

TNI Board of Directors Meeting Summary

March 9, 2016

1. Roll Call

Directors	Present
Jordan Adelson	X
Aaren Alger	X
Steve Arms	
Justin Brown	X
Scot Cocanour	X
George Detsis	X
Jack Farrell	X
Keith Greenaway	
Myron Gunsalus	X
Daniel Lashbrook	X
Judy Morgan	X
Lara Phelps	X
Patsy Root	
Scott Siders	X
Alfredo Sotomayor	X
Dave Speis	X
Ex-Officio Member(s)	
Sharon Mertens	X
Staff	
Lynn Bradley	X
Carol Batterton	
Ken Jackson	
Jerry Parr	X
Ilona Taunton	X
Janice Wlodarski	X

2. Welcome New Directors

We welcome Daniel Lashbrook to the Board of Directors and welcome back to Scott Siders on the Board of Directors.

3. 2016 Officer Election

The Officers shall be a Chair, Past-Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. Other Officers may be established by the Board of Directors. The Officers, with exception of the Past-Chair, shall be elected annually at the first meeting of the newly elected Board of Directors, from among its members

Chair: Alfredo Sotomayor
Past-Chair: Sharon Mertens
Vice-Chair: Aaren Algers
Secretary: Patsy Root
Treasurer: Dave Speis

Motion to accept 2016 Officer Election: Judy Morgan
Second: Scott Cocanour
Approved: Unanimous

4. Approval of February Minutes

Changes: None

Motion to Approve: Scott Siders
Second: Myron Gunsalus
Approved: Unanimous
Abstentions: Dave Speis

5. 2017 Board Election (Attachment 1)

A total of 73 votes were cast, 34 in Tulsa and 39 on-line. This is double 2016, but less than 10% of the membership. Every candidate was overwhelmingly elected, with 2 or fewer negative votes for any individual. Attachment 1 lists the current Board.

There was one computer at the conference and people had to stand in line to vote.

Suggestions for try to increase voting at the next election:

- Keep the computer by the registration desk so people can vote when they register.
- Keep one in the Exhibit Hall
- Give away a free drink ticket (or something else) to encourage participation
- Email the ballot
- Include a paper ballot inside the registration packet.
- Add the ballot to the evaluation packet.
- "Campaign moments" to meet/introduce the candidates at different times of the conference.

Let's allow the nominating committee to take these suggestions and come up with a plan for improving the turnout for next year's election.

6. Organizational Placement of the TNRC (Attachment 2)

In developing the concept for recognition of Non-Governmental Accreditation Bodies (NGAB), the NGAB working group learned that some state accreditation bodies (AB) could not allow an NGAB to be a member of the NELAP Accreditation Council. Therefore, the NGAB working group recommended the establishment of a separate approval and oversight body for NGABs reporting directly to the TNI Board. The role of this approval committee, The Non-Governmental Accreditation Body Recognition Committee (TNRC), is to provide a determination that an NGAB meets the requirements of the TNI Standard and is recognized to grant accreditation to laboratories in conformance with the applicable TNI standards for the environmental laboratory sector.

In July of this year, TNI received a complaint alleging among other things, that NGAB recognition and the TNRC constituted a "core program" that is not authorized by the TNI Bylaws. The Policy Committee appointed an investigation team to look into this issue and make a report to the TNI Board. The investigation team concluded that the NGAB recognition effort did not constitute a core program, and the team recommended having the TNRC operate in association with the Laboratory Accreditation System Executive Committee (LASEC) and not report to the TNI Board of Directors. They further recommended that this activity be managed by the TNRC in association

with the LASEC in an arrangement similar to that of the NELAP Accreditation Council. Following the Board's review and acceptance of the investigation team's report, they directed the NGAB working group to prepare a concept paper outlining options for placement of the NGAB accreditation activity within TNI's organizational structure. This document (Attachment 2) outlines the options considered; along with pros and cons, and a recommended course of action.

Discussion:

What were the objectives of putting this under the LASEC?

- Some states feel that placing the TNRC under the LASEC would not make a sufficiently clear distinction between a government AB and a non-government AB. This would require a lot more control and there were members of that group that were uncomfortable about it.
- Also, others felt that this placement was not sufficiently addressing other use of the organization in terms of combining similar activities under one single umbrella – that all regulatory programs would be under one structure and this would be the place where the NGAB would best reside.
- It was also felt that placing it under the LASEC would be confusing not just for the NGABS but for the laboratories.

It is important to recognize the roll and responsibilities of the LASEC, and, one of the primary objectives of this committee is to bring forth other inputs beyond just the AC and the states. The non-government group is another form of outside-the-state entities. We're bringing forth input from the labs, consultants, and other entities beside just the states. Knowing the roles and responsibilities of the LASEC, it would be really wrong not to put it under there.

This was the reason the investigative committee placed the TNRC under the LASEC and also echoes the sentiments of many of the people in both workgroups. Retaining the TNRC under the Board for the moment, doesn't preclude this to be revisited in the future, and in fact, is part of it as well.

If we retain this with the Board, do we need another Program Administrator and project support? And how do we maintain consistency with LASEC is doing and the AC in terms of decisions and SIRs adopted, and review of the Standard and those types of thing?

To clarify, this committee is only going to meet three times in four years to make three decisions, at least in the current form. There should not be any staff support needed. There are some SOPS and things being put in place, work that was done by the work group – if some of this needed to change, we would bring it up as an issue in front of the Board and ask the Board to appoint a task force to work on whatever that issue might be.

Aaren plans to hold an "AB Summit" so to speak, and invite the TNI NGABs (wherever they end up being) to attend AC calls on a case by case basis depending on what we are going to be discussing. Contract assessors are already being invited to these calls so it won't be a problem to also include the NGABs to ensure consistency and keep an open dialogue to make sure we are not running two different programs with different expectations for laboratories. It would be great if this was put in writing so that it continues should things change, i.e., Aaren chooses to move on to another job.

Also, when the evaluation groups are put together, there is a requirement that a NELAP AB be on that group, and also that the lead evaluator is the same between the three NGABs. This will help to build some consistency too.

Motion to accept recommendation of keeping the TNRC under the Board of Directors:

Moved: Aaren Alger
Second: Daniel Lashbrook
Abstain: ---
Approved: ---

Individual Vote:

Jordan Adelson – Yes
Aaren Alger – Yes
Justin Brown – Yes
Scott Cocanour – Yes
George Detsis – No
Jack Farrell – No
Myron Gunsalus – Did not vote
Daniel Lashbrook – Yes
Judy Morgan – Abstain
Lara Phelps – No
Scott Siders – No
Dave Speis – No

5 No's, 5 Yes's. The Motion does not pass.

Suggestion to do an electronic vote for those that were not here to vote? No, they would not have the benefit of the conversation by which to vote. Table until next month? There are 5 people that have not voted. Do just they vote or does everyone have the opportunity to change their vote? What do the Bylaws say? The Bylaws are pretty open that the Board can choose how the vote is taken.

We have a quorum, we didn't say we would open this up for electronic vote, so this vote stands as Nay, the recommendation of the workgroup is not accepted.

Next steps: The workgroup needs to come back with another recommendation.

Motion that the TNRC be placed under the LASEC as suggested by the NGAB Complaint Investigation Team:

Moved: George
Second: Jack, for discussion
Approved: ---

Discussion:

Because we know there are parties opposed to this, I propose that we not vote until we do more exploration to see what the fallout would be to the TNI organization. And in addition, I think we should call for the entire TNI Board of Directors to be available to be a part of the discussion and vote.

We do have more work to do. The fallout is only one piece. And we can't run the organization by worrying about what the fallout is going to be. What's going to work for the organization? Need to discuss all of these issues that seem to be coming out. Are they real? Is there a way around them? Should we be doing something else?

Suggested modification to the motion – we continue to explore the issues that are keeping us from placing this group in what we think is the proper location from an organizational structure. What and how much of this is real and what can we do about it?

The NGAB Workgroup has done all this homework and this is the outcome.

But there are no facts. There is an executive summary, but no facts listed.

Clarification: We did not vote today not to put the TNRC under the TNI Board – it is currently under the TNI Board. We are not accepting the recommendation of the group to keep it under the Board.

We need to solicit greater input from the general TNI membership. For the meantime it will stay under the Board. More discussion needs to occur about where it will go from there.

Additional questions and comments:

- When will we be able to make a decision?
- Do we have a mechanism to get that kind of feedback? Bounce it back to the workgroup?
- Motion to come up with a mechanism to solicit input, put it on the next agenda for people to come and make their case?
- Kick it back to the workgroup for more information. Earlier vote may have been premature.
- Motion of a sunset for placement of the TNRC.
- Is there some issue underneath all this that we have not identified? Do we need to identify the issue that is causing this dissention? Once identified, the path will then show itself.

Regarding the second motion to place the TNRC under the LASEC: There needs to be more discussion before any other vote takes place.

Next Steps: We will take the information we have heard here and bring it up as an agenda item at the next meeting.

7. **2017 Environmental Measurement Symposium (Attachment 3)**

Planning for the summer conference is well underway. On the NEMC side, we have received 143 abstracts for oral presentations that are being organized into 27 Breakout Sessions, a training course of CLP data review, and panels on citizen science, data validation and legacy obstacles. We also have 32 poster presentations. All of the abstracts should be available by April 1, and we also plan to open up conference registration around then.

On the TNI side, we are planning 17 meetings, including a special day-long session on the 2016 standard. We are also planning a training course on the current standard focused on California laboratories.

Attachment 3 is the preliminary schedule that should be finalized in about two weeks.

8. California Update

California ELAP is offering two free workshops covering the *2009 TNI Laboratory Standard*. The workshops will be led by quality management systems expert, Chris Gunning, of A2LA. The NELAC Institute (TNI) Executive Director Jerry Parr will be in attendance to assist with TNI-specific topics and questions. The TNI laboratory standard is among three accreditation standard options under consideration by ELAP for adoption. The workshops will be held on April 5 in Rancho Cordova and April 7 in Costa Mesa. <http://bit.ly/21TYrT7>

9. EPA Soliciting Individuals to Serve on ELAB

ELAB is a multi-stakeholder federal advisory committee that provides independent advice and recommendations to the EPA Administrator, Science Advisor, and Forum on Environmental Measurements (FEM) about cross-cutting issues related to enhancing EPA's measurement programs, and facilitating the operation and expansion of national environmental accreditation. EPA is seeking nominees with knowledge in methods development; measurements; monitoring and regulatory programs; quality systems; and environmental accreditation. <http://1.usa.gov/1QEaDjJ>

10. Program Reports (Attachment 4)

**Attachment 1
 TNI Board of Directors 2016**

First	Last	Organization	Stakeholder	Subgroup	Balance			Term Expiration*		
					AB	Lab	Other	2017	2018	2019
Aaren	Alger	Pennsylvania DEP	AB	NELAP AB	1			1		
Steve	Arms		Other				1			1
Justin	Brown	EMT	Accredited Organization	FSMO		1		1		
Scott	Cocanour	Promium	Other	LIMS Vendor			1	1		
Daniel	Lashbrook	Eurofins Eaton Analytical	Accredited Organization	Commercial		1				1
Alfredo	Sotomayor	Milwaukee Metropolitan	Accredited Organization	State agency		1				1
Judy	Morgan	Pace	Accredited Organization	Commercial		1				1
David	Speis	Eurofins QC	Accredited Organization	Commercial		1			1	
Keith	Greenaway	ANAB	AB	Third party AB	1			1		
Myron	Gunsalus	Kansas DHE	AB	NELAP AB	1				1	
Jack	Farrell	Analytical Excellence	Other	Consulting			1		1	
Patsy	Root	IDEXX	Other	Vendor			1			
George	Detsis	DOE	Other	DOE			1			
Jordan	Adelson	DOD	Other	DOD			1			
Lara	Phelps	EPA	Other	EPA			1			
					3	5	7	4	3	4
Balance										
					AB = 3					
* Term expires in March of the year shown					Lab = 7					
					Other = 7					
As updated on 02/17/16					Open = 4					
Non-Voting										
Sharon	Mertens	Milwaukee Metropolitan		Past President						

Attachment 2 Organizational Options for TNRC

Background:

In developing the concept for recognition of Non-Governmental Accreditation Bodies (NGAB), the NGAB working group learned that some state accreditation bodies (AB) could not allow an NGAB to be a member of the NELAP Accreditation Council. Therefore, the NGAB working group recommended the establishment of a separate approval and oversight body for NGABs reporting directly to the TNI Board. The role of this approval committee, The Non-Governmental Accreditation Body Recognition Committee (TNRC) is to provide a determination that an NGAB meets the requirements of the TNI standard and is recognized to grant accreditation to laboratories in conformance with the applicable TNI standards for the environmental laboratory sector.

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Following the Board's review and acceptance of the investigation team's report, they directed the NGAB working group to prepare a concept paper outlining options for placement of the NGAB accreditation activity within TNI's organizational structure. This document outlines the options considered; along with pros and cons, and a recommended course of action.

Discussion:

The TNRC and NGAB working group met jointly and discussed options for organizational alignment of the TNRC for NGAB recognition. Possible options identified for organizational placement of the NGAB recognition effort included:

- 1) Leave the TNRC in its current location reporting to the TNI Board of Directors
- 2) Place the TNRC under the LASEC, but separate from the NELAP AC
- 3) Combine all of TNI's recognition/accreditation activities into one program.
- 4) Combine all of TNI's recognition/accreditation activities into regulated and non-regulated accreditation programs

After initial discussion, Options 3 and 4 were eliminated from consideration as they were not deemed feasible to implement at this time. However, these options will be set aside to discuss at future TNI strategic planning meetings. The pros and cons of Options 1 and 2 are discussed below.

TNRC reports to the Board of Directors

As mentioned above, the TNRC currently reports to the TNI Board of Directors. It was placed in this location to minimize any conflicts with the NELAP AC and also to allow the TNI Board to have close oversight of a developing program. However, having the NGAB recognition effort organizationally separate from the NELAP Accreditation Council could lead to inconsistencies developing between the operations of the TNRC and the NELAP AC. This organizational alignment is not consistent with how other recognition efforts are organized within TNI, and would also require that TNI maintain a separate administrative support structure for the TNRC.

TNRC is part of the LASEC, but separate from the NELAP AC

Placing the TNRC under the umbrella of the LASEC is consistent with the current organization scheme in TNI and will minimize administrative support requirements. It will also allow for better coordination and consistency with NELAP. However, at least one member of the NELAP AC has indicated that an alignment placing the TNRC under the LASEC, but separate from the NELAP AC, would not be acceptable to his state. Additionally, one member of the NGAB working group and TNRC did not support this option because they felt it could create more confusion for laboratories.

Recommendation:

The NGAB working group and TNRC believe that in light of concerns expressed by some members of the NELAP AC, NGAB working group and TNRC, keeping the NGAB recognition activities under the TNI Board is the best option at this time. The Board will need to take steps to ensure that the necessary coordination and consistency in recognition of accreditation bodies accrediting to the TNI laboratory standard occurs with this arrangement. After the first group of NGABs is recognized and there is some operational history, this structure can be re-visited.

Attachment 3
2017 Environmental Measurement Symposium
PRELIMINARY SCHEDULE

Monday, August 8

10:30 — 5:00 Academic Poster Session

8:00 Welcome

8:15 Presentation of the 2016 Charlie Carter Award

8:20 — 8:45 Keynote Address:
Richard Burrows, TestAmerica Laboratories, Inc.

9:00 — 12:00 Concurrent Sessions

- NEMC: Academic Research Topics in Environmental Measurement and Monitoring
- NEMC: Best Practices for Reference Materials
- NEMC: Current Trends in Laboratory Information Management Systems
- NEMC: Forensic Chemistry
- TNI: Laboratory Accreditation System Executive Committee
- TNI: Mentor Session
- TNI: NELAP Accreditation Council

12:00 — 1:00 Lunch Provided

12:00 — 1:00 TNI: Consensus Standards Development Program Executive Committee (Working Lunch)

1:00 — 5:00 Concurrent Sessions

- ELAB: Environmental Laboratory Advisory Board
- NEMC: Collaborative Efforts to Improve Environmental Monitoring
- NEMC: Topics in Drinking Water
- NEMC: Use of Continuous Monitoring for Compliance Monitoring
- TNI: Assessment Forum
- TNI: Field Activities Committee
- TNI: NEFAP Executive Committee

5:30 — 7:00 Opening Reception and Exposition

Tuesday, August 9

8:00 — 5:00 Poster Session and Exposition

8:00 Welcome

8:15 — 8:45 Keynote Address:
Rajul Pandya, Citizen Science Association

9:00 — 12:00 Concurrent Sessions

- NEMC: Contaminated Sediments
- NEMC: Metals and Metals Speciation Analysis in Environmental Samples

- NEMC: Roundtable on Citizen Science and Technology Innovation
- NEMC: Topics in Shale Gas
- TNI: Assessment Forum: Assessing Whole Effluent Toxicity Laboratories
- TNI: Proficiency Testing Program Executive Committee

12:00 — 1:00 Lunch Provided

1:00 — 3:00 Concurrent Sessions

- NEMC: Air Methods & Monitoring (Session 1)
- NEMC: Citizen Science
- NEMC: Overcoming Legacy Obstacles
- NEMC: Verification and Review of Data for Chlorinated Dioxins, Furans and PCB Congeners
- TNI: Whole Effluent Toxicity Expert Committee
- TNI: Non-Governmental Accreditation Body Recognition Committee

3:30 — 5:00 Innovative New Technology Showcase

5:30 — 7:00 Innovative New Technology Showcase Reception

Wednesday, July 15

8:00 — 5:00 Poster Session and Exposition

8:15 Welcome

8:30 — 12:00 General Session: Citizen Science, Technology Innovation: What's Next

- Panel TBD

12:00 — 1:00 Lunch on Your Own

OR

Attend a Free Lunch Seminar with

FMS Corporation:

OR

Waters Corporation:

1:00 — 5:00 Concurrent Sessions

- NEMC: Air Methods & Monitoring (Session 2)
- NEMC: California Efforts to Revitalize the Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program
- NEMC: Changing the Paradigm for Water Pollution Monitoring
- TNI: Radiochemistry Expert Committee – The 2016 Laboratory Standard
- TNI: Laboratory Accreditation Body Expert Committee
- TNI: **Field Sampling and Measurement Organization (FSMO) Accreditation Workshop**

Thursday, August 11

8:00 — 5:00 Poster Session

8:00 Welcome

8:15 — 8:45 Keynote Address:
Shane Snyder, University of Arizona

9:00 — 12:00 Concurrent Sessions

- NEMC: Data Quality, Management and Validation (Session 1)
- NEMC: Non-Targeted Compound Screening
- NEMC: Sensors and Field Analytical Chemistry
- NEMC/TNI: NEMC Steering Committee and Conference Planning
- TNI: Proficiency Testing Expert Committee – The 2016 Laboratory Standard
- TNI: Quality Systems Expert Committee – The 2016 Laboratory Standard
- TNI: Stationary Source Audit Sample Committee

12:00 — 1:30 Lunch Provided

1:30 — 5:00 Concurrent Sessions

- NEMC: Advances in Sample Preparation and Clean-up
- NEMC: Data Quality, Management and Validation (Session 2)
- NEMC: Operational and Advocacy Issues Impacting the Environmental Laboratory Industry
- TNI: Chemistry Expert Committee – The 2016 Laboratory Standard
- TNI: Microbiology Expert Committee – The 2016 Laboratory Standard
- TNI: General Session (Committee Chairs Report)

Friday, August 12

8:00 — 12:00 Poster Session

8:00 Welcome

8:15 — 8:45 Keynote Address: TBD

9:00 — 12:00 Concurrent Sessions

- NEMC: Data Quality, Management and Validation (Session 3)
- NEMC: Applications of Quantitative Polymerase Chain Reaction (qPCR) Methods for Microbiological Contaminants
- NEMC: High Performance Liquid Chromatography in Environmental Monitoring
- TNI: Advocacy Committee

Attachment 4 PROGRAM REPORTS

CONSENSUS STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT

- The Chemistry Committee has submitted for Policy Committee approval its intent to prepare a guidance document on the new V1M4 module. This was requested by LASEC. Meanwhile the committee has begun deliberation on the content and format of a guidance document. At the Tulsa meeting the Chemistry Committee presented a preliminary draft of a PowerPoint presentation on the new standard. Input received at the meeting is allowing the committee to continue its development of those slides that will be used in a webinar and other training sessions on the standard.
- The Proficiency Testing Committee has experienced a short delay in its completion of its consideration of comments on the Volume 3 and 4 Voting Draft Standards. The committee met last week to re-consider some of the comments, and it will meet again this week to hopefully finalize the response-to-comments document, and release it for publication. This will allow the two volumes to be released as Interim Standards for voting. Also, Volume 1 Module 1 and Volume 2 Module 2 will be voted out of committee as Final Standards.
- The Quality Systems Committee has completed 2 more SIRs and only 3 are left. An Interim Standard received no comments or negative votes. This standard has been finalized and is ready for LASEC review. The committee will begin work on the Handbook in March. It looks like new committee members will balance out the membership issue discussed last month.
- The Laboratory Accreditation Body Committee updated its charter. LAB now has a second member from the "other" stakeholder category and can bring on additional members from other stakeholder categories, so that it will have a full complement of active members as it gears up for revising Volume 2 of the TNI ELSS once the 2016 standard is completed.
- The WET committee chair has been invited to participate in the March ELAB meeting to discuss the white paper as presented to EPA's DMRQA/PT program last fall. This committee is also gearing up to revise its module (V1M7) of the TNI ELSS as soon as the 2016 standard is completed.
- The Radiochemistry committee is continuing to discuss tools such as audit checklists, the small lab handbook and trainings to help with the implementation of the new standard. The committee is reviewing the Best Lab Practices document Advocacy has been working on. They have concerns that will be expressed to Advocacy.
- The Microbiology committee is still finishing up work on comments. There were four similar comments submitted that the committee feels are non-persuasive. Robin is contacting the submitters for clarification and then the committee will prepare a final comment response document and move the Standard on to a final Standard. The committee is continuing to work on the Small Lab Handbook.

NEFAP Executive Committee

- The committee has a new Vice Chair – Justin Brown.
- The strategic planning/marketing subcommittee is continuing to put plans for marketing in place as they start implementing opportunities that arise. The subcommittee is working on the Workshop planned for Orange County. Ilona let the committee know that the workshop will be done through TNI instead of as an NEMC session. Funding for this effort was further discussed at the last subcommittee meeting and the subcommittee plans to do a webinar workshop. Some of the webinar funds will be used to cover any additional costs for doing the workshop in Orange County.

- Membership of the Recognition Committee is being reviewed. One member resigned and a new member needs to be added.
- The Mobile Lab Subcommittee did not meet in January or February. The Scope for this subcommittee will be reviewed in March. Paul Bergeron (Chair) noted that Dan Hickman has been working on how Mobile Labs are entered into LAMS.
- Implementation timing issues for the new Standard were discussed and it was felt the current implementation date should be fine because there are no major changes.
- The committee finished review of the flow charts for ABs and will discuss where there is information should be published in March.
- Kim will be updating the Nomination SOP for review at the March meeting. The 2016 Nomination Committee needs this update to proceed in their task.
- Doug Leonard discussed impact on the NEFAP EC given the recent LAB acquisition by ANAB. It will still take time for policies and procedures to merge, so they should be thought of as separate, but operating under the same umbrella company. Updates will be provided as they become available. Only one AB fee will be provided going forward and Zaneta Popovska will represent ANAB (the umbrella) on the NEFAP EC. Impact of this change on membership and the Nominating SOP will be reviewed by Kim for discussion at the next meeting.

Field Activities Expert Committee (FAC)

- The committee decided to form a subcommittee to work on the Scope Guidance document. Kevin will pull this subcommittee together in the next few weeks for their first meeting.
- Work on the ANSI application will begin in April.
- The committee plans to re-establish the FSMO Implementation Tools Subcommittee to begin evaluating development of tools to help FSMOs apply for accreditation. One tool being discussed is a Quality Manual Template.

NELAP

Accreditation Council

- There has been no change in the status of evaluations since the February Board meeting.
- The Council did not meet in February but the small workgroup discussed with the Finance Committee possible changes to the evaluation process for the next cycle that begins in December 2016.
- The AC has accepted with approval the first of a total of four recommendations from LASEC about adopting completed portions or modules of the revised standard. Additional recommendations are under consideration, as the states have time to review the documents in detail. To clarify, each document will be reviewed individually, but the final adoption of a new standard will only occur after the complete standard "package" is provided to the LASEC and the AC for final review and consideration.

Laboratory Accreditation System Executive Committee (LAS EC)

- LASEC continues to review revised standard documents in order to provide recommendations to the NELAP AC. Currently, the Detection & Quantitation standard (a portion of V1M4) is under review, and once that recommendation is finalized and delivered, the entire Chemistry module will be reviewed as a whole for a more comprehensive recommendation.
- Planning for the Assessment Forum and Mentor Session in southern California is already underway. The WET Expert Committee is particularly interested in using a portion of the Assessment Forum to improve the understanding and assessment of WET laboratories.
- LASEC's review and development of two policies for the AC is temporarily side-lined in favor of more pressing and time-sensitive issues, but will resume when the members who are doing the work of drafting and editing are no longer consumed by other aspects of their committee responsibilities and their "day jobs." Once finalized and approved by LASEC, these two policies will be forwarded to the AC for its consideration.
- Standards Interpretation Request (SIR) Update:

Total Number	Closed Out	LASEC Review	NELAP AC Voting	Expert Committees	PT Program
284	258	13	5	6	2

PROFICIENCY TESTING

- Maria Friedman has been re-elected as Chair of the PTPEC for 2016.
- The committee worked on language for the PT Expert Committee. The language will be used in the Volume 4 update.
- The committee is continuing to collect information and ideas to re-evaluate how FoPT tables have been updated in the past. It is currently a very time consuming and costly process. There may be more effective ways to target problem or potentially problematic analytes and concentrate on these during updates. There have been concerns expressed about whether prep methods should be considered in PT limits. Most feel is not required, so it would be difficult to collect the information. This will be re-evaluated at a future date.
- In Progress: The NELAP AC has approved the Analyte Request submitted by Carl Kircher to add cis-1,3-Dichloropropene and trans-1,3-Dichloropropene to the SCM FoPT Table at the low-level and medium-level concentration ranges. A request for data is being prepared for the PT Providers. The data will be given to the Chemistry FoPT Subcommittee for review and recommendation.
- The SOP Subcommittee did not meet in February. They are still working on addressing Policy Committee comments to SOPs. They have also started working on the evaluation checklist for the next round of PTPA evaluations. Ilona will work on a DRAFT evaluation procedure with the goal to combine the evaluation with a NELAP Evaluation. This DRAFT will be worked on in March and April.

- Still in Progress: The WETT FoPT Subcommittee previously approached Brian with DMR to find out if the instructions in question can be added to the DMR instructions. Instructions were included in the most recent DMR instructions and the subcommittee needs to review these to determine if this closes the issue or if there is still something that needs to be done. Once this is completed, the continued need for this committee will be reviewed.
- The FoPT Table Format Subcommittee. CAS numbers have been getting added to the FoPT Tables.
- The Microbiology FoPT Subcommittee has started meeting again. An update will be provided next month.
- The Chemistry FoPT Subcommittee finished review of SCM data. Maria will be asking them to update the SCM FoPT Table to delete analytes that are still in the ARA process. Once this is received the table will be forwarded to the NELAP AC for approval.
- The 2016 Charter is being voted on for finalization.

ADMINISTRATION

Advocacy Committee

- The Advocacy Committee reviewed the proposals that TNI received for Winter 2017 meeting locations. Consensus was that the proposals for Albuquerque, NM, Houston, TX, and Savannah, GA, were the most viable, with a slight preference for Houston. Jerry will get further information to refine the proposals and present to the Finance Committee for a final decision.
- TNI will be sending speakers to the following regional meetings:
 - Oregon Laboratory Association – May,
 - Kansas Laboratory Education Association – May,
 - Texas Water – April , and
 - TCEQ Trade Fair – May.
- Target date for publication of the next newsletter is April 1. Articles are due March 15.

Non-Governmental Accreditation Bodies

- The NGAB working group has finalized their paper recommending an organizational location for the TNRC and submitted their recommendation to the TNI Board for approval. Following the Board's acceptance of this recommendation, the NGAB working group will be disbanded.
- The NGAB Evaluator Webcast is now available and has been forwarded to persons required to take the course.
- Three AB evaluations were performed during the last 3 weeks. One onsite observation will be completed this week and the other two are still being scheduled. Everyone's goal is to have observations complete by early May so that final reports can be completed and the corrective action process can be done.

Policy Committee

- Policy Committee will soon finalize the internal audit processes and checklists that will be included in, or accompany, the draft TNI Quality Management Plan. A few sections of the draft QMP itself also require updating to reflect current status (NGABs, NEFAP and internal audits) so that a final draft can be presented for Board consideration in the spring.

Information Technology

2015 Monthly Averages

Unique visitors: 5055
Number of visits: 9921
Pages: 50808

Unique visitors counts each visitor (a PC or mobile phone) that visits any page on the website (not counting NEMC, which is tracked separately). So, you would be counted once per month when viewing the website from your PC, regardless of the number of times you visited the site.

Number of visits counts the number of times someone views any page on the website, including duplicate visitors. So, if you visit the website 30 times a month, you would add 30 to the number of visits.

Pages is the number of web pages viewed, including duplicate visitors and pages. So, if you visited the website 30 times a month and viewed 5 pages every time, you would be adding 150 (30x5) to the number of pages.

Most Popular Downloads of 2015

- 2003 NELAC Standard (367)
- SOP 1-100, Format Guidelines of SOPs for TNI (249)
- TNI Forum, 2008 Newport, Manual Integration Assessment Forum (231)
- TNI Forum, 2008 Newport, Auditing ICP Methods 200.7, 6010B Assessment Forum (218)
- SSAS FAQ (153)
- SSAS Table (148)

Training

- Ilona is continuing the discussion with Bob Shannon to develop a series of Radiochemistry webcasts or webinar/webcasts for training he previously provided for EPA. He has checked with EPA and has been given the go ahead. He is now looking at his schedule to determine timing for getting started.
- The NGAB Evaluator training webcast is now available and has been sent to everyone required to take the class or who started the webinar and needed to finish using the webcast. Quizzes continue to be graded and certificates are being prepared as needed.

Membership Report

- There were 7 new committee applications that have been forwarded to the committee chair and program administrator.
- **Active Members:** 931