
**TNI Board of Directors Meeting
May 13, 2009**

1. Roll Call and Approval of April Minutes

Directors	Present
Joe Aiello	Y
Aaren Alger	Y
Steve Arms	Y
Judith Duncan	Y
Jack Farrell	Y
Ken Jackson	N
Tom McAninch	N
Sharon Mertens	Y
Judy Morgan	Y
Ken Olson	N
Aurora Shields	Y
Matt Sica	N
Alfredo Sotomayor	Y
Dave Speis	Y
Curtis Wood	Y
Bob Wyeth	Y
Ex-Officio Directors	
Brenda Bettencourt	Y
Brooke Connor	Y
George Detsis	N
Edward Hartzog	Y
Staff	
Carol Batterton	Y
Jerry Parr	Y
Ilona Taunton	Y
Jane Wilson	N
Janice Wlodarski	Y

Motion to Accept April 2009 Minutes with inclusion of RS&T document:

Motion: Bob Wyeth
Second: Judy Duncan
Approved: Unanimous

2. Welcome Brenda Bettencourt to the Board

As Deb Szaro determined she could not fully participate on the TNI Board, EPA's Forum on Environmental Measurements solicited additional candidates and Brenda Bettencourt from EPA Region 9 volunteered to be the EPA liaison.

3. SW-846

ELAB met with EPA on this topic in April 2009. Dave has been the leader for us and ELAB and has been great. They were very receptive to our being there. They understand the issue better and are willing to work towards a mutual conclusion. There was a good discussion of what the terms mean (i.e., draft, withdrawn, current, final) and processes. A draft policy was presented that talks about the current published method being the preferred method except under certain conditions, and also includes a list of definitions. This draft policy is being edited by ELAB. Also had a discussion regarding TNI including how we train our assessors. They want to be more involved and to be a presenter at conferences.

4. Program Administrator Reports

See Attachment 1.

Specific Issues Discussed:

Roles of LASC and NELAP Board in the reviewing standards: the LASC is the intermediary between NELAP and the Expert Committees. LASC makes sure that all recommendations have been taken into consideration and been incorporated into the standard. Standards do not go to NELAP until ready for final review and approval. What if the Expert Committees review the recommendations and decide that they do not need to be incorporated into the standard? Should the Consensus Board get involved as an arbitrator or facilitator when the LASC and Expert Committees cannot agree on changes to a standard? No, they may be a little biased toward the Expert Committees.

Jerry: Does the Board affirm that the LASC is in the correct role: Yes.

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**Experimental analytes: are they in the new standard?** If they are not in, how are we going to set acceptance limits?

**Current language that allows for non-accredited PT providers?** Some States have said that this is not acceptable. If the PT Board does their job, there won't be anything on those tables that would require anyone to find a non-accredited provider? Can PT Board develop a policy that talks about under what conditions would there be a need for a non-accredited provider?

#### **5. EPA Office of Water QA Memo**

Refers to the QA/QC requirements and how they are applied to the Clean Water Act methods. Fairly significant and references QC checks. Jerry – we should form a group (Advocacy Group and Quality Systems) to develop some comments on essential QC elements and send back to the EPA.

We should post an announcement and link on the website for membership to review. Also include in the newsletter.

#### **6. TNI Reorganization**

Jerry provided a draft of a plan for a reorganization of TNI. Because the Board did not have time to review this plan in detail, and because other topics occupied the agenda, this topic was tabled until the June call.

#### **6. Next Meeting: Wednesday, June 10, 2009**

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**Attachment 1  
Program Reports**

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**May 12, 2009**

**Consensus Standards Development**

- The SSAS committee completed development of the three voting draft standards by May 1 and voted to release the VDS documents for TNI membership voting. The documents have been sent to the webmaster for posting along with text that can be used for an email communication to the TNI members. The SSAS committee has also reviewed the audit sample table approved by the PT Board. It is expected that a few comments will be submitted back to the PT Board for incorporation before the implementation of the SSAS program in October. The SSAS subcommittee on the audit sample database is waiting for a demo version of the database to be completed by the webmaster.
- Five TIAs from the PT committee have been found to be of an emergency nature and were posted for public comment. It is expected the PT committee will complete work on these 5 TIAs this month. One additional TIA from the PT committee is still in development.
- Final report from the PT frequency subcommittee is anticipated to be provided to the PT committee soon.
- CSDB discussed the development of guidance documents to support the implementation of the new TNI standards, as inquiries have been made regarding format, etc. As part of the discussion, it was noted that the new TNI standards had been developed with the objective of minimizing the need for additional tools such as guidance documents. A request was made to Ilona for LASC and the NELAP Board to confer on this issue and determine which guidance documents are most urgently needed.

**NELAP**

- The NELAP Board has voted on renewal of the CA program. As soon as all ABs have voted, this will complete the first round of AB renewals.
- In the second round of renewals, OR onsite evaluation has been conducted and the draft report is in preparation. TX onsite and lab shadow have been completed. LADEQ's onsite is scheduled for the week of July 13. The evaluation team is reviewing IL's response to the technical review.
- The evaluation coordinator has done the initial completeness review on the VA application.
- The NELAP Board has begun reviewing outstanding standards interpretation requests.
- A subcommittee of Steve Stubbs, Art Clark, Lynn Bradley and Carol Batterton has been formed to develop revisions to the Evaluation SOP.
- The SW 846 issue continues to be discussed. Additional options were presented at the last meeting. Modification of the National Database will be explored.

**Technical Assistance**

- David Caldwell and Jack Farrell are working with Jerry on a methods modification session for the summer meeting.
- Jack Farrell is working to develop the Assessment Forum agenda and is holding conference calls to finalize. Topics for the Forum will include assessor uniformity and consistency. Assessment report format and consistency will also be included.
- Quality Assurance Manual Template:
  - This project is behind, but increased effort should be possible this month.

### **Advocacy**

- Len Schantz reported he had received about 30 additional contacts for the Small Lab Advocate Group (SLAG). Jack Farrell joined the last conference call and discussed the role of the Technical assistance Committee. Len has asked for TNI staff support for the conference calls.
- Judy Duncan and Brooke Connor along with Len have developed a brochure promoting the small lab advocacy group.
- Ken Jackson is the next newsletter editor. Articles and authors have been identified. Articles will be due June 16, estimated publication is June 30.
- The Advocacy Committee will be doing additional analysis of Judy Morgan's survey.
- The committee will begin exploring an Memorandum of Understanding with EPA.

### **Laboratory Accreditation System Committee**

- The LASC received additional feedback from the NELAP Board. This information is being used to work with the Expert Committees and CSDB.
- The committee met with Bob Wyeth from CSDB and Paul Junio from the Quality Systems Expert Committee to resolve questions on editorial changes, document preparation and TIAs. Bob will be meeting with CSDB and using LASCs table to update the status on the various editorial and TIA items. June hopes to have an update by the end of the month to determine when the final version of the standard will be complete for the NELAP Board's final vote. The original goal was end of May, but it looks like it will now be June.
- There was some confusion about the process for getting updated information to the NELAP Board. It is now clear that all editorial updates must go the CSDB so that they can approve them and insert them into the final DRAFT. The final DRAFTs will all go to LASC for confirmation of the changes as per the recommendations and then LASC will forward to the NELAP Board.
- Standards Interpretation Request process:
  - Six requests were received in April and they have been forwarded to the expert committees. New requests are being received, but people are being informed that the process may take longer to accommodate the time needed for finalization and implementation of the TNI Standard. The NELAP Board just finalized a number of responses that will be going back to the inquirer and posted on the website. This should be complete by the end of the week.

### **PT Board**

- The limit update SOP prepared by the Chemistry FoPT Subcommittee was not forwarded to the Policy Committee for finalization. The implementation of the elimination of the Experimental PT analytes has raised some questions that the subcommittee and PT Board need to resolve. It was pointed out that analytes can not be added to the Accreditation FoPT tables without rules for how the limits were arrived at. This is a requirement of the 2003 NELAC Standard that the group is working under. It is not compliant to add the previous experimental analytes without data. The subcommittee has begun evaluating data and initial review shows that there are only 5 DW analytes that can be added to the FoPT tables under current criteria. There is not enough data for the other analytes. This information will be provided to the PT Board for consideration.
- The database issue remaining to close the A2LA Audit has been reviewed. Though there is not enough data yet, a demo was used to perform the review. The finding has been closed. A2LA forwarded a final copy of an SOP that was requested and PT Board members will review and discuss the SOP during the May conference call to close out the remainder of audit. A letter of recommendation will be prepared for submittal to the TNI Board of Directors after a final PT Board vote. Eric will also prepare a letter to A2LA letting them know that all the findings have been closed.

- The A2LA Statement of Work has been reviewed and requested changes are being prepared by A2LA. This will be reviewed for finalization during the May meeting.
- Chemistry FoPT Subcommittee: They have now received all data from the PT Providers and should have requested lab data by the end of the month. They will start with the inorganics because there are a number of experimental analytes in question in this area. They will proceed by compound class and work through the analytes unless the PT Board requests something different. They originally had a goal to update the format of the tables and incorporate the Experimental PTs by July 1, 2009, but this time frame is in question until they decide what to do with the issue raised in the first bullet above.

### **National Database**

- Dan Hickman is still working on getting the subcommittee full access to the database so that they can look for any final issues before the system gets tested.

### **NEFAP**

- Information is being collected to prepare a comparison of options for how accreditation may work. Third party options are being considered – NACLA, ILAC, and IAAC. A DRAFT of the comparison is being discussed. There are members on the Field Committee that feel strongly that there is no need to review third party options, but others felt that this process should be completed before moving forward. The committee talked about what should be compared and this table will be completed this week so that the committee can make a final recommendation on how to move forward. Whatever route is taken, the committee agrees that the process needs new ways to think about training.
- Marlene Moore made a presentation at NACLA – Establishing a New Accreditation Program in the US. This presentation has been summarized and may provide direction for the development of NEFAP (see attached.)
- The Field committee hopes to have a more formal presentation prepared for the June TNI Board meeting.

### **Website**

- Performed a comprehensive review of the website and corrected a number of errors.
- Ready to work on national database when access is granted.

### **Policy**

- No meeting since Miami.
- Action Items from Miami Meeting and TNI Board Calls
  - Bylaws: The Policy committee will draft bylaws changes.
  - QA: Need to consider adding a function for QA feedback to the TNI Board on the activities of the NELAP Board. This function could mirror the old AARB with annual review and report.
  - TNI bylaws require each committee to submit an annual report. The Policy committee is working on an example to share. Committees will be required to review their old charters and submit new ones.

**Finance**

- The final technical report to close out the cooperative agreement for standards development and technical assistance is complete. Of the \$300,000 awarded, \$43 was not expended.
- TNI has been verbally notified that an application for additional assistance (\$100,000 over 18 months) has been accepted and should be awarded in May.

**Environmental Measurement Symposium (NEMC plus TNI Forum in San Antonio)**

- Registration has opened and a brochure is at the printer to be mailed to 2500 names. Also, an email notice will go out Thursday.
- TNI staff will meet in May to flesh out the details of the TNI session topics for the August meeting
- At this point we have over 100 abstracts submitted for the NEMC part of the meeting, and there are still a few outstanding. The chairs are finalizing the order of presentation in their sessions and final acceptance letters will be going out this week. We are also working on preparation of bios for all speakers and final instructions for preparation of papers.
- Within the next two weeks the website schedule will have the titles of the talks and presenter names included. Clicking on the title will pull up a copy of the abstract and clicking on the presenter will pull up their biography.
- Next steps include working with the presenters to get their first paper DRAFTs completed in June and preparation of a release for all presenters to sign when they turn in their papers and posters.

**Membership**

- Active Members: 574