

**Microbiology Expert Committee (MEC)
Meeting Summary**

December 10, 2013

1. Roll Call and Minutes:

Patsy Root, Vice-Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:30pm EST. Attendance is recorded in Attachment A – there were 5 members present. Associate Members present: Carl Kircher and Randi McCuin.

(Addition: The November 12, 2014 minutes were distributed for review and voted on by e-mail. Patsy motioned to accept the minutes as distributed. The motion was seconded by Dwayne. Vote: 7 – For (Patsy, Dwayne, Elizabeth, Robin, Donna, Karla, Mary) 0- Against 3 – No Vote (Colin, Deb, Po). The motion passed.)

Associate members need to let Robin and Ilona know they own a copy of ISO 17025 so they can be included in distributions of the draft working standard updates.

2. Charter

Mary has agreed to continue on the committee. Karla is asking for the OK. Po has not been reached yet. *(Update: Po will be continuing on the committee.)*

The vote for the new committee member has not been closed yet. Robin is following up on this and should have results by the next meeting.

(Update: Voting results: Patsy motioned to add the new member. The motion was seconded by Elizabeth. Final Vote: 9 – For (Patsy, Elizabeth, Colin, Dwayne, Mary, Karla, Deb, Donna, Robin) 0 – Against 1 – Abstain or No Vote (Po). The motion was approved.)

Patsy pulled up the revised charter for any additional comments. Membership will be finalized by the next call and the committee will vote on the final charter. The charter is due the CSDP by 1-15-14.

3. Standard Interpretation Request (SIRs)

SIR #98 and #132:

Ilona and Carl provided a summary of how SIRs are handled and how they came to this committee.

Ilona commented that SIR #98 is related to SIR #132 and both should be looked at at the same time. She also commented that the 2003 standard should be looked at because they are asking for an interpretation related to that standard.

One of the things the committee needs to do is to look at all SIRs related to Microbiology and to consider whether they have been addressed in the standard update. Ilona will pull all relevant SIRs and get them to the Committee before the next meeting.

Carl noted that the committee can also determine that this is not a SIR and should be part of an FAQ page. The initial review by LASEC is that it is a SIR.

Ilona noted that if the issue is addressed in the 2009 standard, it might be acceptable to take the wording from the standard and use it in the response. The Committee wants to review the 2003 and 2009 standards and provide comment by e-mail to help develop a response at the next meeting.

Ilona noted that once the NELAP AC votes in agreement to the SIR response it is posted on the website and becomes an official interpretation of the standard that all ABs and labs are to follow.

There was a lot of discussion about why something inspected and documented by the vendor needs to be rechecked by the lab. Patsy noted that labs outside of the US don't have to recheck. Why do US labs have to? Robin noted this is an AB decision. This should be further discussed as the standard is updated.

SIR # 133:

Comments: It all depends on how the laboratory defines their day of use. Carl commented that he believes the standard states that the day of use is 12:01am to midnight.

The answer to the question is "no". The lab would not be in compliance with the 2003 standard. This SIR issue needs to be considered in the current standard update.

Dwayne provided the following comment by e-mail on 12/5/13:

SIR #133 There seem to be multiple questions here

- 1) *Q: "The laboratory has free standing incubators that are not used every day for testing and turns them off and on with use. There would be times when the laboratory does not have temperatures documented twice per day with at least 4 hours apart for days of use"*

A: There is no intent in the requirement for laboratories to take the temperature of an incubator when there are no samples being incubated. If a laboratory turns on an incubator in the afternoon and begins incubating samples in the afternoon,

then it would be expected that the laboratory take a temperature reading in the afternoon for that day-of-use. There is no expectation for the laboratory to have taken a temperature reading in the morning when samples were not being incubated.

- 2) *Q: “If the laboratory records the temperature when the samples are put in the incubator and when the samples are taken out, would this meet the standard?”*

A: No, taking a temperature when samples are put in the incubator and when the samples are taken out of the incubator does not meet the standard. If sample incubation begins in the morning then it is required that a temperature be taken that morning and a temperature taken in the afternoon at least 4 hours apart. It is also required that a temperature be taken the next morning and, for tests requiring greater than 24 hours incubation, taken in the afternoon at least 4 hours apart. Samples requiring a 24 hour incubation may not need an afternoon reading because no samples are being incubated at that time.

- 3) *S: “The laboratory would continue to record the normal morning and afternoon temperatures along with the times the samples were placed in and taken out of the incubator.”*

A: There is no prohibition on a laboratory taking additional temperature readings of an incubation unit over the required 2 times a day at least 4 hours apart.

My thoughts: The intent of the standard is to check the temperature of the incubation unit twice daily (morning and afternoon, separated by at least 4 hours) during days-of-use (periods of use). I believe it was written in the spirit of a standard 8 hour working day not a 24 hour calendar day. It is also written in the spirit of day of use meaning during periods of time in which samples are being incubated. Therefore, for most laboratories temperatures are to be taken in the morning (i.e. between 8 and 12) if samples are being incubated at any time during the morning hours and taken again in the afternoon (between 12 and 4) if samples are being incubated at any time during the afternoon hours. These two readings must be at least 4 hours apart (i.e. 9AM and 1PM, 11AM and 3PM). Some laboratories may operate during non-standard hours or operate in several shifts. In these cases the laboratory can discuss with its primary AB when temperature readings are expected to meet the intent of the standard.

Ilona noted that there are notes in the SIR that point out that the response was already re-written by the LASEC and the NELAP AC still did not agree with it. The NELAP AC feels the standard is clear on this topic and that an interpretation is not necessary. The LASEC wants to know if this concern was addressed in the 2009 standard or if it is being addressed in the update this committee is working on. It would be appropriate to word a response this committee agrees with based on the 2003 standard or go back to the LASEC with a comment that this is not a SIR and provide information on what this committee is doing to ensure this is clear in the new standard.

Patsy will work on a response to distribute to the group. She will have something together to send to the group next Tuesday.

Conclusion:

Ilona will send an email to the entire committee to start a conversation regarding a response to #98 and #132. People need to review the 2003 Standard in order to be able to respond to the SIR. Patsy will send out a response to #133 for comment.

5. Standard Review

The Committee looked at the language changed in the standard update Robin prepared and distributed. No one expressed any concerns about the changes that were made.

6. Action Items

A summary of action items can be found in Attachment B. The action items were reviewed and updated.

7. New Business

Continue to review the Standard Robin sent and look for opportunities for improvement.

8. Next Meeting and Close

The next meeting will be January 14th at 1:30pm EST.

A summary of action items and backburner/reminder items can be found in Attachment B and C.

A motion to dismiss the meeting was made by Donna and unanimously approved. Seconded by Patsy. The meeting ended at 2:45 pm EST.

Attachment A
Participants
Microbiology Expert Committee (MEC)

Members	Affiliation	Balance	Contact Information	
Robin Cook (Chair) Present (15 min)	City of Daytona Beach EML	Lab	(386)671-8885	cookr@codb.us
Patsy Root (Vice-chair) Present	IDEXX Laboratories, Inc	Other	(207)556-8947	patsy-root@idexx.com
Karla Ziegelmann- Fjeld Present	Microbiologics, Inc	Other		kfjeld@microbiologics.com
Donna Ruokonen Present	Microbac Laboratories, Inc	Lab	(219)769-8378 Ext 110	druokonen@microbac.com
Colin Fricker Absent	Analytical Services, Inc	Lab		colinfricker@aol.com
Deb Waller Absent	NJ DEP	AB	(609)984-7732	debra.waller@dep.state.nj.us
Dwayne Burkholder Absent	Pennsylvania DEP	AB	(717)346-8213	dburkholde@pa.gov
Mary Robinson Present	Indiana State DOH	AB	(317)921-5523	mrobinson@isdh.in.gov
Elizabeth Turner Absent	North Texas Municipal Water District	Lab	(972)442-5405 Ext 535	eturner@ntmwd.com
Po Chang Absent	Texas Commission on Environmental Quality	AB	(512)239-4876	Po.chang@tceq.texas.gov
Ilona Taunton (Program Administrator) Present	The NELAC Institute	n/a	(828)712-9242	ilona.taunton@nelac-institute.org

Attachment B

Action Items – MEC

	Action Item	Who	Expected Completion	Actual Completion
1	Review Method Codes and send comments to Robin for Dan Hickman.	Deb	TBD	
4	Review Handbook and Method Codes before next meeting.	ALL	5/7/13	Handbook Complete.
11	The issue of how to recertify media will be looked at by Colin.	Colin	January Meeting	He will be working on it during the holidays and getting input.
12	Research possible effects of using bromine and whether it needs to somehow be included in the standard. Does not look like it.	Deb	November Meeting	
13	Send updated copy of Standard that includes the changes discussed to date.	Robin	10/31/13	Complete
14	Compile SIRs related to Microbiology for the Standard update.	Ilona	1/7/14	
15	Prepare response to SIR #133 for comment by e-mail.	Patsy	12/17/13	
16	Send out SIRs to committee with instructions to begin developing a response by e-mail.	Ilona	12/17/13	

