

Laboratory Accreditation System Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

February 27, 2013 1 pm Eastern

1) Welcome and Roll Call

This meeting was convened to discuss the Board-approved merger of the TNI Technical Assistance Committee (TAC) into the Laboratory Accreditation System Executive Committee (LAS EC.) Rolls of both committees were called, and attendance is recorded in Attachment A.

[NOTE: a more formal roster will be created once final membership is established for the combined committee.]

2) Background of the Merger

Judy Morgan opened the discussion by saying that our goal is to successfully merge these two committees while maintaining all of their valuable functions. She invited Jerry Parr to provide some background on the rationale for the merger.

The two committee charters state similar missions, plus both committees have roughly half of their membership with expiring terms this year. Since TNI was formed roughly six years ago, and committee members are limited to two 3-year terms, this is an issue for nearly all of our committees.

Jerry noted that TAC did a LOT of work in the training area, as asked by the Accreditation Body Task Force, and that successful effort contributed greatly to TNI's relatively new Educational Delivery System (EDS.)

In the past, TAC was not required to be a "balanced" committee, whereas LAS EC is and will continue to be. From the stakeholder groups of the combined members, there is no reason to anticipate difficulty in achieving this balance, going forward. Because of the LAS' role in supporting the NELAP Accreditation Council (AC,) this balance and broad perspective is a vital part of the AC's programmatic support.

The ongoing functions of the two committees are as follows. Some will be standing subcommittees while others will be *ad hoc* groups formed as work needs to be performed.

- Assessment Forum (a subcommittee)
- Mentor Sessions (a subcommittee)
- Standards Interpretation Requests (a subcommittee)
- SIR SOP (ad hoc)
- Standards Review (ad hoc)
- Training – support to EDS (ad hoc)
- Small Lab Advocacy (an ongoing activity, unclear which type of group yet, but the Small Lab Advocate will be an Ex-Officio Member of LAS EC, going forward.)

3) Updating the Combined Charter

Prior to this teleconference, invitees were sent a rough draft of a charter that included the separate missions and implementing activities from the existing committees. Through discussion, a revised draft charter was formulated with the mission, objectives, success measures, and key milestones for 2013. The combined language follows:

Mission:

The mission of this committee is to manage TNI's efforts in supporting a national program for the accreditation of environmental laboratories, by supporting the NELAP Accreditation Bodies and enabling stakeholders such as laboratories, proficiency testing providers and data users to efficiently participate, adopt, implement and comply with the TNI standards.

Objectives:

- Will work in cooperation with the NELAP Accreditation Council to assist in implementing this program
- Will work with the Consensus Standard Development Program Executive Committee to ensure that accreditation standards developed for this program are suitable for use – both standards review and facilitating early input of AB and laboratory community needs into the development process
- Review new or revised standards after approval for the purpose of recommending them to the NELAP Accreditation Council for adoption
- Manage involvement and assistance of Expert Committees and the PT Executive Committee as appropriate for standards interpretations, guidance documents and related tools
- Develop tools and templates to assist laboratories and accreditation bodies with implementing accreditation programs.
- Support TNI's Educational Delivery System in providing training programs relevant to the needs of the NELAP stakeholder community.
- Ensure that laboratory assessors have a forum to discuss common issues (Assessment Forum)
- Develop a mentoring program to assist both laboratories and accreditation bodies with implementing accreditation programs (Mentor Sessions)
- Provide a voice and solution strategies for small organizations' issues and concerns (small laboratories, especially)
- Provide a peer review mechanism for documents.
- Develop and recommend to the NELAP Accreditation Council policies and procedures, standards interpretations, guidance documents, and any related tools to implement NELAP

Success Measures:

- Process Standards Interpretation Requests in timely fashion, consistently applying SOP 3-105
- Reviewing and providing recommendations to NELAP Board on TNI standards, policies and SOPs as needed or requested
- Maintaining active liaison with the Small Laboratory Advocacy Group (SLAG) through active involvement of TNI's Small Laboratory Advocate

- Providing Assessment Forums at TNI conferences, both winter and summer
- Providing Mentor Sessions at TNI conferences, both winter and summer
- Respond in timely manner to requests from TNI Educational Delivery System

Key Milestones:

- Develop and maintain the Standards Interpretation Request SOP 3-105 (revision complete by July 2013)
- Assessment Forum and Mentor Session (January 2013, Denver)
- Assessment Forum and Mentor Session (August 2013, San Antonio)
- Working with the NELAP Accreditation Council, complete the processing of 90% of Standards Interpretation Requests that have been pending longer than 12 months (“backlog” eliminated by December 2013)

The revised draft charter will be sent to all members of both committees with a request to respond by March 12 with 1) whether they are interested in continuing on the LAS EC and 2) if so, which of the subcommittees or activities they prefer. Each committee member is expected to be involved with at least one activity, and if necessary due to the 15-member size limit for committees, some individuals may need to change to Associate Members but would still be involved with one of the subcommittees or *ad hoc* groups. From these responses, a committee roster with subcommittee assignments and preferred activities will be created, and negotiable staggered terms tentatively assigned prior to the next meeting.

5) Next Meeting

The next meeting of the LAS EC will be on Tuesday, March 26, at 1:30 pm Eastern. The agenda will be to discuss and revise or approve the draft Charter, and initiate activities according to the subcommittees and ongoing activities of the group. (For ongoing activities, see Appendix B.) Subcommittee chairs and Ad Hoc group leaders will determine their own meeting times as needed for their diverse tasks.

Action Items are included in Attachment B.

The meeting was adjourned at about 3 pm Eastern time.

Attachment A – PARTICIPANTS

Ann Marie Allen, 2006	no
Aaren Alger, 2009	no
Jo Ann Boyd, 2006	no
Carol Barrick, 2008	Yes
Kristin Brown, 2010	Yes
Kirstin Daigle, 2011	No
George Detsis2006	Yes
Terry Grimes, 2006	No
Carol Haines, 2012	No
Roger Kenton	No
Judy Morgan, 2006, Chair	Yes
Mitzi Miller, 2011	No
Julia Sudds, 2012	No
<u>Current TAC</u>	
David Caldwell, 2006	Yes
Keith Chapman – Ex Officio	No
Gary Dechant, 2010	No
Maurice Downer, 2008	No
Barbara Escobar, 2006	Yes
Jack Farrell, 2006	No
Bill Hall, 2006	No
Ronald Houck, 2008	No
Betsy Kent, 2006	No
Carl Kircher, 2012	Yes
Christelle Newsome, 2012	No
William Ray, 2012	No
Kin Sandrock, 2012	Yes
Carol Schrenkel, 2008	Yes
Gale Warren, 2008	No
Leslie Wentland, 2008	No
<u>Guest:</u>	

Jerry Parr, TNI Exec. Dir.	Yes
<u>Program Administrator</u>	
Lynn Bradley	yes

