

TNI Board of Directors Meeting Summary

May 8, 2019

1. Roll Call

Directors	Present
Jordan Adelson	
Aaren Alger	X
Steve Arms	X
Justin Brown	X
Stacie Crandall	
Bob Di Rienzo	
Jack Farrell	X
Maria Friedman	X
Chris Gunning	X
Myron Gunsalus	
Paul Junio	X
Judy Morgan	
Cheryl Nolan	X
Patsy Root	X
Debbie Rosano	
Scott Siders	X
Alfredo Sotomayor	X
Dave Speis	X
Lem Walker	X
Curtis Wood	X
Past Chair	
Sharon Mertens	
Staff	
Lynn Bradley	X
Carol Batterton	X
Jerry Parr	X
Ilona Taunton	X
Janice Wlodarski	X
Bob Wyeth	X

2. Approval of April Minutes

Changes: “Scott” Haas, not Kevin

Motion to Approve: Patsy Root

Second: Maria Friedman

Approved: Unanimous

3. Implementing the 2016 Standard (Attachment 1)

There are 2 items remaining and one that was completed last month.

- The PT Executive Committee released 2 memos. One was sent to the PT Providers and PT Provider Accreditors and the other posted on the TNI website. Both memos indicate the new scoring system is to be implemented on 1/31/2020, but that a given AB can choose to implement their own evaluation procedure if their implementation date is not January 31, 2020. These memos are contained in Attachment 1.

- Upon further review by LASEC, the guidance document on LOD/LOQ needs significant revisions to clarify what language is in the TNI Standard, what is in the EPA MDL procedure and what is only recommendations. Jerry has prepared a revised version and sent it to Judy Morgan for review.
- The Standard Interpretations Request consolidated document is on track for completion in August.

4. SOPs for Review

- **SOP 3-105** on the standards interpretation process was revised to improve clarity of implementation guidance contents and add requirement to provide relevant SIRs to expert committees during revision of modules. This SOP does not require approval by the Board.
- Policy 1-128 will be postponed until next month since the Policy committee did not vote on this yet.

Discussion:

In the April call, the Board recommended that Policy Committee consider including the non-discrimination policy (Policy 1-128) in TNI's Code of Conduct, which does exist, but not as a controlled document. The committee reviewed the "Conduct" document and finds that it lists numerous documents with which members should comply, so that list would appropriately be amended to contain the non-discrimination policy. The non-discrimination policy is thus being presented for Board approval and the committee will revise the uncontrolled document, "Guide for the Conduct of Participants", to become a controlled document that does include the non-discrimination policy, and recommends that the conduct guide be included in the planned revision to the TNI committee member training.

5. NGAB Evaluations

The last round of NGAB evaluations happened in 2016; these are due again in 2019.

The Board should consider whether to extend these recognitions into 2020 to allow time for policies and procedures to be developed or expedite this process so the evaluations could occur along with the NEFAP and PTP evaluations. This would delay the NEFAP and PT Programs that are already behind. Actions that would need to be done including revising the NGAB SOP for TNI Environmental Laboratory Standard Recognition to include procedures for renewing accreditation. It is currently only written for initial recognition. Complaint and appeal procedures were also never developed for this recognition.

The renewal for the NBAGs can be extended so they are still recognized and the onsite renewal/evaluations happen. It will be about 2020 when this will happen. The renewal can apply for three years and then modifications can be completed during that time frame.

Who will undertake the revision of the SOPs for the renewal of the accreditation, and complaint and appeal procedures?

Right now, no one is working on the revisions of the SOPs for renewals. There are people that are working on the revisions for the NEFAP and PTP programs. Jerry and Ilona will handle the revisions of the SOPs for renewals for NGABS.

6. Second Quarter Financial Reports

Second Quarter 2019 financial reports were reviewed.

7. Program Reports (Attachment 2)

**Attachment 1
PT MEMOS**

Memorandum

Date: April 28, 2019
To: TNI Accredited PT Providers and PT Provider Accreditors
From: TNI Proficiency Testing Program Executive Committee (PTPEC)
Regarding: Implementation of Section 5.9 of Volume 3 of the 2016 TNI Environmental Laboratory Standard

A key component of the 2016 TNI Standard for NELAP is the revised approach to scoring Proficiency Test results described in Section 5.9 of Volume 3. This revised approach brings back PT Reporting Limit (PTRL) scoring from the 2003 NELAC Standard.

To provide for the orderly and consistent implementation of PTRL scoring, and upon consultation with TNI's PT Providers, PT Provider Accreditors, and Accreditation Bodies, the PTPEC has determined that all TNI PT Providers shall implement Section 5.9 of Volume 3 of the 2016 TNI Standard on the implementation date set by the NELAP Accreditation Council for Volume 1, **January 31, 2020**.

Prior to January 31, 2020, PT Providers shall continue to score PTs according to the requirements specified in the 2009 TNI Standard.

Additionally, TNI's PT Providers will include the following footnote in PT reports issued on or after January 31, 2020:

"This report is scored by the criteria in the 2016 TNI Standard, Volume 3, instead of by the criteria in the 2009 TNI Standard to which the Proficiency Testing Provider is accredited. This is a planned change and is endorsed by the TNI Proficiency Testing Program Executive Committee for transition to the 2016 TNI Standard."

Upon a PT Provider becoming accredited to the 2016 TNI Standard, that PT Provider shall discontinue including the footnote in their PT reports.

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**Memorandum**

**Date:** April 28, 2019  
**To:** TNI Proficiency Testing (PT) Program Participants  
**From:** TNI Proficiency Testing Program Executive Committee (PTPEC)  
**Regarding:** Implementation of Section 5.9 of Volume 3 of the 2016 TNI Environmental Laboratory Standard

A key component of the 2016 TNI Standard for NELAP is the revised approach to scoring Proficiency Test results described in Section 5.9 of Volume 3. This revised approach brings back PT Reporting Limit (PTRL) scoring from the 2003 NELAC Standard.

To provide for the orderly and consistent implementation of PTRL scoring, and upon consultation with TNI's PT Providers, PT Provider Accreditors, and Accreditation Bodies, the PTPEC has determined that all TNI PT Providers shall implement Section 5.9 of Volume 3 of the 2016 TNI Standard on the implementation date set by the NELAP Accreditation Council for Volume 1, **January 31, 2020**.

**How this will affect PT Program participants:**

- Prior to January 31, 2020, PT Providers shall continue to score PTs according to the requirements specified in the 2009 TNI Standard. Those NELAP Accreditation Bodies (ABs) that implement the 2016 TNI Standard prior to January 31, 2020, may conduct their own re-evaluation of laboratory results according to the 2016 TNI Standard if they choose or may simply accept the evaluations done according to the 2009 TNI Standard by the PT Providers.
- In PT reports issued on or after January 31, 2020, PT Providers shall score PTs according to the requirements specified in the 2016 TNI Standard. Those NELAP ABs who do not implement the standard by January 31, 2020 may choose to conduct their own re-evaluation of laboratory results according to the 2009 TNI Standard or may simply accept the evaluations done according to the 2016 TNI Standard by the PT Providers.
- TNI's PT Providers will include the following footnote in PT reports issued on or after January 31, 2020:

“This report is scored by the criteria in the 2016 TNI Standard, Volume 3, instead of by the criteria in the 2009 TNI Standard to which the Proficiency Testing Provider is accredited. This is a planned change and is endorsed by the TNI Proficiency Testing Program Executive Committee for transition to the 2016 TNI Standard.”
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## Attachment 2 PROGRAM REPORTS

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### CONSENSUS STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT

- The Consensus Standard Development Executive committee welcomed Cathy Westerman to the CSDEC as an ex-officio member.
- A CSDEC task force has been developed with representatives of the LASEC, AC and CSDEC for potential revision of SOP 2-100. Their goal is to address the “lessons learned document” and the institute changes necessary to improve the overall development process. The task force activities have begun.
- The Chemistry Expert Committee postponed its last meeting (5/1/2019) in anticipation of receipt of final comments from the LASEC regarding the LOD/LOQ guidance document. It is anticipated that the committee will meet later this month.
- The Proficiency Testing Expert Committee (PTEC) previously revised the EL-V2M2 checklist. The Laboratory Accreditation Body Expert Committee finalized a review of the checklist with only minor changes/improvements to the document.
- The PTEC previously prepared a document comparing the requirements of the DoD/DOE QSM with the 2016 TNI Standard (i.e., what and where are the QSM requirements for proficiency testing found in the TNI Standard). After sharing this document within TNI, a companion document showing where and if TNI PT requirements are found in the QSM. The PTEC is now preparing this document which should be available after the committee’s July meeting.
- The Asbestos Expert Committee has, to the best of their abilities, reconstructed the latest revisions to V1M3 lost due to Ken’s passing. They are now working through this version of the standard to prepare a new VDS.
- The draft outline of changes plus the draft module V2M1 have been published on the TNI website to request comments, with the comment period closing on June 16. To date, one comment has been received. The full text of the revised document is available behind the “Members Only” firewall as a draft, but only the “outline” describing omissions from the 2005 version of ISO/IEC 17025 and the additional TNI language placed within the 2017 version is available to non-members of TNI. In the interim, the committee will begin reviewing all comments received during the several public sessions at conferences over the past few years.
- No date is yet established for WET representatives to meet with several ELAB members and the EPA DMR-QA coordinator and possibly other EPA staff. Conversations about revision to the WET Module V1M7 are ongoing, with the revision to Initial Demonstrations of Competence for analysts being the primary focus. After some months of circular discussions, the group is hopeful that they have identified an approach that can improve the auditability of IDOCs without creating additional and hugely burdensome procedures. This concept will be fine-tuned in the coming months, if it continues to satisfy both lab and AB needs.
- The Radiochemistry Committee is continuing to review the list of suggested changes to the current 2016 Standard. They plan to prepare an outline of changes to prepare for a public webinar. SIRs will need to be looked at too. The Committee is continuing work on Part 4 of the training series. The topic will be Gamma Spec.
- The Microbiology Committee continued work on Technical Manager language and they hope to finalize language during the May meeting to present to Quality Systems. A DRAFT of the internal audit has been completed and will be finalized in May.

- The SSAS Committee reviewed the status of the work on Module 1 by reviewing the outline that will be used for the public meeting. They used the discussion to fine-tune the outline.

### **NEFAP Executive Committee**

- The NEFAP EC is continuing work on the Scope Guidance document. Paul Bergeron and Kirstin Daigle met to pull together thoughts on re-writing/formatting the Scope Guidance document. It was decided that the guidance will be completed by forming a small group: AB, FSMOs and a user. Kirstin will facilitate this group and it may change membership as each phase of the document is completed. Kirstin will be reaching out to possible participants and the group will prepare an update to the Scope Guidance document for the May meeting. Progress on this task has been slow, but FAC is OK with that because they are not yet ready for the information.
- The Policy Committee's comment on the NEFAP Nomination Committee SOP was reviewed. The Committee will add the language put into CSDP's document regarding membership from the same organization. They are also adding language to possibly extend membership under special circumstances. The update will be reviewed during the May meeting with hopes of finalizing the document and returning it to Policy for their review in June.
- Membership of the Nomination Committee was finalized this month and the group will begin reviewing applications and contacting possible new members. The 2019 Nomination Committee members include Jeremy Driver (Chair), Kevin Holbrooks and Sharon Mertens. The Committee would like to be voting in new membership to the Committee by late May/early June.
- The Committee has delayed the discussion regarding accreditation options for FSMO's until the Scope Guidance Document is complete. Reminder: An interesting discussion was started in Milwaukee when someone asked if they could add an FSMO accreditation to their NELAP accreditation. This could work currently for an NGAB accrediting to the TNI Environmental Standard.
- John Moorman discussed the possibility of doing an FSMO training during the Jacksonville meeting – something on a smaller scale than what was done in Orange County. Further discussion on this will occur during the May meeting to see how this could fit within the NEFAP EC and FAC meeting time slots.

### **Field Activities Expert Committee (FAC)**

- The Committee is continuing work on the DRAFT of the FSMO Standard that includes both language from the 2014 TNI Standard and language from the ISO/IEC 17025:2017 standard.
  - They are still finishing up work on removing duplicate language. It was hoped this would have been completed in April, but it looks like it won't be complete until mid-May for email review and discussion.
  - Topics discussed at the face-to-face meetings will then be placed into the Standard (e.g., statistics for sample, etc.).
  - A DRAFT Standard will be presented in Jacksonville for preliminary input.
  - The Committee will then develop their outline of changes proposed to the Standard and plan a public meeting for comment on the outline.
- The internal audit will be completed in May.

## **Field Activities Task Force**

- The Task Force is beginning working on a flow chart to help clarify which Program (NEFAP or NELAP) is appropriate for field activities seeking accreditation.
- Work is still progressing on definitions for Field Activity and Mobile Laboratory.
- The Task Force is waiting for a copy of the Scope Guidance Document from the NEFAP EC. This document will impact its goal of developing and recommending consistent policies for the accreditation of field activities; including the standardization of the approach to listing scopes of accreditation.

## **NELAP**

### **Accreditation Council**

- For the current round of evaluations, all renewal letters have been issued with nine recognition renewals approved. Five applications are in various stages of review and one recommendation for renewal of recognition awaits action by the AC, with another recommendation expected shortly. The revision of the NELAP Evaluation SOP 3-102 has moved to LASEC and should reach the Council in June.
- Five-year reviews of other NELAP SOPs have resulted in minor revisions, either in nomenclature (Board changing to Council) or to accommodate the change to annual issuance of Certificates of Recognition. Discussions about how to revise PTs for Aroclors are ongoing. Maria Friedman, PTPEC Chair, joined the AC on April 15 to discuss several other PT issues needing decisions (not yet resolved) and Dan Hickman, TNI Database Administrator, joined the group on May 6 to discuss WET Method Codes. Aaren expects to join the next Microbiology Expert Committee call to discuss micro Method Codes.

### **Laboratory Accreditation System Executive Committee (LASEC)**

- Topics for both the Mentor Session and the Assessment Forum have been selected and planning is underway for Jacksonville.
- LASEC's SIR Subcommittee has finalized half of the Implementation Guidance documents from the Mentor Session discussions in New Orleans, and these are now posted to the web site. The remaining ones should proceed somewhat faster. Three new SIR interpretations were approved for posting to the NELAP AC's voting web site. The full LASEC revised its SIR Management SOP 3-105 to accommodate minor changes requested by Policy Committee.
- The final revision of the Detection and Quantitation Guidance document was reviewed by committee members, resulting in a motion not to approve the document in its current form. Judy has discussed the issues with Jerry.

## **PROFICIENCY TESTING**

- The Committee is continuing work on the implementation of Volume 3 and 4 of the 2016 TNI Standard. Maria reviewed the implementation letter with the NELAP AC and they were in agreement.
  - Maria prepared a letter to the PT Providers and PTPA's to update them on the implementation process.
  - Maria prepared a posting on the TNI website where information about the implementation process can be found. This will be referenced in the footnote.

It is expected that PT Providers will start providing the updated report on January 31, 2020.

- The PTP/NEFAP Combined Evaluation Taskforce. No update. Next steps in preparing for evaluations include:
  - Complete the Application
  - Complete the Checklist(s)
  - Plan training
  - Compile list of onsite/witness and evaluation team members
  - Put Recognition Committee in place

The executive committees are hoping to send out applications in the Fall.

- The Chemistry FoPT Subcommittee will meet end of May to review the SOP update requested from the Radiochemistry Expert Committee. This update includes written procedures to develop limits based on their recommendation. The Subcommittee has also started work on review of the FoPT Limit SOP (4-101) and will be working on comments to present to the PTP SOP Subcommittee to help them in the rewrite of this SOP. The Subcommittee will also be taking on the task discussed last month regarding PT Providers interpreting the SCM FoPT table differently. This is an issue with footnotes 5 and 6. The footnotes need to be more explicit as to when the rules are applied.
- The PTP SOP Subcommittee – They are working on SOP 4-102 (Appeals/Complaints SOP).
- Analyte Breakdown Subcommittee – The subcommittee charter was finalized. Its mission is to investigate and recommend a technical solution to the dilemma of analyte breakdown of 4,4-DDT and Endrin in PT samples. This subcommittee will begin meeting in May.
- Analyte Request Application (ARA) was received from Aaren Alger related to DW and SCM: The individual isomer compounds are the measured analytes and the laboratories should be required to report the compound(s) that they measure. Please review all tables for consistency in the evaluation of individual isomer compounds. She is also requesting that the PTPEC evaluate the need for compounds that are “total” (meaning a calculation from other analyses), and consider removing compounds that are strictly calculations, those that are not measured by the instrumentation as a “total” result. For example, “Total Xylenes”.

Initial discussion on this ARA raised an issue as to whether data is available to develop limits. Michella (EPA) was concerned about removing “Totals” from the table because “Totals” are required in some instances. Maria will bring this ARA back to the NELAP AC to let them know data is only available for NPW.

## ADMINISTRATION

### Advocacy

- The Advocacy Committee proposes a new objective and success measures in their charter for the Small Lab Advocate. This amendment reads as follows:

**Objective:**

Provide outreach to the small laboratory community through the Small Laboratory Advocate position.

**Success measures:**

- Recommend individuals to the TNI Board for appointment to the Small Laboratory Advocate (SLA) position

- Ensure that the SLA has an established work plan for conference calls, webinars, and other training activities to actively seek the opinions, ideas, and viewpoints of the small laboratory community regarding accreditation
  - Provide support to the SLA in presenting TNI's positions and ideas on accreditation to appropriate small laboratory associations and groups outside of TNI.
  - Assist the SLA in answering questions internally and externally regarding small laboratory issues and implementation of accreditation standards.
  - Provide SLA with a webpage and meeting opportunities at TNI meetings
- Instead of having an open session with NELAP ABs at the Advocacy meeting on the last day of the Jacksonville meeting, the Advocacy Committee proposes a lunch meeting with NELAP ABs and NGABs on Wednesday to discuss how NELAP ABs could potentially use NGABs in their accreditation programs. The committee will ask Christine Sotelo of CA ELAP to discuss the MOUs she has developed with NGABs in CA.
  - The Advocacy Committee is continuing to work on a position/white paper discussing the Value of Accreditation.
  - TNI will be represented at the upcoming regional meetings:
    - Oregon Environmental Laboratory Association, May 9 – Jerry Parr
    - Texas Commission on Environmental Quality Trade Fair, May 14 – Jerry Parr
    - Florida Society of Environmental Analyst -May 22-24 – Paul Junio

### **Policy Committee**

- The approved revision of LASEC SIR Management SOP 3-105 is presented to the Board for endorsement.
- A new complaint that does not fall to any of the TNI programs was discussed in Policy Committee, and the committee as a whole determined to refer the matter to the Information Technology Committee for its recommendation.
- The Board recommended that Policy Committee consider including the non-discrimination policy in TNI's Code of Conduct, which does exist but not as a controlled document. The committee reviewed the "Conduct" document and finds that it lists numerous documents with which members should comply, so that list would appropriately be amended to contain the non-discrimination policy. The non-discrimination policy will be finalized for Board approval and the committee will revise the uncontrolled document, Guide for the Conduct of Participants "...", to become a controlled document that does include the non-discrimination policy, and recommends that the conduct guide be included in the planned revision to the TNI committee member training.
- Policy is also drafting a policy or procedure (unclear yet) to ensure that email documents can be appropriately archived and retrieved when needed. Jerry and TNI's webmaster have identified multiple options and two of these will form the basis of the new process. The need for this became acute when we learned that Ken Jackson's computer could not be accessed, to retrieve his email documents, but thankfully, they still resided on the Office 365 account.

## **Training**

- Current Classes being worked on:
  - Good Laboratory Practice – Internal Audits – Part II (Matt Sica) Ilona received an update from ANAB and a DRAFT for review is expected late May/early June. This class will focus on technical internal audits.
  - The Radiochemistry Expert Committee is working on Part 4 of 5 of the Understanding Radiochemistry Series. It will be held at 8am on Friday morning in during the Jacksonville meeting.
  - Ensuring Ethics in Your Testing (Marlene Moore) – this is a new webinar class that will be taught on June 6, 2019. The recommended audience for this class includes small labs, in-house labs, municipal labs doing simple tests such as pH, Cl2 residual, Bacteria, Solids, BOD, temperature, sampling and operators and compliance inspectors.

## **NEMC**

- NEMC sessions and technical papers have been finalized with 153 abstracts for oral presentations and 29 posters. All keynote and plenary speakers are confirmed. We have sold 56 exhibit tables with the potential to add four more if needed.
- Eleven abstracts for the Technology Showcase have been received and accepted so far. Submission process will be left open for one more.
- Hotel registration and conference registration in Jacksonville are open. Early registration at a reduced fee is open until June 10.

## **NGAB**

- IAS Evaluation: The onsite review was completed on March 28, 2019. IAS has been working on its Scope and completing corrective action with the assessed laboratory. A final Scope is expected early this week and then the Evaluation Report can be finalized and sent.

## **Membership**

- Active Members: 1082
- One new committee application was received.