

TNI Board of Directors Meeting Summary

May 20, 2008

1. Roll Call and Approval of April Minutes

Directors	Present
Joe Aiello	Yes
Steve Arms	No
Judith Duncan	No
Jack Farrell	Yes
Ken Jackson <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes
Tom McAninch	No
Sharon Mertens	Yes
Judy Morgan	Yes
Ken Olson	Yes
Aurora Shields	Yes
Matt Sica	Yes
Alfredo Sotomayor	Yes
Dave Speis	Yes
Curtis Wood	Yes
Bob Wyeth	Yes
Ex-Officio Directors	
Brooke Connor	Yes
Barbara Finazzo	Yes
George Detsis	No
Edward Hartzog	No
Staff	
Carol Batterton	No
Jerry Parr	Yes
Jane Wilson	No
Janice Wlodarski	Yes

We welcome Curtis Wood to the Board.

2. Small Laboratory Advocate

The Small Laboratory advocate position has been posted and three applications have been received to date. A decision was made to extend the deadline for applications one more week and get the information out to other organizations. It was agreed that a small team consisting of one Board member, a member of the Advocacy group, and a member of the TAC would be formed to evaluate the applications and bring a recommendation to the Board for approval. If the team is unable to decide, then the final applicants would be brought forward to the Board for their evaluation and decision.

3. 2008 TNI Budget

The 2008 TNI Budget was presented for approval. Discussion involved explanation of a few of the line items as well as the need to increase the profits from NEMC. NEMC is the bulk of the 2008 profit – are there other things that we can do: reduce NEMC costs, another EPA grant, increase members.

The NEMC Board of Trustees has been formed; they are working on a number of things including getting more vendors involved in the meeting. Future action: Discussion of how to increase the differential between costs and profits for all meetings going forward.

Motion to approve the budget: Sharon Mertens
Seconded: Jack Farrell
All in favor: Approved

4. Assessment Forum Training Credits

Have held four assessment forums in conjunction with meetings and getting good response and feedback from participants. There is a requirement for assessors to have annual refresher training. Can we provide this training along with CEUs? Offering CEUs for training may be too complicated a process – we can offer the training which will count towards their training requirements but without the CEUs. CEUs are not a requirement, just the training – technical and refresher – is required. A refresher training agenda for the Assessment Forum is needed.

Suggest that the CEU discussion be tabled until a future date. Next Steps: Recognize training as a vehicle for refresher training. Have the TNI Board endorse it. See Attachment 4. Plan to take attendance and issue certificates of completion. Responsibility: TAC. To implement for 2008 summer meeting.

Motion to Adopt: Aurora Shields
Second: Bob Wyeth
All in Favor: Approved

5. Changes to Bylaws

Proposed change to Bylaws reviewed. Discussion ensued surrounding how to handle a Board member's affiliation change and the impact to the balance/change of balance. The issue is not about balance, but about the fact that the person was elected for a specific category and changing affiliations possibly changes the audience that that person is representing. The fact that someone has changed employment does not automatically mean that they need to resign from the Board. The Board should review the situation and decide if the person should be asked to resign or not.

A statement will be added to the Bylaws similar to the following: "A director who has a change in employment shall notify the BOD who shall make a decision on the continued tenure of the director." If necessary, issue will be addressed in the SOP. Next Step: Jerry will clean up the Bylaws, circulate for review, vote to be held in July.

6. Approval of 2 SOPs

Two SOPs, endorsed by the committees, were presented for Board approval. 1) Dispute Resolution Process – new and 2) Process to Accept Standards for Accreditation – revised.

Motion to approve: Sharon Mertens
Second: Judy Morgan
All in Favor: Approved

7. Expanded Role of Policy Committee

Members of the Policy Committee had been approached about being a part of the general conflict resolution process, which would complement the processes that other committees already have. The Policy Committee would have to have a process by which they will decide which complaints they will respond to. The Policy Committee is asking the Board to expand their charter to include the component of general conflict resolution. See Attachment 4.

Motion to approve: Jack Farrell
Second: Judy Morgan
All in Favor: Approved

8. Sale of Templates

Discussion of what kinds of documents we should provide for free and to whom vs. which documents we should charge for. Brought about by the TAC having come up with an SOP template. Ed Hartzog commented that anything developed by a consensus organization, developed by volunteers, should be provided free of charge. The DOD will not use such documents if they have to pay for them.

Possible guidelines: Documents having to do with Standards and PT Limits, i.e., mandatory items, should be free. Documents that are considered "guidance" documents could be charged for (tools). Fees may be waived for special situations. Documents written by TNI should be copyright protected.

Jerry will detail examples and possible charges for the next call.

9. Board Action Items

This agenda items was tabled until the June meeting.

Attachment 1

Executive Director's Report

May 19, 2008

Activities completed since April 9:

- Developed Board Action Items list
- Continued work on summer meeting
 - Finalized training courses
 - Draft detailed schedule
 - NEMC Technical Sessions
 - Updated website
 - Preliminary hotel logistics
- Presentation at TCEQ trade fair on April 29
- Presentation at Oregon Lab Association on May 15
- Met with EPA Office of Air on PT Program (teleconference)
- Met with ACLASS/ANAB (teleconference); See Attachment 5.
- Began work on unsolicited proposal to EPA
- Intensive work on new TNI website
 - Go to: <http://74.54.252.185/> for a peak
 - When this new site goes active, the old NELAC site will be inactivated as all relevant information will be moved over to the new site. An archival record of all documents on the old EPA site will be kept for any requests.
- Filed SF 272 with EPA
- Email broadcast on Small Laboratory Advocate, Air PT Committee, etc.

Upcoming activities

- Finalize operational plan
- Continued work on summer meeting
 - Publish and mail brochure
 - On-line registration
- Publish Board minutes
- Submit unsolicited proposal to EPA
- Publish Newsletter
- Complete 2007 Financial Report
- Establish new accounting categories
- File indirect cost proposal with DOI

Organization update

April 9: 619 Active members
May 19: 643 Active members

Attachment 2
Program Administrator's Report

May 19, 2008

TNI NELAP Board

- All but one technical review is completed on the AB applications. On-site evaluation of NY program and the LADHH program have been completed. All other on-sites are scheduled.
- Returned Micro PT requirements to PT Board with suggestions for modification. Returned with modifications, but voting delayed until next meeting.
- Approved SOP templates from Technical Assistance Committee.
- Reviewed proposal from TAC to award assessor training credit for attendance at assessor forums. Delayed approval until next meeting to give everyone time to review

Laboratory Accreditation Committee

- Received new TNI standards from CSDB. Will begin review of new standards at next meeting.

National Database Subcommittee

- Continuing to work with NFSTC contractor on database development. Contractor feels that adequate information is available to begin development. Beta testing still possible before summer meeting.

PT Board

- Revised Microbiology FoPT subcommittee report and re-sent to NELAP Board for consideration.
- PT Board FoPT toxicity subcommittee continues to meet and evaluate data from PT providers.
- Continuing to coordinate with A2LA on next round of PT provider oversight evaluations.
- Re-evaluation of A2LA as PTOB scheduled for May 28-30 at NYDOH.
- Voted to establish an Air FoPT subcommittee. Looking for volunteers.
- Bill Ingersoll and Richard Sheibley resigned. 10 members remaining include 4 ABs, 3 labs and 3 others. Will re-evaluate need for new members in October.

Consensus Standards Development

- ♦ Final TNI standards modules are with Janice Wlodarski for formatting. The standards should be ready to post on TNI sometime this week. When posted, a 30 day appeal period will start. An email should go to the TNI membership upon posting to announce this. The modules have already been shared with Joan Flowers for LASC review as well.
- ♦ Formation of the new Air PT expert committee was approved. The activity of this group needs to be carefully scoped such that there is a clear distinction between the role of the existing PT committee and this new activity.
- ♦ CSDB is still discussing the possible formation of a committee to develop a taxonomy standard.
- ♦ Expert Committee chairs are reviewing membership needs and openings on their committees. All are reviewing the applicant spreadsheet from Jerry to fill openings. The Chairs will contact applicants to determine committee preferences and request additional information as needed. The QS committee

continues to need specific technical expertise for which they would like to recruit members. These types of needs can be posted on the new TNI site once it is launched.

- ◆ Marlene Moore has been elected as Chair of the Field Activities committee.

Technical Assistance Committee

- Web Based Course Development initiated.
- Carol Batterton will begin providing Program Administrator support.
- Working on FAQs.

Advocacy

- Added new members.
- Appointed liaison for EPA mercury thermometer project.
- Working on white paper on benefits of accreditation.
- Continued work on next newsletter.

Website

- Meeting on May 16 in Denver to finalize pages for new website.

Policy

- Reviewed and endorsed the proposal for assessor forum training credits.
- Drafted changes to bylaws for presentation at May Board meeting.
- Developed proposal for expanded role of committee for Board consideration.

**Attachment 3
Proposal for providing training credits for attending the Assessment Forums**

This is the requested plan and details for providing training credit to and QA personnel for attending the Assessment Forums. At the January 2007 meeting of the Technical Assistance Committee, it was unanimously approved that TNI should offer training credits for attendance at the twice annually held Assessment Forums. These training credits would be one option that could be used to satisfy the annual update continuing education requirements for NELAP assessors and other professionals.

Background

The 2003 NELAP standard specifies the requirements for laboratory assessor initial and continuous training. In addition to basic assessor training, assessors must attend both technical training and an annual update training. For assessors to remain qualified, it is a requirement to attend an annual training seminar or workshop on accreditation standard updates, interpretation and other topics to further the continuing education of those assessors that are performing NELAP type assessments. Currently, there is no set structure, content or duration for conducting these training sessions for their in-house or contractor assessor used execute their programs. These seminars and workshops extend for between one half day and a full day of training.

Assessment Forums

The Assessment Forums are an opportunity for laboratories, assessors, consultants and regulators to engage in discussion, training and dialogue on a variety of topics that pertain to the implementation, interpretation, content and obstacles of the NELAP programs and in general, topics that affect the assessment process. Assessor Forums (now named Assessment Forums) have been successfully conducted at the last four semiannual meetings and deemed an overwhelming success by virtue of its attendance (over 80+ participants for an entire day) and program evaluation of the Forum submitted by attendees. At the January 2007 Forum, it was asked if it would be an inducement for participants to continue attendance, if they could receive training credit toward the annual update training requirement. The response was very positive.

The Assessment Forums are intended to be full day training and discussion sessions conducted at each TNI meeting or alternatively under some such other schedule should it be taken on the road to other locations. The assessment forum agendas have contained such topics as regulatory updates, method discussion and auditable points, panels on the effectiveness of assessments and issues for resolution, discussion on interpretation and common finding of assessments and other topics requested by the participants.

Benefit Statement

The benefits to this are pretty obvious and straight forward. The better training and prepared our assessors are, the more consistent assessment will be. This is a perfect mechanism for getting laboratories and assessors together to work out some of the issues affecting consistency and in promoting better training of laboratory staff and AB staff as well as other stakeholders. Providing an incentive to attend these sessions would also encourage more participation and attendance. This process could also be used in dealing with on-going technical training using aspects of the Assessment Forums and mentoring sessions. This expansion could be explored after the pilot update training is implemented.

The Proposal

The TAC proposes that full day (six contact hours) attendance at a minimum of at least one of the Assessment Forums annually would satisfy the requirements for continued update training. This would be one option for satisfying the requirement, but not the only mechanism. Others could be determined by the AB as is done currently. This would not satisfy the requirement for annual technical training.

The Assessment Forum development subcommittee under the direction of the TAC will administer the forum, record the attendance and provide to the TNI executive director a list of persons that has attended the forums. The executive director would issue certificates of attendance to the participants.

Agendas for the Assessment Forum are prepared by the development subcommittee and presented to the TAC for discussion and approval. This ensures that the right topics are presented to satisfy the requirements for update training.

Cost Implications

Currently this is a program that is being offered at the semi-annual meeting, so there does not appear to be much of cost increase. The increase would be the administration of the program limited to taking attendance and issuing certification. If it becomes feasible to take the program on the road and offer it regionally, a budget and revenues would need to be determined by the Board, either through a combination of fees, grant monies, vendor sponsorship and volunteer support.

Action Required

1. The TNI policy committee should review this proposal for consistency with TNI programs policy.
2. The NELAP Board should review and approve this proposal to become one option for continuous training.
3. The TNI executive director or staff should announce this program as an approved activity.
4. The TNI executive director should make provisions for the tracking of attendance at forums and for issuing training certificates.

It is intended that this program go into effect with the 2008 annual meeting in Washington, DC.

Attachment 4
Recommendation from the Policy Committee to the TNI Board of Directors:

The Policy Committee requests that the TNI Board of Directors approve expanding the committee's mission to help review and resolve conflicts that members may experience with TNI programs and committees, and that this expanded mission be reflected in the Policy Committee's charter. The Policy Committee requests authorization from the TNI Board of Directors to create processes and procedures to accomplish its expanded mission.

Background

At its March 17, 2008 meeting, the Policy Committee considered the role it might play in reviewing and attempting to resolve conflicts that members could have with TNI Programs and committees.

Members of the Policy Committee had been approached previously about the possibility of identifying a body that could serve as a conduit for raising and resolving such concerns. In the old NELAC organization, two such groups existed, the Accrediting Authority Review Board and the Environmental Laboratory Advisory Board (ELAB). While it is conceivable that ELAB could serve that purpose, at least informally, the committee noted that this function was not part of ELAB's charter and that ELAB could only give advice to EPA. Using ELAB to advise TNI through EPA would be awkward, inefficient, and perhaps inappropriate.

The committee considered that it would be best for this body to be internal to TNI. The committee acknowledged that the final arbiter of TNI is its Board of Directors, but concluded that the TNI Board's role in reviewing and resolving members' conflicts with programs and committees should remain strategic, or invoked directly only in certain situations where substantial precedents could be created or where resolution required changing existing procedures or the bylaws.

The Policy Committee discussed various alternatives, such as creating another committee, but finally concluded that it could assume the duties of reviewing and attempting the resolution of conflicts between members and programs or members and committees. The Policy Committee consists of representatives from each of the TNI Programs, serves at the pleasure of the TNI Board, and responds directly to it. These qualifications make the Policy Committee a natural candidate to perform these functions.

At the moment, the Policy Committee does not have tangible procedures for accomplishing the expanded function, but with the Board's endorsement, would begin to draft processes to do that. The committee does not wish to invalidate the need for establishing conflict resolution mechanisms within each TNI program. However, the committee also sees the utility in establishing a group outside of program lines and structures that can serve as listeners, reviewers, and problem solvers for the entire Institute. Having the Policy Committee become the centralized body to assume these functions would promote consistency among programs and would help all in ensuring conformance with TNI's mission, both of which are anchored in the committee's current charter.

PRINCIPLES AND DESIRABLE ATTRIBUTES:

The Policy Committee would get involved in:

- Conflicts that involve or affect more than one TNI Program.
- Matters where the TNI Board of Directors has requested the committee's participation.
- Disagreements where two programs voluntarily seek the committee's advice and agree to abide by its counsel.

The Policy Committee may serve as:

- A clearinghouse for referring concerns back to an appropriate committee or program board.
- A deliverer of a reasoned opinion for consideration by a program board, a committee, or the TNI Board of Directors.
- An arbitrator, when two parties voluntarily seek and agree to abide by the Policy Committee's decision.
- A collector of members' complaints and concerns about a program, committee, or the entire Institute.

To accomplish its expanded mission, the Policy Committee will develop procedures that:

- Are mindful of the expressed authority and autonomy of all TNI Programs.
- Assist committees and boards in developing protocols for due process when conflicts or disputes arise.
- Are transparent and available to all members.
- Avoid unnecessary redundancies.
- Ensure all members have access to due process.

The Policy Committee sees itself in conflict resolution as:

- Reviewers and arbiters, offering opinions, but not directors of actions.
- A council of sages, not another program board.
- A last recourse for opinion, when a matter has been decided by several program boards or committees.
- Conveyors of an opinion for the TNI Board of Directors to act on.

The Policy Committee could eventually:

- Keep a database of complaints and conflicts and how they have been resolved.
- Provide a summary for the TNI Board of Directors of all heard and resolved conflicts.

**Attachment 5
Summary of Call with ACLASS**

On May 2, 2008, Aurora Shields, Carl Kircher and Jerry Parr met by teleconference with Roger Muse, Keith Greenaway and Lane Hallenbeck, who "all work within the ANSI/ANAB/ASQ family."

The primary purpose of the call was for Roger to discuss options for ACLASS becoming a PTPA for TNI. Carl and I both pointed out all they needed to do was complete an application and send it in, along with their application fee of \$4,000. We also indicated they would be required to pay an annual accreditation fee of \$2,500.

That was the essence of the call. We did ask a few questions of why they wanted to do this since there are so few PT providers and they are all currently accredited by A2LA. ACLASS believes some PT Providers would like to get recognition from them for the NELAP PT program because these providers are also accredited by ACLASS as a laboratory to ISO 17025 and as a Certified Reference Material producer under Guide 34. We did not question any of this and simply assured them that they could choose to apply if they desired.

They expressed some interest in coming to our meeting and exhibiting and we encouraged them to do so.

There was then a very brief side discussion on a joint laboratory accreditation program. From what I pieced together, ACLASS would work as a team with the NELAP assessors and do their assessments at the same time and then issue some type of joint NELAP/ISO 17025 certificate. We cut this discussion off and said this would be an issue for the NELAP board to consider and invited them to come to our meeting in August and present this idea to the NELAP Board.

There is on action item from this. In 2007, the Board agreed on the \$4000 and \$2500 fees, but I never published this anywhere, incorrectly assuming we would never have another applicant. I will work to get that corrected this week.

Background on ANAB and ACLASS

The ANSI-ASQ National Accreditation Board (ANAB) is the U.S. accreditation body for management systems. ANAB accredits certification bodies (CBs) for:

- ISO 9001 quality management systems (QMS)
- ISO 14001 environmental management systems (EMS)
- ISO 27001 information security management systems (ISMS)
- ISO 22000 food safety management systems (FSMS)
- ANSI/AIHA Z10 occupational health and safety management systems (OHSMS)
- Numerous industry-specific requirements

ANAB is a member of the International Accreditation Forum and a signatory of the IAF multilateral cooperative arrangements (MLAs) for QMS and EMS. Through the IAF MLAs and the Multilateral Cooperative Accreditation Arrangement, ANAB cooperates with other accreditation bodies around the world to provide value to its accredited CBs and their clients, ensuring that accredited certificates are recognized nationally and internationally. The global conformity assessment system ensures confidence and reduces risk for customers engaging in trade worldwide.

ANAB has acquired Assured Calibration and Laboratory Accreditation Select Services (ACLASS), expanding ANAB's range of conformity assessment services to include accreditation of testing and calibration laboratories.

ACLASS provides accreditation of laboratories to ISO/IEC 17025, inspection bodies to ISO/IEC 17020, and reference material producers using ISO Guide 34.

ACLASS is internationally recognized by ILAC, APLAC, and IAAC through the signing of multilateral recognition arrangements. These arrangements facilitate the acceptance of test and calibration data between ACLASS-accredited laboratories and the international community.

For more information about ANAB, visit www.anab.org.

For more information about ACLASS accreditation, visit www.aiclasscorp.com.