

**Summary of the Laboratory Accreditation Body Expert Committee Meeting  
Tuesday, September 16, 2014**

**1. Welcome and Roll Call**

Jeff opened the meeting and the roll was called. Those present are noted in Appendix A. Minutes from July 15 and August 4, 2014, meetings were approved with Aurora abstaining from vote on the August minutes.

**2. Third Party Assessor Credentials**

As the group discussed the August 4 minutes, Jeff provided his reflections on the session at conference. As committee members had seen in email exchange after we circulated the draft proposal, fear levels ran high at the beginning of the session over the prospect of altering the current *ad hoc* process whereby each AB using Third Party Assessors (TPAs) identifies and solicits proposals from potential contractors, and performs its own version of checking credentials provided by the TPAs, whether they be individuals or organizations. As the session went on, and TPAs came to believe that their concerns were being heard and would be considered (not dismissed), the mood shifted to cautious, and valuable perspectives were exchanged.

While LAB intends to honor its charge from the TNI Board, neither this committee nor the Board seeks to impose simply another layer of bureaucratic “requirements” on TPAs. Given the preceding presentation at conference – about the generic application, and how its utility became obvious to NELAP ABs once they saw how it could help them do their screening of secondary accreditation applications more efficiently – that concept carried over into the TPA discussion. If TPAs can provide, one time and all in the same place, all of the information that each NELAP AB uses in its procurement processes, then that can actually be a savings for the TPAs, rather than a burden – a single application containing all information desired by all ABs.

And, there has never been any intent to impose new requirements, beyond the existing standard, for qualifying TPAs. “Credentials” means those items that demonstrate how the TPA (whether individual or organization) meets the requirements of the standard – specific education and training, as well as experience.

We then discussed specific modifications to the proposal that was previously approved by LAB and circulated for comment, and presented at conference. The revised version is appended to these minutes, while a “track changes” version will accompany the minutes when sent to committee members.

Changes included adding a paragraph about avoiding redundancy by recognizing any and all existing processes for qualifying assessors, to the extent possible, and combining certain paragraphs with (hopefully) improved explanations of intent.

The TNI Board meets again on November 12. This will allow LAB to review and discuss, and revise as warranted, the revised proposal at its October 21 meeting, and still have an approved version to submit to the Board at its next meeting.

**3. Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the LAB Expert Committee will be Tuesday, October 21, 2014, at 11 am Eastern. A reminder will be sent the week before.

## Appendix A

## LAB Expert Committee Roster

Name/Email	Term ends	Affiliation	Present?
Joseph Aiello <a href="mailto:joseph.aiello@dep.state.nj.us">joseph.aiello@dep.state.nj.us</a>	12/31/2016	AB - NJ State Department of Environmental Protection	Yes
Nilda Cox <a href="mailto:nildacox@eurofinsus.com">nildacox@eurofinsus.com</a>	12/31/2014	Lab –Eurofins-Eaton Analytical Inc.	Yes
Jeff Flowers, Chair <a href="mailto:jeff@flowerslabs.com">jeff@flowerslabs.com</a>	12/31/2014	Lab – Flowers Chemical Laboratories, Inc.	Yes
Myron Getman <a href="mailto:mrg05@health.state.ny.us">mrg05@health.state.ny.us</a>	12/31/2014	AB – NY Department of Health	No
Chris Gunning <a href="mailto:cgunning@A2LA.org">cgunning@A2LA.org</a>	12/31/2014	AB – A2LA	No
Virginia Hunsberger <a href="mailto:vhunsberge@pa.gov">vhunsberge@pa.gov</a>	12/31/2014	AB – PA Department of Environmental Protection	No
Lucrina Jones <a href="mailto:Jones.Lucrina@epa.gov">Jones.Lucrina@epa.gov</a>	12/31/2016	Other -- EPA Region 9 Laboratory	Yes
Carl Kircher, Vice Chair <a href="mailto:carl_kircher@doh.state.fl.us">carl_kircher@doh.state.fl.us</a>	12/31/2015	AB – Florida Department of Health	No
Rebecca Pierrot <a href="mailto:Rebecca.Pierrot@ALSGlobal.com">Rebecca.Pierrot@ALSGlobal.com</a>	12/31/2015	Lab – ALS	No
Aurora Shields <a href="mailto:ashields@lawrenceks.org">ashields@lawrenceks.org</a>	12/31/2015	Lab – City of Lawrence, KS	Yes
Program Administrator: Lynn Bradley <a href="mailto:Lynn.Bradley@nelac-institute.org">Lynn.Bradley@nelac-institute.org</a>	N/A		Yes
Associate Members:			
Nirmela Arsem <a href="mailto:narsem@ebmud.com">narsem@ebmud.com</a>		Other – East Bay Municipal Utility District (San Francisco Bay area)	No
Doug Leonard <a href="mailto:dleonard@L-A-B.com">dleonard@L-A-B.com</a>		AB – Laboratory Accreditation Bureau	No
Jeff Lowry <a href="mailto:JeffL@phenova.com">JeffL@phenova.com</a>		Other -- Phenova (PTP)	No
Judy Quigley <a href="mailto:JQuigley@dep.nyc.gov">JQuigley@dep.nyc.gov</a>		Lab – NYC DEP	YES – announced Retirement and Resignation from LAB Expert Cmte
Guests: none			

## Appendix B

### **TNI Recognition of Assessors for Contracting with NELAP ABs**

The LAB Expert Committee is preparing a proposal for a voluntary program to address the charge from the TNI Board to implement Option 4 of the Final Report of the AB Assistance Task Force (July 2011.) LAB offered a proposal to the TNI Board on January 8, 2013, for how to proceed. The Board approved the initial listing of individuals and organizations available to work as contract or third party assessors (TPAs) and LAB was asked to prepare a more detailed proposal for a program to provide a vetted credentialed community of TPAs that are qualified to conduct assessments in support of NELAP Accreditation Bodies.

This document is a suggested outline for that more detailed proposal, with steps in roughly chronological order.

1. Establish a staff position and committee to support this activity.
  - 2a. Use collective knowledge of the LAB as incorporated into the templates on the TPA website plus assessor qualifications as specified in V2M1 § 6.2.6.3 and V2M3 §4.2.3-4.2.5 as baseline qualifications
  - 2b. Survey NELAP ABs and NGABs briefly to determine what training and experience are required and offered in current contracts and for in-house assessors (per V2 of 2009 TNI ELSS) as well as how on-going monitoring of assessors is conducted. If actual written tests are used, obtain example tests, if possible, for various scopes per V2M3 §4.2.6 (these may need to be held confidentially at the staff level.) At minimum, the scopes would be the technical disciplines listed in the “note” of V2M3 §4.2.4
  - 2c. Merge that information into a preliminary checklist or matrix for assessor qualifications for lead assessor, assessor and as required expertise for the various scopes. Establish a matrix of suitable training and experience for assessors in the areas noted in V2M1 §6.2-6.3 and V2M3 §4 of the TNI Environmental Laboratory Sector Standard (ELSS).
3. Determine whether and how well the credentials of existing TPAs match that matrix and use that as the basis for creating a model set of credentials that each AB could use to eliminate redundancies in the TPA applications and AB approval processes.
4. Vet that matrix with the existing NELAP ABs, understanding that it would initially apply ONLY to TPAs. Adapt as warranted within the language of V2, with the goal of creating a single uniform way of presenting TPA qualifications that is usable by all NELAP ABs
5. Agree on appropriate personal attributes and incorporate those into a standardized interview which could be used with all TPAs would undergo (videoconference if not in person) during the contracting/hiring process (*From ISO 19011 – ethical, open-minded, diplomatic, observant, perceptive, versatile, tenacious, decisive and self-reliant.*) Interview to include verbal check on credentials presented, also.
6. Determine form of recognition to be awarded upon vetting the submitted credentials.
7. Establish acceptable AB/TNI evaluation techniques and tools for on-going monitoring of performance and competence of TPAs, plus settle on acceptable refresher training. Include

recognition of in-service observations of assessments as well as continuing education opportunities.

8. Establish feedback mechanism for peers and laboratories to reduce program redundancy and minimize costs.

9. Succession planning: Investigate necessity and practicality of identifying suitable commercial courses or establishing TNI training for future assessors, whether online or in person, for both basis assessor training as well as in the technical disciplines. **PERFORM THIS STEP CONCURRENTLY WITH STEPS 2-8.**