

**Field Activities Expert Committee Meeting
TNI Forum on Laboratory Accreditation
Cambridge, MA
August 21, 2007**

Committee Members Present:

Glenn MacGraw (Vice-Chair)
Mike Miller
David Speis
Jan Wilson
Jim Eychaner
Elaine Sorbet
JoAnn Boyd
Ed Hartman
Pat Conlon

Not Present:

Dane Wren
Andrew Tintle
Eddie Clemons

Committee members gave self-introductions and Glenn MacGraw noted that a new Chair is being recruited for the committee. Additional committee members are also needed, as some current members are rotating off soon, so applications for new members are welcome.

It was announced that the two Field Sampling and Measurement Organization (FSMO) sector volumes were completed as TNI standards as of May 2007. The two volumes are:

Volume 1 - General Requirements for Field Sampling and Measurement Organizations

Volume 2 - General Requirements for Accreditation Bodies Accrediting Field Sampling and Measurement Organizations

Accreditation and Process Policy for FSMOs

David Speis reviewed the development of the Accreditation and process Policy for FSMOs document that was distributed at the session. He noted that development of the document was prompted by outreach to FSMO stakeholders and feedback from organizations outside of TNI, such as the Department of Defense (DoD). It is intended that the policy would accompany Volumes 1 and 2 as they are submitted to the NELAP Board for adoption. The policy is organized into four titles which each outline a potential model for how the FSMO accreditations are expected to function. Each model addresses the accreditation application, conducting applicant assessments, granting the accreditation, and continuation of accreditation. Each of the titles was reviewed in some detail as follows.

Title 1: Accreditation through Independent Accreditation Bodies

This title addresses accreditations that may be performed by non-governmental bodies. It was noted that item 4 (b) is amended to read "...as applicable *and available*." It was also discussed that identification of "qualified" assessors may be difficult due to a limited number of individuals with the appropriate experience. Title 1 covers both single facility accreditations and "umbrella" accreditations for FSMOs with multiple locations operating under a common quality system.

Title 2: Single Facility FSMO Accreditation Through Government Accrediting Bodies

This title describes an accreditation process similar to that already used by TNI, since it addresses accreditations performed by government accrediting bodies. It covers single facility accreditations only.

Title 3: Multiple Facility FSMO Accreditation Through Government Accrediting Bodies (Intrastate)

This title covers multiple facility accreditations, where all facility sites are within one state. In these cases the FSMO would apply to its home Accrediting Body (AB) if applicable.

Title 4: Multiple Facility FSMO Accreditation Through government Accrediting Bodies (Interstate)

This title covers multiple facility accreditations, where facility sites are located in multiple states. This policy allows for renewal assessments to be performed by other ABs if satellite sites are located in their state.

It was discussed who chooses when an independent AB could be used versus a NELAP AB, or whether both could be used. Independent ABs are anticipated to be used outside of NELAP states. NELAP states can also defer to 3rd parties for performance of assessments, but not for overall accreditation responsibility.

An additional policy for performing assessments for FSMOs was also suggested. Other comments included the potential need to redefine requirements for PT samples based on differences between FSMOs and traditional laboratories.

Ed Hartman moved to accept the policy document and forward to the TNI Policy Committee. Pat Conlon seconded. All Expert committee members present were in favor (Mike Miller not present for voting).

Pilot Test Set-up

Jim Eychaner reviewed the overall structure of the FSMO modules, which are based on an ISO model with operational requirements, technical requirements and documentation of the conditions of sample collection. The Expert Committee is undertaking a pilot study to determine potential issues, such as what may be missing from the standards, what is redundant, what is the level of effort and cost for both the FSMO and AB, etc. the goal is

to determine what is needed to be able to promote the standards as the basis of a national system.

Phase I of the pilot is targeted to both the FSMO and AB including the following:

- Both organizations read the standard
- FSMO outlines its operations to be accredited
- FSMO proposes scope of accreditation
- AB outlines the process/schedule/budget
- FSMO reviews budget
- Both organizations document and discuss issues that arise

John Moorman of the South Florida Management District is developing a checklist from the standard. The spreadsheet should be done in 2-4 weeks and will be circulated for comment. He does have some questions on how certain requirements will be audited. Michael Perry of the Southern Nevada Water Authority also may participate in the pilot.

The participants discussed the applicability of the standards and who will offer accreditation to them. EPA and DoD have expressed interest in the standards. Florida is interested as one of the existing NELAP ABs; others are not sure if they have the purview to accredit FSMOs or they don't have a significant volume of FSMO work. The NELAP Board can adopt the FSMO standards, but all NELAP states don't necessarily have to utilize them. The TNI Advocacy Committee can help with the creation of drivers with organizations like EPA. Outreach to other types of organizations such as engineering firms is needed so that they are convinced of the value in using accredited FSMOs for their work.

Other suggestions provided by participants are to develop a toolbox such as examples of an FSMO quality manual, and training on how to develop one. The TNI quality manual template could be adapted for this use. FL DEP also has SOPs that are publicly available that may help in this area as well. Monitoring and sampling plans are not currently a NELAC requirement, but some organizations may have them as part of non-NELAP accreditations. This could be an SOP under the FSMO standards that would address issues of scalability of the standards to the size of the operation seeking accreditation.

Another item for consideration is what end users want to see in the assessment report – stakeholders may want to see something different than is currently produced under NELAC assessments.

Glenn MacGraw again noted the need for an infusion of new members. Those interested can contact Glenn or another committee member and applications are on the TNI website.