

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

**February 11, 2016**

1. Roll Call and Minutes:

Robin Cook, Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:18pm EST by teleconference on February 11, 2016 (call start delayed due to phone issues for Chair). Attendance is recorded in Attachment A – there were 8 members present. Associate Member present: Jennifer Hoch

The meeting minutes for December 8, 2015 and January 12, 2016 were reviewed. A motion was made by Patsy to accept the minutes from both of these meetings as written. The motion was seconded by Elizabeth and unanimously approved.

2. Committee Applications

Robin noted that she is expecting applications from Brad and Jessica. Ilona forwarded Jessica's application to the committee for review. The application includes a resume. Po noted that Jessica is a good candidate for the committee. She would be classified as an AB.

1:50pm: A motion was made by Patsy to add Jessica Hoch to the committee. The motion was seconded by Elizabeth and unanimously approved.

3. Tulsa Meeting

Ilona sent a copy of the summary prepared from the Tulsa meeting. It will be included as an attachment to today's meeting (Attachment D).

Robin and Ilona noted that the meeting went well in Tulsa and everyone stayed to talk about the Standard for the full 1.5 hours planned for the meeting.

4. Interim Standard Comments

Dwayne sent possible language to respond to the comments received:

Comment 40

1) Non-persuasive. Disinfection procedures that do not leave a residual, such as UV light, do not need to be checked for neutralization of the disinfectant.

- 2) Non-persuasive. If the disinfectant residual cannot be checked in the field and recorded then, in accordance with 1.7.5.2, the laboratory would need to check for the absence of disinfectant residual for the sample.
- 3) Non-persuasive. The requirement is to check for disinfectants that leaves a residual. The preservation criteria is in place to neutralize the disinfectants that leave a residual that can continue to act on the sample after collection. In section 1.7.5.2 we changed the word “chlorine” to “disinfectant” because it was brought up the use of bromine as a disinfectant which also leaves a residual and we wanted to use a general term to include the idea that chlorine was not the only disinfectant covered by this standard (i.e leave a residual). So in section 1.7.5.2 we are using the word disinfectant to mean those disinfectants that leave a residual and not all disinfectants which is further clarified by the use of the phrase “be checked for the absence of disinfectant residual in the laboratory” at the end of 1.7.5.2.

#### Comment 37

- 1) Non-persuasive. In parts a, b, c and d of section 1.7.5.2 we are listing the criteria to be met as an “exception” to the requirement to check the chemical preservation (neutralization) of samples. Here, in sections b and c, the use of the word “chlorine” instead of the general term “disinfectant” is appropriate because chlorine is what is being used as the “spike” to test the efficacy of the sodium thiosulfate.

#### Comment 35

- 1) Non-persuasive. Disinfection procedures that do not leave a residual, such as ozone, do not need to be checked for neutralization of the disinfectant. The general term “disinfectant” in 1.7.5.2 is used to mean disinfectants that leave a residual and not all disinfectants as indicated by the use of the phrase “be checked for the absence of disinfectant residual in the laboratory” at the end of 1.7.5.2. In 1.7.5.2 sections b and c, we use of the word “chlorine” instead of the general term “disinfectant” because chlorine is what is being used as the “spike” to test the efficacy of the sodium thiosulfate. This standard would apply to the use of bromine as a disinfectant because it also leaves a residual and sodium thiosulfate is the neutralizing agent for bromine as well so that a through d would apply to bromine as well as chlorine disinfectant.

#### Comment 30

- 1) Non-persuasive. In parts a, b, c and d of section 1.7.5.2 we are listing the criteria to be met as an “exception” to the requirement to check the chemical preservation (neutralization) of samples. If any item in 1.7.5.2 a through d are not met then, in accordance with 1.7.5.2, the laboratory would need to check for the absence of disinfectant residual for the sample. Sodium thiosulfate is used as the neutralizing agent in the case of both disinfectants that leave a residual that need to be neutralized and that is why it is specified in 1.7.5.2 b.

Robin noted at the last meeting that everyone agreed the comments were non-persuasive. Ilona reviewed the next steps. The committee does need to respond to the commenters and the response needs to be posted on the website. Robin will prepare the response table so the committee can vote on the responses.

The Standard does not need to be voted on by the committee again. Once the responses are complete the Standard can go the LASEC.

Elizabeth motioned to accept the responses as Dwayne stated above. There was no second. The committee preferred to vote on the completed spreadsheet. The spreadsheet will be completed and distributed to the committee to vote by email or at an upcoming meeting.

#### 5. Advocacy Document

Robin sent all comments in last week.

#### 6. Small Laboratory Handbook

Robin noted that QS would like to have the section to review by the summer meeting. Patsy and Mary sent their completed sections to Robin.

#### 7. Action Items

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

#### 8. New Business

- Dan Hickman will be asking for more help on method codes in the near future.

#### 9. Next Meeting and Close

The next meeting will be held on March 8, 2016 at 1:30pm Eastern. (*Additional Note: Meeting time changed to March 15, 2016.*)

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

Robin adjourned the meeting at 2:25 pm Eastern.

**Attachment A  
Participants  
Microbiology Expert Committee (MEC)**

<b>Members</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>	<b>Balance</b>	<b>Contact Information</b>	
Robin Cook (Chair) <b>Present</b>	City of Daytona Beach EML	Lab	(386)671-8885	<a href="mailto:cookr@codb.us">cookr@codb.us</a>
Patsy Root (Vice-chair) <b>Present</b>	IDEXX Laboratories, Inc	Other	(207)556-8947	<a href="mailto:patsy-root@idexx.com">patsy-root@idexx.com</a>
Karla Ziegelmann- Fjeld  <b>Present</b>	Microbiologics, Inc	Other		<a href="mailto:kfjeld@microbiologics.com">kfjeld@microbiologics.com</a>
Colin Fricker  <b>Absent</b>	Analytical Services, Inc	Lab		<a href="mailto:colinfricker@aol.com">colinfricker@aol.com</a>
Deb Waller  <b>Present</b>	NJ DEP	AB	(609)984-7732	<a href="mailto:debra.waller@dep.nj.gov">debra.waller@dep.nj.gov</a>
Dwayne Burkholder  <b>Present</b>	Pennsylvania DEP	AB	(717)346-8213	<a href="mailto:dburkholde@pa.gov">dburkholde@pa.gov</a>
Mary Robinson  <b>Present</b>	Indiana State DOH	AB	(317)921-5523	<a href="mailto:mrobinson@isdh.in.gov">mrobinson@isdh.in.gov</a>
Elizabeth Turner  <b>Present</b>	North Texas Municipal Water District	Lab	(972)442-5405 Ext 535	<a href="mailto:eturner@ntmwd.com">eturner@ntmwd.com</a>
Po Chang  <b>Present</b>		Other		<a href="mailto:Dr.PoChang@yahoo.com">Dr.PoChang@yahoo.com</a>
Gary Yakub  <b>Absent</b>	Environmental Standards, Inc.	Other	(610)935-5577	<a href="mailto:gyakub@envstd.com">gyakub@envstd.com</a>
Ilona Taunton (Program Administrator) <b>Present - Recorded</b>	The NELAC Institute	n/a	(828)712-9242	<a href="mailto:Ilona.taunton@nelac-institute.org">Ilona.taunton@nelac-institute.org</a>

## Attachment B

### Action Items – MEC

	<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Expected Completion</b>	<b>Actual Completion</b>
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.
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 2013 Meeting	
19	Provide EPA interpretation on temperature readings to Ilona. She will have it posted on the website.	Robin	1/31/14	
55	Ask Carl Kircher to prepare a table to list positive and negative organisms for specific tests.	Robin	12/31/15	
56	Prepare Draft or outline of assigned Handbook section. Email to committee.	All	12/7/15	
57	Prepare comments to Best Lab Practices document. Send email to committee.	All	12/7/15	Complete
58	Prepare DRAFT response to comments on the Standard and send to committee members.	Robin	2/9/16	



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

**January 26, 2016**

A committee quorum was not present to meet, so Robin decided to present information on the committee and then provide an open forum to receive comments and ideas on the Small Laboratory Handbook. She also provided an impromptu review of the changes made to the Standard by reviewing the presentation she did at Chicago NEMC.

Robin provided some history on the committee and reviewed the new committee charter.

- There are currently 10 committee members. She has 2 applications in and this will give her perfect balance – 4 labs, 4 ABs, 4 others.
- There were comments received on the Interim Standard. The committee is finalizing the response to comments and the committee will move it on as a Final Standard.

Small Laboratory Handbook

The committee is working on the microbiology chapter in the Small Laboratory Handbook.

There were quite a few suggestions from committee members and associate members to put more specifics into the Standard. Robin and other committee members decided that the Standard is not necessarily the place for all specifics, but the committee did think the suggestions were appropriate for the Small Lab Handbook. They will help the lab implement the Standard.

Robin asked for information on what people have trouble with? What kind of advice should be given to new labs? What kinds of issues do ABs see? etc ...

- Traceability.

Carl Kircher thinks the traceability is to the organism. Not to the supplies used to perform the test. Robin asked how can you find the organism if you don't have supplies that are working properly.

- Why 5? It has been accepted as good practice. In the 2009 std the reference is Module 5 1.7.3.6.c. The question was why sub culturing stops at 5 as opposed to some other number. I spoke a bit about mutation and subsequent generations and how quickly bacteria replicate etc.

- Robin described some of the documentation she uses in her lab. She takes the requirements and tweaks templates to make them work the lab. Templates help ensure traceability.
- The chlorine checks would be an area for guidance.
- The method states that the ideal range is 20-60, but the countable range can go to 200. Discussion regarding demonstrations of capability, or other types of checks and if a plate that was outside the ideal range could still be used as part of these demonstrations.
- Write down what you need to test for and how often if you prepare your own reagent water. If you buy it ... what has to be tested for and how often?
- Carl asked what methods are being considered in reference to the Small Laboratory Handbook? Are we only going to include the methods small labs typically run? Robin is not sure until she sees what she receives from the various committee members who are working on the update. Not adding the more complicated tests will still cover 90+% of all analysis ... so it may not be necessary.