

TNI Board of Directors Meeting Summary

July 13, 2011

1. Roll Call and Approval of June Minutes

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

Approval of June 8, 2011 Minutes. Changes:

- Joe Aiello, Bob DiRienzo were both present last month
- Education Delivery System SOP – we decided to conduct an email approval instead of a unanimous vote during the meeting. Jack/Ilona will work on the confidentiality issue for the training this week in Florida.
- Noted that the meetings are being recorded for the sole purpose of the transcribing the minutes and making sure that the most important details are captured. Recordings are deleted/destroyed as soon as the minutes are completed/approved.
- Place text “These are not minutes, but detailed notes from this session” at the top of May’s expanded minutes. These “notes” will be available to anyone upon request. (S. Boutros).

Motion to Approve with changes: Jack

Seconded: Sharon

Approved: Unanimous

Abstentions: 1 (Sue Boutros)

2. Offer of Resignation from Matt Sica

Matt has resigned from the Maine Center for Disease Prevention and formed his own consulting company and thus, is no longer is a representative of an AB. The current composition of the elected Board is 6 *ABs*, 7 *Labs* and 4 *Other*. With Matt's change to the *Other* category, the new composition will be 5 *ABs*, 7 *Labs* and 5 *Other*.

TNI Board 2011

Terms*	First	Last	Organization	Stakeholder	Subgroup	AB	Lab	Other
2012	Joe	Aiello	New Jersey DEP	AB	NELAP AB	1		
2012	Aaren	Alger	Pennsylvania DEP	AB	NELAP AB	1		
2013	Steve	Arms	Florida DOH	AB	NELAP AB	1		
2012	Judy	Duncan	Oklahoma DEQ	AB	Non-NELAP AB	1		
2013	Alfredo	Sotomayor	Wisconsin DNR	Other	State			1
2014	Matt	Sica		Other	Consulting			1
2013	Judy	Morgan	ESC	Lab	Commercial		1	
2012	David	Speis	Accutest	Lab	Commercial		1	
2012	Robert	DiRienzo	ALS	Lab	Commercial		1	
2013	Susan	Boutros	EA	Lab	Commercial		1	
2013	Sharon	Mertens	MMSD	Lab	Municipal		1	
2013	Zonetta	English	Louisville	Lab	Municipal		1	
2012	Jack	Farrell	AEX	Other	Consulting			1
2013	Elizabeth	Turner	NTMWD	Lab	Municipal		1	
2012	Curtis	Wood	ERA	Other	PT			1
2014	Keith	Greenaway	ACLASS	AB	NEFAP AB	1		
2014	Patsy	Root	IDEXX	Other	Vendor			1
	Brooke	Connor	USGS	Ex-Officio	Federal			
	George	Detsis	DOE	Ex-Officio	Federal			
	Ed	Hartzog	DOD	Ex-Officio	Federal			
	Brenda	Bettencourt	EPA	Ex-Officio	Federal			
						5	7	5
				Balance				
				AB = 5				
				Lab = 7				
				Other = 5				
				Ex-Officio = 4				

Jerry was notified via email that Matt would like to remain on the Board. Effect on Balance: Change to "Other" has no detrimental effect.

Motion to reject Matt's Offer of Resignation, and per his request allow him to remain on the Board with the Change in His Affiliation to "Other":

Motion: Judy

Second: Dave S.

Approved: Unanimous

FYI – Judy Duncan will be retiring later this year – may make us a little light on the AB side. We are also getting close/or are at the minimum for NELAP ABs. We are hoping that Oklahoma becomes a NELAP AB.

This is one of the things the nominations committee has considered and they are going to propose a change to the SOP for nomination to recognize that we need to maintain a minimum number of

NEFAP ABs. We are hoping the Nominations Committee can get together at the August conference and get that fleshed out and brought to the Board.

3. Implementing the 2009 Standard

- The AC held two "special" meetings in June, for a total of four. It rejected a recommendation from the LAS EC to utilize a hybrid standard, consisting of the 2009 TNI standard for labs and ABs but the 2003 NELAC standard for PT aspects, and instead adopted a motion clarifying its rolling implementation, by mutually recognizing accreditations issued in compliance with the 2003 NELAC standard or the 2009 TNI Standard for a period of at least two years to allow all Accreditation Bodies to adopt the standard into laws or regulations. The Council is also voting on this motion:
 - As they implement the 2009 TNI Standards, the NELAP Accreditation Council requests that PT providers annotate their electronic reports with an asterisk or other demarcation so as to identify any analytes reported with a less than value, i.e., "<," having an assigned concentration greater than zero, and found acceptable according to the 2009 Standards.

The AC voted that moving forward with the 2009 Standard is the right thing to do, even knowing that some would not be able to due to political climates and regulation changes. Best thing to do is to clarify what we mean by the rolling implementation discussed at Savannah. As an AB we will move toward the 2009 Standard as we can, and will continue to recognize both the TNI Standard and the NELAC Standard. We will put it in writing, in case a state is unable to move forward it will not be a detriment to their laboratories or their accreditation. Also agreed to move forward with the next round of AB evaluations, evaluating all the states to the 2009 TNI Standard – do not need to have a regulation change to do this. The AC will have this rolling implementation for at least 2 years rolling. Reason for the “at least” is because we are not sure all the ABs will be able to change their regs and generally felt it was more important to give everyone the opportunity and continue on with as many ABs as possible and not risk losing any states. Only 1 state voted no because they didn’t like the timeline.

Re: PTs, the AC also received another letter from NY that sounded like they were not moving to the 2009 Standard at all; they would be staying with the 2003 Standard, not just for PTs, but for everything.

A call was held with PT Providers to discuss how they could or would handle the dual PT requirements. PT Providers were asked if they could annotate their electronic reports to the pass/fail of the 2009/2003 Standards to make it easier for the ABs that were required to stay with the 2003 Standard. So far all PTPs have agreed to this and at least one has agreed to a supplemental paper copy as well of any failures or anomalies or special reporting items. Currently there is a vote ongoing to request the PTPs provide these reports. Vote is still open, but looks like it’s going to pass.

Some of the states sent letters to their labs telling them the plan for implementation of the 2009 TNI Standard, and what the labs should do in terms of implementing the Standards and which ones they should follow. Some of the letters encouraged the labs that do business out of state to do due diligence in making sure they are following the correct standards.

Will laboratories doing PTs be report to PTRL or LOQ or both? It depends on who your AB is. If your primary accepts LOQs, and your secondary (i.e., NY) accepts PTRLs, ABs are advising labs to report to the PTRLs so they don’t have to do two PTs.

We should have the letters to the labs posted on the website as well as other information. We need to develop a communications plan and decide what is posted on the website and what it is not.

- In related news, on June 28 New York State sent another letter clarifying their position on PT scoring. A copy of that letter is attached separately. TNI immediately began receiving complaints from labs. The TNI Finance Committee had a call scheduled for June 30 which was changed into an Executive Committee call to discuss this matter. Given the emergency nature of this issue, the committee decided we needed to contact NYS and indicate our concern over the action taken. Jerry was finally able to contact Stephanie on July 7, after she returned from vacation, and informed her that a letter would be forthcoming. That letter was also provided in the transmission of this agenda. In the discussion that followed, Jerry and Stephanie worked out a solution as follows:
 - NYS would retain the right to require labs to report results to the PTRL. Results reported with a < sign would be scored acceptable. Since NYS require all labs to report to the PTRL, a result reported with a < sign greater than the PTRL should never occur. However, if this were to occur, the results should be scored acceptable and then NYS would retain the right to suspend accreditation for not reporting to the PTRL, which is a requirement of the state regulation.
- This language was provided to Stephanie on July 7, but no confirmation if this approach will be acceptable has yet been received. The letter provided by TNI has a request for response by July 12.
- A quality systems checklist was finalized and is now available for download by TNI members after attesting to owning a copy of the TNI standard.

Developments (NY) within the Past Week:

With the receipt of NY's June 28th letter, TNI has received several complaints from labs asking what TNI is going to do about this. Meeting was called and it was decided that we needed to formally response and have them get back to us by July 12, which is when they were going to ship out their next study and move forward. The letter was drafted and Stephanie was contacted to give her the opportunity to respond before sending the letter. Discussion was good and resulted in the letter that was received yesterday, a substantial improvement over the initial June 28th letter. Their largest issue is that they cannot segregate their responsibilities as a PT Provider from their responsibilities as an accreditor easily. Both [Jerry and Stephanie] believe that NY retains the right to require labs to report to specific limits in their regulations; in NY's case to PTRLs. If they have the ability to report to PTRL, they should never get a < value that's reported greater than a PTRL and so we're agonizing over a non-event, something that should never occur.

Is NY still expecting labs accredited thru mutual recognition to adhere to those same requirements? According to Stephanie, NY doesn't believe in mutual recognition and their state rules do not allow for it (this may not actually be the case).

Jerry will send back to Stephanie comments on her draft letter, with possibly the following points:

1. How are they going to treat the different laboratory populations?
2. How are they expecting laboratories that have NY primary accreditation to report their PT results?
3. How are they allowing labs that are not primaries in NY to report PTs?
4. What is their intention for moving toward implementing the 2009 Standard?
5. What things are beyond their control, that are preventing them from moving forward now?

and re-invite Stephanie to discuss these questions with us.

Motion to authorize the Executive Committee to provide comment on draft letter and resolve the issue(s) directly, or to bring back to the Board, if necessary.

Motion: Judy D.

Second: Jack F.

Approved: Unanimous

4. **AB Task Force Report**

The final draft of the Accreditation Body Task Force report was provided the Board on July 7. A session on this report is tentatively scheduled for the Bellevue meeting on August 16.

Reviewing page 6 -- Is the Board in agreement with these options:

1. TRAINING – Ok as is.
2. ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT SERVICES – Ok as is.
3. NATIONAL DATABASE – Dan Hickman and IT Committee.
4. USE OF THIRD PARTY ASSESSORS – Ok as is.
5. USE OF ASSESSMENTS PERFORMED BY OTHER ACCREDITATION BODIES –
 - a. 2nd sentence, 2nd paragraph – “rather than indirectly from the laboratory” -- move this portion of the sentence to the end.
6. SHARING OF INFORMATION AND RESOURCES – Ok as is.
7. SURVEILLANCE ASSESSMENTS – Ok as is.
8. NON-GOVERNMENTAL ACCREDITATION BODIES –
 - a. Change priority to High.
 - b. Closely involve NELAP ABs (along with the AB Task Force as Lead) in this proceeding.

Motion that TNI accept the recommendations of the AB Task Force Report, and direct the Executive Director to take whatever steps necessary to implement the recommendations in report:

Motion: Judy D.
Second: Dave S.
Approved: Unanimous

Steve commends the Task Force for all the hard work that's been done.

Communication strategy surrounding the report (Jerry): Clean up the report and post on the website? Send to committees that have assignments? Keep everything close at hand until Bellevue, get comments/tweaking, then publish?

Send to committee chairs with assignments. Have a member of the ABTF at each meeting in Bellevue. ABTF should set aside some time to work on #8. Forward the report to NELAP as background. Everyone on a committee with an assignment should get an email inviting them to the meeting.

5. **First Quarter Financial Report**

The board reviewed the first quarter financial report.

6. **Program Reports**

See Attachment 1.

7. **Next Meeting**

August 10, 2011, 1pm EST

Attachment 1 PROGRAM REPORTS

CONSENSUS STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT

- The PT Committee plans to have its Working Draft Standard (WDS) for Volume 1, Module 1; Volume 2, Module 2, and Volumes 3 and 4 completed and posted on the TNI website for public comment in July, 2011. The Committee will review the changes proposed along with the reasons for the changes during its scheduled meeting at the TNI/NEMC Forum in Bellevue, WA.

The PT Committee is continuing with the WDS for Whole Effluent Toxicology and other sciences including radiochemistry and asbestos. The Committee plans to issue a separate module for Whole Effluent Toxicology but the time line for this and other changes is not known at this time.

- The QS Expert Committee has posted its new WDS on the website. Most of the changes are provided for clarification of language in the current TNI Standard and for inclusion of ISO language. The QS session at the August meeting in Bellevue, WA will be a forum for presentation and discussion of the comments on the WDS and will present the opportunity to move the WDS forward to a Voting Draft Standard for consideration at the Winter TNI meeting.
- The revision cycle of the FSMO standard (V1 and V2) is underway and the Committee is expecting comments from the EPA Office of Air and DOD. It is hoped to have these comments by July or August when the WDS may be revised. The training procedures have been reviewed. There continues to be a lot of advocacy planned, including an EPA Region 6 meeting in Dallas in October.
- The Stationary Source Audit Sample program was approved by EPA on May 17. The committee is now working on the SSAS Table, which will also have to be submitted to EPA for approval. The accreditation process for providers by A2LA is pending, but it is not yet clear if ACLASS will be able to provide this accreditation as there is no mention of it on their website.
- The Environmental Measurement Methods Committee continues to work on the background guidance document for calibration, and has developed an outline for a TNI standard. This will be developed during the Committee's session at the Bellevue, WA meeting. This standard will likely be a module separated from the QS standard that can be "plugged in" to the laboratory volume.

NEFAP Executive Committee

- Conflict of Interest Forms have been completed and all evaluation material has now been forwarded to the Lead Evaluators this week.
- Document review and preliminary letters of acceptance are hoped to be completed by Bellevue.
- A nominating committee is being formed to prepare for the election of new members on the NEFAP Executive Board.

Field Activities Expert Committee (FAC)

- Comments are being received for consideration in the update of the 2007 Standard. The standard will be split into sections for various members to do a more detailed review of the standard.
- The "NEFAP Training Oversight Subcommittee" is still working on written procedures on how to determine training needs and review training proposals submitted for review. The procedures have been distributed for review.
- The updated NEFAP brochure is just about complete and will be forwarded to Jerry for printing for Bellevue this week.
- A response to SIR #4 has been completed and is being voted on by e-mail.

NELAP

Accreditation Council

- Eight renewal evaluations are now underway. PA was suspended due to resignation of the Lead Evaluator, but a replacement was finally identified, and the evaluation has resumed. NH is suspended until such time as the Lead Evaluator can return to work (due to MN shutdown) and this also leaves the NY team without the required NELAC assessor.
- One other Lead Evaluator may need to withdraw, that remains to be seen; several states are undergoing layoffs that may impact ABs. Thus far, EPA is steadfastly contributing to each team, although names for the later teams are TBD. The evaluation SOP is being modified to permit the AC to consider "equivalent experience" for team compositions, since an increasing number of AB staff are having difficulty participating due either to workload or travel restrictions.
- The AC held two "special" meetings in June, for a total of four. It rejected a recommendation from the LAS EC to utilize a hybrid standard, consisting of the 2009 TNI standard for labs and ABs but the 2003 NELAC standard for PT aspects, and instead adopted a motion clarifying its rolling implementation, as follows:
 - I move that the NELAP AC clarify its meaning of the "rolling implementation" by mutually recognizing accreditations issued in compliance with the 2003 NELAC standard or the 2009 TNI Standard for a period of at least two years to allow all Accreditation Bodies to adopt the standard into laws or regulations.
- The AC declined to concur with the PT Expert Committee's recommendation to remove WET PT from the AC PT requirements and the FoPT table for WET PT from the NELAP PT part of the website. The PT Expert Committee has been so notified. The reason for rejecting this recommendation was that it would be just one "patch" for an entire standard that is considered unworkable, and it is preferable to revise the entire PT standard to address this and other issues.
- A new SOP was adopted by the AC and forwarded to the Policy Committee for review and approval, SOP 3-108, "Standard Operating Procedure For the Issuance of Provisional Recognition of Accreditation Bodies According to the TNI Standard." This joins the Evaluation SOP (SOP 3-102) and the revised Voting SOP (SOP 3-101) that are in use by the AC, pending final approval.
- TNI's Database Administrator, Dan Hickman, met with the AC to discuss status of the database and to encourage ABs to complete entry of their Fields of Accreditation, since the "demographic" data about accredited labs are mostly complete now. Unexpectedly, a number of ABs indicated that the workload of data entry to permit actual use of the database is unsustainable, since they must concurrently maintain their in-house records of accreditations.
- Finally, the AC considered whether it could offer any advice to the PT Executive Committee regarding how to accommodate the AC's rolling implementation, when the PT program has fully implemented the 2009 TNI Standard. No consensus has been reached but the issue will be carried forward to future meetings.

Laboratory Accreditation System Executive Committee

- Standards Interpretation Request (SIR) process:
 - 3 requests were received in June. Two have been forwarded to Quality Systems for a response and the other is being reviewed for validity as a SIR.
 - A voting summary has been distributed to the NELAP AC. ABs have been asked to access the voting site to finalize their vote so that more final responses can be uploaded to the website before Bellevue. Virginia expressed some concerns on what should be considered a SIR request.
- The Quality Systems checklist was reviewed by the committee.

Technical Assistance Committee

- Quality Manual Template training is planned for the end of the month at the NYAAEL Annual Convention. Oommen Kappil will be helping Ilona with this.
- Plans are being finalized for the Bellevue meeting.
 - Mentoring Session: “Interactive Discussion – Internal Auditing of Your Management System: Examples of Scheduling, Checklists, Root Causes, Corrective Actions and Verifications.”
 - Assessment Forum: Demonstration of Capability, Consistency Improvement task Force, AB Task Force.
- The NELAC 101 Handbook is in to Jan for formatting and will be finalized before August 15.

PROFICIENCY TESTING

- The Chemistry FoPT Subcommittee is continuing to review NPW analytes.
- The Field PT Subcommittee has proposed an FSMO PT table for NEFAP. The Chair is still working with the Chair of the NEFAP Executive Committee to determine if they need to approve it before posting. The effective dates are expected to sometime within the first quarter of 2012.
- The PT Executive Committee contacted the NELAP AC to find out about their intended use of the WET Accreditation FOPT table on the website after July 1, 2011. The NELAP AC would like the table to remain on the website. This has been communicated to the Chairs of the CS Executive Committee and PT Executive Committee. The WET subcommittee is continuing to move forward with the work on the WET FoPT table.
- The DW FoPT table was updated to address the concerns on the VOA and asbestos criteria. The PT Executive Committee voted to accept the changes and this vote will be finalized by e-mail. The table will then be forwarded to the NELAP AC.
- Work is continuing on the FoPT Table Management SOP. A few additional changes have been recommended and Eric will forward a DRAFT copy to the NELAP AC and the NEFAP Executive Committee for comment. This will be a discussion topic in Bellevue.

ADMINISTRATION

Advocacy Committee

- The next newsletter is scheduled to be published on July 15.
- The Advocacy Committee reviewed a table of all state laboratory accreditation programs that was compiled by Suzanne Rachmaninoff. Summary information from this table will be presented in

Seattle. The committee will be developing ideas for how to use the information to facilitate outreach to state programs that are not currently involved in TNI.

- The Advocacy Committee is sponsoring 3 meetings in Seattle; the APHL task force meeting, a meeting of SLAG, and the regular Advocacy Committee meeting.

Policy Committee

- No meeting in June

IT Committee

- No update.

Environmental Measurement Symposium – Bellevue, WA

- Abstracts and biographies are being posted to the NEMC website. Posters are also being finalized – we may have as many as 32.
- There are 52 exhibitors currently registered for the conference. Exhibit kits have been distributed so that exhibitors now have schedule, shipping and electrical information.
- Total registrations for the conference are approaching 300 with 2 weeks to go before the pre-registration deadline.
- The Board will meet on Thursday, August 18 from 4-6 pm.

FEM Cooperative Agreement

- The State Primacy Laboratory Accreditation Task Force (SPLATF) held a “brainstorming” conference call with the purpose of getting ideas for developing an acceptable approach for accreditation of primacy laboratories in the TNI system. Obstacles to be overcome include finding a low-cost way to accredit the laboratories (most DW primacy laboratories are certified by EPA at zero cost), and having a mix of state and/or federal authorities provide this accreditation which must have government authority. During its next conference call the Task Force hopes to select and expand on the more promising approaches.

Educational Delivery System

- The new training website is up and functional and courses are being offered.
- Ilona and Jack Farrell will be working on some webcasts in July for posting to the site.
- LOD/LOQ, QA Manual Template and TNI Standard training are being planned.
- Betsy is following up Richard and Brooke on progress regarding the LOD/LOQ training.

Consistency Improvement Task Force

- The CITF is developing draft recommendations to present at the Seattle meeting. The committee plans to finalize its recommendations after receiving feedback from this meeting.

Membership Report

- Active Members: 856