

TNI Board of Directors Meeting Summary

October 9, 2013

1. Roll Call

Directors	Present
Joe Aiello	
Aaren Alger	X
Steve Arms	
Judith Duncan	X
Zonetta English	X
Jack Farrell	X
Keith Greenaway	X
Sharon Mertens	X
Judy Morgan	
Patsy Root	X
Scott Siders	
Alfredo Sotomayor	X
Dave Speis	
Elizabeth Turner	X
Susan Wyatt	
Ex-Officio Directors	
Brenda Bettencourt	
Brooke Connor	
George Detsis	
Jordan Adelson	X
Staff	
Lynn Bradley	X
Carol Batterton	
Ken Jackson	X
Jerry Parr	X
Ilona Taunton	X
Janice Wlodarski	X

2. Approval of September Minutes

Motion to Approve: Jack Farrell

Second: Judy Duncan

Approved: Unanimous

3. SOP 1-115: Newsletter Preparation

This SOP was reviewed for questions or comments. There were none.

Motion to Approve: Patsy Root

Second: Elizabeth Turner

Approved: Unanimous

4. Impact of Government Shutdown on TNI

EPA sent TNI two letters related to our current assistance agreements informing us we can continue to work during the shutdown, but cannot request any payments to be processed. Based on a cash flow report provided to the Finance Committee, TNI estimates it has sufficient funds to continue work currently underway through the end of the year. However, the Executive Director has requested work on NEMC and any new training efforts be halted until such time as payment requests can be processed to minimize expenses during this time. Work on standards development, NELAP, NEFAP and the P²T program are not affected.

5. Program Reports (Attachment 1)

Attachment 1 PROGRAM REPORTS

CONSENSUS STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT

- At the request of the TNI Board of Directors, the Consensus Standards Development Executive Committee (CSDEC) has set a target date of 2015 for the next published version of the Environmental Sector Standard. This will replace the 2009 standard. The following revised volumes and modules are anticipated:

Volume 1, Management and Technical Requirements for Laboratories Performing Environmental Analysis:

Module 1, Proficiency Testing;
Module 2, Quality Systems General Requirements (the already approved 2012 version);
Module 4, Chemical Testing (Calibration section);
Module 5, Biological Testing; and
Module 6, Radiochemical Testing.

Volume 2, General Requirements for Accreditation Bodies Accrediting Environmental Laboratories:

Module 2, Proficiency Testing.

Volume 3, General Requirements for Environmental Proficiency Test Providers

Volume 4, General Requirements for an Accreditor of Environmental Proficiency Test Providers

In anticipation of these standard revisions, Project initiation Notification System (PINS) forms have been completed for all 4 volumes and submitted to ANSI. These PINS forms will be published by ANSI to allow any interested party to comment on the need for the standard.

- The CSDEC has completed its revision of SOP 2-100 (Procedures Governing Standards Development), and has submitted it to the Policy Committee. When finalized, it will be sent to ANSI for consideration and approval.
- The Laboratory Proficiency Testing (PT) Expert Committee is working on Volume 3 of the Environmental Sector standard. It is the committee's goal to have all volumes complete by the 2014 August meeting in order to meet the 2015 goal for completion and adoption.
- The Chemistry Expert Committee has almost completed its consideration of voters' comments on its Calibration VDS. When changes have been made as a result of the persuasive comments, it will become the Interim Standard.
- The Stationary Source Audit Sample Committee is continuing to review and modify the SSAS standard. The committee has received a report of problems with audit samples. These included: a laboratory receiving reports from a provider with their company name and SSAS Laboratory ID on them, but they had not done the work; receiving a report with the incorrect audit lot number showing that all audit samples had failed when, in fact, they had all passed; and audit samples inadequately packaged.

- The Radiochemistry Committee is continuing to edit the standard. The committee is planning a Webinar on November 14, 2013 at 1pm EST to present an outline of changes planned for the standard and to get input from stakeholders to get general feedback and comments on needed changes.
- The Microbiology Committee has not met since San Antonio, but will be meeting tomorrow. The meeting last month had to be cancelled. The committee is beginning their review of the standard to begin developing a Working DRAFT standard. The committee will evaluate a time do a stakeholder Webinar to get input on changes needed in the current standard.
- The Third Party Assessor web page has been created and is available under the Technical and Professional Resources button on the TNI home page. An invitation has been sent to all known interested parties, and the NELAP evaluators have been asked to further distribute the link to any who might be interested. This web page will also be mentioned in the NELAP Update in the next TNI newsletter. Two individuals and one organization have submitted completed templates thus far, and these will be posted to the web page soon, if not already.

NEFAP

- The NEFAP EC has not met since San Antonio, but is meeting on Thursday.
- A DRAFT of the charter in the new format has been completed and will be discussed on Thursday for submittal to the Board of Directors.
- Recognition Committee: The committee has submitted questions to the Evaluation Team and is waiting for a response.
- The Evaluation SOP update is still being worked on.
- Continued follow-up on training needs for Recognition Subcommittee. One member still needs to complete the quiz for the webcast, but all subcommittee members have reviewed the webcast or participated in the original Webinar. This item will be discussed at the next meeting.

Field Activities Expert Committee (FAC)

- The FAC has not met since San Antonio, but is meeting next week.
- Information has been pulled to together to move forward on the FSMO tools. The subcommittee will begin meeting again this month. The overall subcommittee concept is that FSMOs walk through a process of determining their needs through a checklist, are provided templates and examples to develop SOPs and policies, and then guided to take the information they prepared and produce a Quality Manual through a template or guidance document. The subcommittee also plans to provide conference calls that people can take advantage of to ask questions while working through their SOPs/Policies and then their Quality Manual.
- The committee is continuing to work with the NEFAP EC on mobile lab issues.
- The standard has been submitted to the CSDP for finalization.
- A draft of the NEFAP brochure has been forwarded to the Advocacy committee and Jerry Parr for finalization and printing. Status on this effort needs to be updated.

NELAP

Accreditation Council

- Three AB evaluations are still in process. All upgraded or revised documents for the new round of evaluations are approved by the AC and have been forwarded to Policy Committee. Individual evaluators are beginning to consider schedules and preferences for their assignments in the new round; these will be ready for approval by the AC, no later than early December. Some teams will have EPA evaluators, others will not, depending on each EPA region's preference.
- The Request for Proposal for a Third Party (contract) Evaluator has been published (see <http://nelac-institute.org/nelap/ab-rfp-docs.php>), and proposals are due by November 4. We anticipate a contract award no later than mid-December. This contracted individual will be the Lead Evaluator for all evaluation teams, with a state person and perhaps an EPA person also on the team. Due to having a single Lead Evaluator, consistency issues should be minimized so that funding previously used for the QAO function may be applied to the contract evaluator instead.
- The AC approved the revised Non-Potable Water Field of Proficiency Testing Table and recommended that PT providers be asked to recalculate the Total Suspended Solids PT results based on the changes approved, and notify ABs of the revised results. All agreed that this extra effort was worthwhile in order to treat laboratories fairly.

Laboratory Accreditation System Executive Committee (LAS EC)

- LAS EC is beginning revisions to the 2008 version of its SOP 3-103, Standards Acceptance, based on the recently approved by CSD EC SOP 2-100, Procedures Governing Standards Development.
- Management and oversight of SIRs continues as new SIRs arrive. Virtually all backlogged SIRs have now been either revised and re-posted to the AC's voting webpage or are being transmitted to the appropriate expert committee for reconsideration. Volunteers have begun drafting a set of Frequently Asked Questions to address some of the thornier issues, even though they may not have been actual requests for interpretation.
- Both the Assessment Forum and the Mentor Session subcommittees have begun planning their new topics for Louisville.

Standards Interpretation Request (SIR) Update:

Total Number	Closed Out	NELAP AC	in Committee	Being Redirected
238	183	42	11	2

- 12 SIRs currently have enough negative votes that it is clear they are not going to be approved. Lynn has been working with the LAS EC, NELAP AC and QS to work through these SIRs and other SIRs that are not moving forward in the voting process. There is consideration to send these back to the expert committee with the comments and see if a solution can be found.
- The PT Expert Committee has submitted responses to outstanding SIRs that Lynn and the LASEC are working through so they can be placed on the table for voting. One was determined to not be a SIR and a letter was sent to the inquirer and it has been closed on the table.
- One more SIR has received 2/3 approval and has been sent out to the NELAP AC for a final opportunity to vote before they are finalized.

- Three SIRs were finalized and language was forwarded to post on the website.
- There is one veto vote that needs to be resolved.
- There is one SIR that has 2/3 vote for approval, but it has a request for discussion before it can be finalized.
- The voting process has been restarted with the updated language. There are 15 SIRs that are requesting discussion in addition to the 12 that have too many negative votes to pass.
- There was 1 new SIR submitted. It was considered to be a SIR and was forwarded to Quality Systems for a response.

PROFICIENCY TESTING

PT Program Executive Committee (PTP EC)

- A subcommittee has been formed to look at adding method/technology to the FoPT tables. This is in response to a discussion that started as a result of a NELAP AC complaint that the FoPT tables were not in compliance with the standard.
- The TSS FoPT limits were examined after 4 formal complaints were received. The decision was made to put the previous limits back in place, but keep the new concentration limits. The FoPT Subcommittee finalized a recommendation after discussion of the issue, the PTP Executive Committee had a special meeting to review the issue and start the voting process and then the NELAP AC was able to start their approval process through a special meeting also. The chair and program administrator met with PT Providers and PTPAs and worked through implementation. The updated table is now up on the website and PT Providers are reissuing reports where failures were originally seen that now pass with the older limit.
 - Original Issue: Two PT providers saw a significant increase in the failure rate and after review it was found that a 5% bias was not taken into account in setting the new limits. There were also concerns that TSS was not reviewed as thoroughly as the other solids before the limits were updated. In all meetings to discuss this issue, it was emphasized that changes to failure rates after limits are updated can be expected and this would not be a reason to go through the process we just went through without extenuating circumstances. The TSS issue had extenuating circumstances
- The Chemistry FoPT Subcommittee is continuing to work on the Solid Chemicals and Materials FoPT table. They have added 2 members and two others have been invited.
- The PTP SOP Subcommittee is continuing work on SOP updates. The next SOP being updated is the FoPT Limits SOP. A member of the Chemistry FoPT subcommittee has been invited to help with this update.
- The committee is still looking for additional AB members.

ADMINISTRATION

Advocacy Committee

- The committee has reviewed the EPA response to ELAB and will give the TNI Board a proposal for a new outreach effort to non-NELAP states. The proposal will recommend a series of workshops around the country to get input on the state of national accreditation so that we can better focus TNI's outreach to non-NELAP states.
- The next newsletter is on track to be published November 1. Martina McGarvey is the editor.
- The Advocacy Committee has revised the small lab management systems position paper and sent it back to the Policy Committee.
- The Advocacy Committee will begin reviewing a draft position paper on the PT program received from the PT Executive Committee.

Non-Governmental Accreditation Bodies

- The NGAB working group is continuing to draft the Evaluation SOP for NGABs. The complete draft SOP will be presented in Louisville.

Policy Committee

- The Policy Committee has undertaken revisions to the TNI Bylaws that will allow Ex Officio members to vote and also permit individual committees to expand their stakeholder categories, with Board approval, when the committee's activities require additional or different perspectives. There is strong sentiment that, if allowed to vote, Ex Officio Board members should have their appointments ratified by the TNI membership, just as other Board members are elected. Since the member vote for Board members won't occur until early spring, there is time to consider this revision carefully and make appropriate updates throughout the document. We now believe that draft revisions to the Bylaws should be available for Board review by the November 2013 Board meeting.
- SOP 1-115, TNI Newsletter Preparation and Distribution, was approved upon its submission by the Advocacy Committee and will be presented to the Board for its consideration at the October meeting.

Training

- Upcoming Training Classes:
 - Nov 1 – Brown Bag (Jack Farrell)
 - Nov 8 (4 sessions over next 5 weeks) – TNI Standard (Silky)
 - Dec 5 – Brown Bag (Jack Farrell)
- The IC training by Dr. Gandhi was completed. Certificates have been issued.
- In Progress: The review of the ethics training has been expanded to add information about a 5 minute portion of the training where the microphone was not working. Language has been agreed on to provide information about using the Ethics training for annual and refresher training. Jack has decided to prepare a 5 minute webcast that will be added to the training. Update: Jack and Ilona will work on this when they meet in late November (or earlier if schedules work).
- 2013 goals: These have been delayed until the government has determined a budget.

NEMC

- A few presentations still need to be reformatted to two slides per page handouts for the 2013 Conference Proceedings. Work on the Conference Proceedings will move forward after the government has determined a budget. These will be forwarded at that time.
- William provided a list of presentations that needed to be converted to PDF that need to be checked to make sure they are current. This will be done after the government has determined a budget.
- 11 papers for 2013 have been submitted.
- Effort has been made to update the website and this will be completed after the government has determined a budget.

Complaints

- Three complaints were received concerning the TSS issue discussed above under the PTP Executive Committee Report. The issue has been resolved and closed. An e-mail was sent to each complainant to inform them of the resolution.

Membership Report

- There were 2 new committee applications this month. Requests were for FAC and SSAS. All information was forwarded to the chairs for the committees. Chairs and Program Administrators were asked for status updates on applications that were still listed as only forwarded. The table was updated with status changes and additions to committees.
- Active Members: 873