any potential changes to the standards may be needed for EPA recognition of the TNI program. SSAS EC also has ongoing subcommittee work to update the SSAS table.
- The FAC Expert Committee met on August 26. Part of the agenda was a training session for new members on the standards development process, including TIAs, etc., since several new members had not had this type of training. A training presentation was developed for this purpose and will be made available on the TNI website for use by other committees and interested TNI members.
- Other expert committees are continuing to work on implementation related issues and standards interpretations.

**NEFAP (including Field Activities Committee)**

**NEFAP Executive Committee**

- Progress continues to be made towards implementation of the accreditation program.
  - SOPs have been approved.
  - The AB Checklist, Scope of Accreditation, Certificate and application are being voted on by the NEFAP Executive Committee.
  - Training is in the planning stages:
    - AB Evaluators Training: Material is already being worked on for this training. Marlene hopes to begin this training by November. This will include training on the TNI standard and ISO 17011 as needed. Need to determine whether training will be face-to-face or web based.
    - AB Assessors Training: This training is initially expected to be face-to-face with other alternatives to be discussed. There will likely be two levels offered based on previous experience with ISO 17025.
    - FSMO Training: Initial discussion is to offer this training as formal training – not in a workshop format. Initial thoughts are that it will be given face-to-face and then alternative electronic media options will be explored. The material shared in DC by Dane Wren, Justin Brown and Patrick Conlon is a great starting point for preparation of the material for this training. It is expected that this training will be provided throughout the country and train-the-trainers training will be given to provide consistency in the material.
- Standards Interpretation Requests (SIRs)

A process for accepting standard interpretation requests has been implemented and is now available on the website. The inquirer will select between NEFAP and NELAP and then fill in the appropriate

form. The procedure is similar to the NELAP process and the NEFAP Executive Committee will approve all final responses. Two interpretation requests have been received and forwarded to the FAC. One response is complete and is currently being voted on. The final responses will be made available on the TNI website.

### **FAC**

- The committee met with Jane Wilson for a terrific review on the consensus standards setting process. The topics covered included:
  - Program Structure and SOPs
  - Benchmarks for Consensus Process
  - Stages of TNI Standards Development
  - Appeals Process
  - Tentative Interim Amendments
  - Maintenance of TNI Standards
- A subcommittee has been formed to review the current standard to ensure that all updates to the standard were made prior to finalization. In DC it was discovered that some wording was not removed that should have been. This review will be completed by next Friday (9/10/10) and then a formal request for any changes will be made.
- The committee is preparing to begin the review of the current standard with the intent of updating the standard. This process will take 18 – 24 months and will include input from the community that is now implementing the standard.

### **NELAP**

#### **Accreditation Council**

- The following ABs have paid recognition fees: VA, NJ, CA, UT, TX, KS, FL, and OR.
- The NELAP AC voted to recognize MN as a NELAP accreditation body.
- A motion to approve the revised DW FoPT tables recommended by the PT Executive Committee has failed to be adopted by the NELAP AC. The concern involves the addition of an analytical technology as a heading. The NELAP AC and PT EC will continue to work to resolve this issue.
- The NELAP AC has approved a motion to advise the PT Executive Committee that only experimental PTs meeting the requirements in the current Chapter 2 should be moved to the FoPT tables.
- In response to the allegation that NELAP ABs do not intend to implement the new PT standard, the NELAP AC polled members. NY indicated that their current regulations would not allow reporting “less than” values for PTs. NY is reluctant to try to change their regulations because of lack of stakeholder support for this change. NY reported that the PT Expert Committee had been informed that NY would have a problem implementing this requirement of the new standard, but the comment was ruled non-persuasive. It is uncertain how this will impact NY’s ability to recognize accreditations issued by other NELAP ABs. PA will have a similar situation. TX reported that it cannot require analysis of experimental PT’s if the experimental tables continue to exist. FL will be unable under current law to allow PTs from non-accredited providers. Several ABs reported that they will not implement the new standard in their “state only” programs. The NELAP AC will continue to have discussions to determine if there are ways that the new standard can be implemented and maintain mutual recognition.

- The AB Assistance Task Force met with the NELAP AC and requested input on their assistance needs. The NELAP AC indicated that completion and implementation of the new lab accreditation database is their greatest need at this time. They would also like to have current and accurate information from each other on the status of out of state accreditations.

**Technical Assistance Committee**

- TAC will be focusing on development of the agendas for the Assessment Forum and Mentoring Session at the Savannah meeting.
- The draft training delivery SOP was reviewed and discussed at the Washington meeting. Jerry has asked Ilona to finalize the training delivery SOP drafted by TAC.
- TAC will continue to work with SLAG to finalize the “NELAP Simplified: A Handbook for Small Laboratories” which is in development to assist labs with implementation. Proposed deadline is Fall 2011. This document will need Policy Committee review as a “guidance” document.
- The quality manual template team met in DC. The schedule is to have a complete draft within 2 weeks and to have a final draft to Jan Wlodarski for formatting by mid-September. The next step is to draft the “tools” piece. The group plans to have a final product by December 31. They are considering a training session at the Savannah meeting and perhaps adding this training to the regional workshops. This document will need Policy committee review as a “guidance” document.
- Additional regional workshops on the new standards are planned for the following locations:

<b>Date/Location</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Other Speakers</b>	<b>Lead organization</b>
September 9: St. Paul, MN	Jerry	John Gumpfer	TNI
September 20: Houston, TX	Carol	Tom/Michael/Linda	TNI
September 21: San Antonio, TX	Carol	Tom/Michael	TNI
September 24: Seattle, WA	Jerry	Jack/Gary	TNI
October 27: Palm Beach Gardens, FL	Silky		FSEA
November 1: Baton Rouge, LA	Linda	Tom/Michael	TNI
Fall 2010: Las Vegas, NV	Jack		TNI
December 3: Chicago, IL	Jerry		IAETL
Fall 2010: Northern California	Jack	Diane	TNI
Fall 2010: Knoxville, TN	Ilona		TNI
Fall 2010: Cincinnati, OH	Jerry		TNI
February 3, 2011: Savannah, GA	TBD		TNI
Spring 2011: Denver, CO	TBA		TNI
Spring 2011: Des Moines, IA			Iowa group (Ed Askew)

- Three more sections are needed to complete the initial update of the Quality Assurance Manual template sections. The process of pulling all the sections together to look for duplicate and missing information should be complete within the next two weeks. The template will then be ready for subcommittee review and comment. It will then be sent for review by the Quality Systems Expert Committee and other reviewers as yet to be determined.
- A number of people offered to help pull tools together during the meeting at DC. Tools collections, review and preparation will be worked on as soon as the first draft of the QAM is complete.
- Ilona met with SLAG and they are willing to help with review and compilation of tools. A few SLAG members expressed a concern as to whether they could participate in the preparation of any

documents (QAM or the Handbook being worked on by TAC) that will be sold instead of being given away.

- The target completion date is still December 2010 with the goal of providing training on this tool in Savannah.

#### **Laboratory Accreditation System Executive Committee**

- Standards Interpretation Request (SIR) process:
  - 5 requests were received in August. Four have been forwarded to the Quality Systems Expert Committee and one is still in review to determine if it is a SIR. Status updates have been sent to the inquirers.
  - A new auto response to SIRs has been developed and is now being used. When someone completes a SIR form on-line they receive a response that thanks them for their inquiry, explains the process and gives them a copy of the SIR they just completed. They will still be receiving a status update once their SIR has been placed with a committee or when it has been determined that their question is not an interpretation request. All questions that are determined not to be an interpretation request include a response that gives a suggestion for where to forward their question. Any of these that are method or implementation related are also forwarded to the TAC for information purposes to help them determine the training needs of the community. These new procedures will be added to the SOP update.
  - Requests for interpretations can now be distinguished between the 2003 and 2009 standard. People can now choose the appropriate standard when they make their request.
  - A number of newer expert committee responses are now ready for the NELAP Accreditation Council (AC) review. These have been forwarded to William for posting and we are preparing a review of how the voting process works and resending passwords to the ABs. They should be able to begin voting this week.
  - Last report it was conveyed that June had finished reviewing 12 of the 36 SIRs being prepared for the NELAP AC's review and that Aaren was also working on 12 responses. These actions were being taken due to the concerns raised about the original responses: grammatical errors and opinions were added to the response beyond the interpretation requested. June and Ilona will begin meeting next week for a ½ hour on a few mornings each week to go through these and forward them to William for posting into the voting process again. Reminders were also sent to committee chairs to prepare responses to questions that have not yet been answered.
  - Ilona will prepare an initial Draft SOP for the Standards Interpretation Request process by the end of September to include the recent changes made.
- The DRAFT Implementation Project Summary was distributed to all the committee chairs for one last review after the DC meeting. It has been forwarded to William for posting on the website. It will be listed as an "Easy Link" on the NELAP home page – "2009 TNI Standard Implementation Project". This link will be noted in the "News" box on the home page.
- Comments on the DRAFT Quality Systems checklist have been developed by LAS EC and are being forwarded to the QS Expert Committee. QS will also be provided with the results of a recent survey of the ABs asking how they currently use the checklist and what suggestions for improvement they have.
- LASC EC is working on the review of the NELAP AB Evaluation SOP and the AB Evaluation Checklist forwarded by Lynn for comment. This was distributed at the last meeting for an e-mail

comment review, but only 2 comments have thus been received. A reminder was sent out and people will be encouraged to get their comments in this next week.

- LASC EC has also been asked to review a listing of new technologies needed that the IT Committee is working on.

#### **Consistency Improvement Task Force**

- The CITF presented their progress and work products to date at the summer meeting during the Assessment Forum. Several attendees suggested that the CITF have a separate meeting in Savannah to discuss work products and issues.

#### **Accreditation Body Assistance Task Force**

- The AB task force has drafted a summary of their mission for discussion with the NELAP AC. The task force is soliciting ideas for types of assistance that the ABs need. The NELAP AC indicated that completion and implementation of the new lab accreditation database is their greatest need at this time. They would also like to have current and accurate information from each other on the status of out of state accreditations.
- Judy Morgan's latest survey results will be reviewed and discussed at the next meeting. It was noted that survey responses underscored the need for ABs to have automated assistance with handling PT data.

### **PROFICIENCY TESTING**

- The Chem FoPT Subcommittee is continuing to work on limit updates. The subcommittee is now working on the update of the remaining drinking water analytes that were not experimental. The expected effective date for this table is July 1, 2011.
- The Field PT Subcommittee developed concentration and acceptance limits as discussed at the DC meeting. This group is now looking at formulation/production concerns. This information will be included in the development of the FoPT table. Members of this group will also begin working with the Field Activities Committee to work through policy issues concerning the lead program.
- A WET FoPT Subcommittee is being reconstituted. RaeAnn has raised the issue that the current PTs are not meeting the industry needs. She has volunteered to chair this subcommittee and work with Stacie Metzler as the PT Executive Committee lead on this subcommittee.
- FoPT Table Issue

The PT Executive Committee has met with the NELAP AC to discuss possible solutions to issues raised by the AC regarding acceptance of the proposed FoPT tables. The initial concern was that some analytes being added to the tables did not have sufficient data as required in the 2003 NELAC standard. The PT Executive Committee developed the tables using the 2009 TNI Standard, but many ABs have the 2003 PT requirements written into their regulations. Through discussion it was proposed that the tables be adopted without the analytes that do not meet the 2003 criteria. The PT Executive Board is currently looking at what do with the analytes that do not make it onto the tables – leave experimental tables in place and add these analytes back to these tables, delete the analytes and experimental tables, look for alternative methods to add new analytes to FoPT tables, etc ...

Eric received some feedback from one of the EPA regions regarding Experimental tables when they were contacted by the NELAP AC. Considering the feedback and the issue discussed above, finding



a solution for how to add new analytes to the FoPT tables is now being considered a top priority for the PT Executive Committee.

The other issue recently raised is the use of additional headers in the DW table. The headers (blue and black) were developed to provide clarity of intent and consistency of use. Concerns has been expressed in the past regarding the inconsistency in how the states implement the FoPT tables. For example, some require that if a lab requests a specific analyte in their accreditation it must be run as a PT if a PT for that analyte is available - regardless of whether the concentration limits and acceptance limits for the PT were developed for a semi-volatile method and the analyte being requested is for a volatile method. The Chemistry FoPT Subcommittee proposed the additional headers to try to address this inconsistency and other potential inconsistencies. It has been suggested that the use of headers is not the way to address this and perhaps footnotes would be a better alternative. The feedback on this issue has not been consistent. There have been comments received in favor of the headers (or some form of distinction) from PT providers and states and comments received against the concept from some NELAP ABs and other interested parties. The main concern expressed by those against it is that they feel it will not clear up any confusion and it adds an analytical technology as a heading. Eric is continuing to gather feedback and ideas and this will be discussed with the goal of reaching a solution at the next PT Executive Committee meeting on the 16<sup>th</sup>.

- PTPA Assessments: The on-site assessment of ACLASS occurred mid August and a report is being prepared for the PT Executive Committee. A2LA is working on their renewal application and once it is received and reviewed, an on-site assessment will be scheduled. The on-site team for ACLASS was Carl Kircher and Amy Doupe. The team for A2LA will be Kirstin McCracken and Stacie Metzler.
- TNI/EPA Joint Cryptosporidium Work Group: Carrie Miller (EPA) is developing a work group to look at Cryptosporidium. She is currently developing a list of candidates for the group with the following goal: To discuss possible vendors for PT samples and/or development of equivalent lab approval programs for Cryptosporidium to the program EPA currently maintains.
- PT Executive Committee Membership: There are four members who will potentially be rotating off the committee.

## **ADMINISTRATION**

### **Advocacy Committee**

- As a follow up to the Advocacy meeting stakeholder organizations during the TNI meeting in Washington, DC, in August, Elizabeth Turner and Zonetta English are organizing additional opportunities to discuss lab accreditation issues with utility laboratories.
- The next TNI newsletter will be published November 15. Zonetta English will be the editor.
- Carol Batterton will work with Aaren Alger to draft a response letter to Mike Shapiro.
- Jerry Parr and Steve Stubbs will meet with EPA's Regional Science and Technology Directors on November 1.
- TNI will be an exhibitor at the ASDWA meeting in Pittsburg, PA. Ken Jackson will staff TNI's booth.

**Policy Committee**

- The Policy Committee is reviewing and discussing a working draft of the global TNI Complaint SOP. A Complaint Policy is in final draft form, but the committee has decided to wait and send both documents forward at the same time.
- The SOP for creation and use of guidance is complete and has been approved by the Policy Committee by email vote.

**Conference Planning**

- Presentations are now up on the NEMC website – many of the poster presenters have also shared PDFs of their presentations this year.
- An announcement will go out to all attendees regarding the posting of the presentations after we hear about the RFP. If we are successful, this will allow us to encourage them to start thinking about the next conference in addition to announcing the posting.
- Planning for the exhibitors in Savannah has been started. A draft schedule for Savannah is complete and will be sent to committee chairs for review this week.

**Finance Committee**

- Pricing Issues
  - Standards: Add in indirect costs. E.g., for Volume 1, ASTM price is \$51. Add in 20% indirect cost of \$10 equals \$61 member price and can be said to be “at cost.”
    - Will begin to implement in fall; honor existing prices for workshop attendees.
  - LOD/LOQ powerpoint: \$25 members/\$50 non-member
  - Accreditation Standard Workshop PowerPoint Presentation
    - \$160 member; \$210 non-member
    - For those that attend workshops, price will be \$65 (give credit for workshop fee).
  - New Quality Manual template: \$95 member; \$190 non-member
- TNI Employees
- After evaluating the advantages and disadvantages of having some contract staff become TNI employees, the committee decided the best course of action was to continue current plan. Reasons have to do with developing policies and SOPs related to employees (vacation, sick leave, benefits, etc) as well as removing flexibility to reduce work hours when needed. Advice from both our accountant and general counsel indicated this decision is appropriate.
- Contracts for key staff will be rewritten as personal service agreements.
  - The committee has initiated a performance evaluation of the Executive Director.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT**

- Two organizations submitted proposals for both EPA RFPs, with TNI being one of the organizations. The other organization that provided a proposal for the Measurement Tools RFP was deemed non-responsive, leaving TNI as the only qualified proposal. The technical review for both proposals was scheduled to be completed by September 1.
- First rough draft of Quality Management Plan complete. A draft suitable for review by the Board should be ready for the October meeting.

**Membership Report: July and August 2010**

Active Members: 706