

Summary of the Laboratory Accreditation Committee Meeting March 9, 2007

1. Roll call.

The regular meeting of the TNI Laboratory Accreditation Committee (LAC) was called to order by June Flowers, chair, on March 9, 2007, at 11:00 p.m. EST. Attendance is recorded in Attachment A.

2. Previous minutes

Minutes from the February 9, 2007 meeting were reviewed and approved for posting on the TNI website.

3. Policy on standards Interpretation

The draft policy for standards interpretation (Attachment B) prepared by a subcommittee of Jack McKenzie, Lance Boynton and Stacy Freeburg was discussed. Key points to the discussion included:

- Was this document a policy or an SOP?
The consensus seemed to be that this was an SOP.
- What is the appropriate format for a TNI SOP?
Since TNI has not adopted a formal SOP format, June suggested that the EPA SOP format could be used. June also has a lab SOP format. Carol will check with Alfredo Sotomayor to see when the TNI format will be ready.
- What timelines were appropriate for completing the process outlined in the SOP?
Since volunteers will be involved in the process, there was concern that a rigid timeline might not work. A suggestion was made that the entire process should not take more than 90 days and the timelines for the various steps could be flexible. There could be suggested timelines for each step.

As a next step, June will revise the draft into an SOP format with a table for suggested timelines. A standard form for submitting the request for standards interpretation will also be developed. June will try to have this done by March 23 for a subcommittee conference call.

4. Next meeting

The next meeting of the LAC will be April 13, 2007, at 10:00 am CDT.

Attachment A

PARTICIPANTS

TNI

LABORATORY ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE

Member	Affiliation	Contact Information
Ann Marie Allen	Massachusetts, Non-nelac AB	
Jo Ann Boyd - absent	Southwest Research Institute, Lab	
Lance Boynton	Absolute Standards, Inc., PT	
Lewis Denny	Florida DOH, AB	
George Detsis - absent	Department of Energy, Government	T: 301-903-1488 E: george.detsis@eh.doe.gov
Dan Dickinson	New York DOH, AB	
June Flowers - Chairperson	Flowers Chemical Laboratories, Inc., Lab	
Stacey Freeburg - absent	IA University Hygienic Laboratory, Lab	
Terry Grimes- Absent	Pinellas County Utilities, Municipal Lab	
Dan Hickman	Oregon DEQ, AB	
Marvelyn Humphrey- absent	USEPA Region 6, EPA	
Roger Kenton	Eastman Chemical Company,	
Judy Morgan	Environmental Science Corporation, Lab	
Jack McKenzie	Kansas DHE, AB	
Leyla Perez-	Babcock Laboratories, Lab	
Dale Piechocki	Underwriters Laboratories, Inc., Lab	
Ilona Taunton - absent	TestAmerica Analytical Testing Corp., Lab,	
Carol Batterton -	TNI Administrator	

Attachment B

POLICY ON NELAC STANDARD INTERPRETATION

TNI Version: 1.0 February 26, 2007

The purpose of this policy is to provide a process to follow for interpretations of the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Conference (NELAC) Standard. This policy may be initiated by a NELAP evaluator, a NELAP recognized Accrediting Body (AB), a NELAP accredited laboratory, a laboratory seeking NELAP accreditation or any member of The NELAC Institute (TNI).

TNI Disclaimer: Please note this is only an interpretation process for the NELAC Standard. Any disputes between a laboratory and their AB regarding accreditation can only be handled through the appropriate appeals process established by applicable state laws and regulations. The interpretation process is not intended to interfere with a NELAP accrediting body's legal authority to grant, deny, suspend, or revoke accreditation. This policy is not appropriate nor designed to deal with those matters.

PROCESS:

1. Submit a request for interpretation of a NELAC Standard in writing to the chairperson of the NELAP Board. This request shall include the name of the party(ies), the name of the organization(s), a contact name, address, telephone number, e-mail address, reference for the NELAC Standard in question and a statement of the need for the interpretation.
2. Upon receipt of the request, the Chair of the NELAP Board will evaluate the request to determine whether the issue needs to be addressed by the Laboratory Accreditation Committee (LAC) under this policy.
3. If the NELAP Board determines the issue at hand needs an interpretation through this policy, the chairperson of the NELAP Board will establish an initial teleconference within 14 days between the interested parties and the LAC when deemed appropriate for the request at hand.
4. The LAC may choose to deal with a question of interpretation by in any or all of the following manners.
 - a. As a committee,
 - b. Appointing a sub committee to give recommendations to the committee, or/and
 - c. Contacting a standard expert committee to help the LAC with the interpretation.
5. The LAC will have 45 days to reach consensus on the NELAC Standard and provide their interpretation to the NELAP Board in writing.
6. Before finalizing a interpretation the NELAP Board will evaluate the interpretation to determine if the following conditions are met:
 - a. The interpretation must answer the original question;
 - b. The interpretation must not go beyond the original question; and

- c. The interpretation must be within the boundaries and scope of the standard, that is, an interpretation is neither a new standard nor an addition to the current standard.
7. If the interpretation does not meet these requirements the NELAP Board will send the interpretation back to the LAC with an explanation and the interpretation process will be initiated. The chairperson of the NELAP Board will notify the party who submitted the request of the status of the interpretation.
8. Once the NELAP Board agrees that the interpretation is finalized, the chairperson of the NELAP Board will have 7 days to inform the party(ies) involved with the interpretation request of the final interpretation.
9. Once the party(ies) involved with the interpretation request have been informed of the final interpretation a copy of the interpretation will be placed on the TNI website and will be available to the TNI membership within 14 days.
10. The consensus interpretation must be recognized by the NELAP evaluators, the NELAP recognized AB's, and the NELAP accredited laboratories. The interpretation is in effect until such a time as the NELAC Standard is changed or another consensus interpretation has been issued.