

Summary of the TNI Competency Task Force Meeting
Wednesday, April 27, 2022 1:00 pm Eastern

1. Welcome and Roll Call

Ken welcomed everyone to the meeting. Attendance is recorded in Attachment 1. The minutes from February 23 and March 23 were approved by acclamation.

2. Discussion of Adding a New Member

Ken introduced the discussion by stating that Scott Siders, a long-time TNI member, has asked to join the Task Force, and invited current members to discuss adding a new member while in the middle of a defined activity (Quality Manager, at present). Several members remarked on Scott's passion for the work of TNI, and one noted that he is presently involved with the Quality Management Systems Expert Committee in trying to change the Technical Expert recommendation that this Task Force passed to QMS earlier this year. Ken reiterated that he seeks to work by consensus and that he welcomes individual conversations when there is dissent among the members, and expressed his confidence that the consensus process will continue to work for this Task Force. With no objections offered, Scott's membership in the Task Force will become effective for the May meeting.

3. Review of QM KSAs

Revised Section 3.4 – During the March meeting's review of the spreadsheet created by Ken to show the relationship of courses now available from TNI to the proposed digital badge requirements for each of the fourteen specialist categories identified, Jerry offered to prepare a "pilot" revision of §3.4, the Customer Service Specialist (CSS) badge, for the April meeting. The draft was inserted into the QM KSA document and distributed with the meeting agenda.

The revised draft distinguishes between captive and commercial laboratories, in the requirements needed for the CSS badge, which led to discussion about the terminology as well as the KSA content for the badge. Discussion produced the terminology of commercial and non-commercial labs as preferred terminology. Several options were offered to distinguish between the two, as follows:

- Non-commercial labs would typically have a smaller scope, while commercial labs would be full scope
- Non-commercial labs serve a single client that supports the work, while commercial labs are fee-for-service operations.

The terminology and definitions need to be clearly stated, perhaps as two different types of badge, with the non-commercial lab CSS KSAs/courses being required of all and some additional KSAs/courses required for commercial labs. Ken agreed to revise the course spreadsheet accordingly.

Section 3.5 – participants noted that the functions included in Measurement Traceability Specialist are typically performed in a lab by several different people, and often those individuals are at different levels of the organization. Consensus was that this badge with its associated KSAs should be removed and the KSAs assigned to other areas.

Section 3.2 – Lynn noted that the discussion had inadvertently skipped over §3.2 - 3.3, so the group backed up to 3.2, Data Integrity Specialist. Consensus was that this is an extremely important area in the lab, and also that the reference to "cherry-picking" of data should be rephrased in less colloquial terms.

The question arose about whether the included course “Establishing a Data Integrity Plan”, addresses storage and maintenance of records. As no one knew the answer, this led to a consensus request that the Task Force gather a syllabus for each course included in the badges, so that we can determine which KSAs are actually addressed in the courses, and if not, then find a way to address the missing KSAs. Lynn agreed to track these down, asking for a syllabus for each of the TNI courses, at least for the ones specified for the Quality Manager badges.

There are two very lengthy courses included in the proposed badge requirements, totaling 36 hours, which is a considerable impact on lab operations. The “Small Lab Implementation Series” (10 courses, 20 hours total) is listed for nearly every badge, so perhaps we could specify which module is relevant to a particular badge and require just that module, if the existing course is structured in a way to make that feasible.

The “Implementing the 2016 Standard” course (16 hours) is listed for every badge, so it would make better sense to simply make that course a prerequisite for any QM badge, and consider it a “core course” for Quality Managers. While this is definitely an important topic, perhaps we could create a revised training which summarizes the portions that do not address Quality Manager KSAs, to shorten the total time.

Ideally, TNI should structure the courses required for the various badges (and the QM credential) so that they provide the KSAs identified as necessary for a Quality Manager, rather than making do with existing courses which may or may not duplicate or skip over some of those KSAs. This aspect will be essential if we are to offer a credential that is worthy of respect in the environmental laboratory industry. One participant suggested that we also consider what the laboratory assessors expect from a Quality Manager, when they are assessing a lab.

At this point, time was expired. We will resume with section 3.3, Document Control Specialist, at the May meeting.

3. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Competency Task Force will be on **Wednesday, May 25, 2022, at 1 pm Eastern**. An agenda and any necessary documents will be sent in advance of the meeting.

Attachment 1

Competency Task Force Roster

NAME		EMAIL	AFFILIATION	Present?	
Aaren	Alger	aaren@alger-consulting.com	Alger Consulting & Tech.	No	1
Paul	Banfer	paul.banfer@eisc.net	EISC	Yes	2
Kenneth	Brown	kbrown@escondido.org	City of Escondido	Yes	3
Julia	Caprio	JKlensCaprio@Geosyntec.com	Geosyntec	Yes	4
Patricia	Carvajal	pmcarvajal@sara-tx.org	San Antonio River Authority	Yes	5
Kirstin	Daigle	Kirstin.daigle@pacelabs.com	Pace Laboratories	No	6
Steve	Drielak	drielak-associates@usa.net	Drielak & Associates	Yes	7
Amanda	Dutko	adutko@fairwaylaboratories.com	Fairway Laboratories	Yes	8
Stacey	Fry	sfry@babcocklabs.com	Babcock Laboratories	Yes	9
Silky	Labie	elcatllc@centurylink.net	ELCAT	No	10
Harold	Longbaugh	Harold.Longbaugh@houstontx.gov	City of Houston	Yes	11
Mike	Michaud	Mike.michaud@abilenetx.gov	City of Abilene	No	12
Mitzi	Miller	Mitzi.MQC@gmail.com	MQC	No	13
Sharon	Robinson	Sharon.Robinson@doh.nj.gov	New Jersey DOH	No	14
Joann	Slavin	Joann.slavin@health.ny.gov	NY ELAP	No	15
Alfredo	Sotomayor	asotomayor@mmsd.com	MMSD	Yes	16
Elizabeth	Turner	Elizabeth.turner@pacelabs.com	Pace Labs, Inc.	Yes	17
Staff:					
Jerry	Parr	Jerry.parr@nelac-institute.org	TNI Executive Director	No	
Lynn	Bradley	Lynn.bradley@nelac-institute.org	TNI Program Administrator	Yes	