

Summary of the NELAP Accreditation Council Meeting

October 3, 2011

1. Roll call and Approval of Minutes

The NELAP Accreditation Council (AC) met at 1:30 pm EDT on October 3, 2011. Minutes of the September 19 meeting were approved with changes noted. Those members in attendance are listed in Attachment 1.

2. Updates on AB renewals

Lynn reported on the status of ongoing evaluations:

CA – requested and received 30-day extension, application to be submitted late October

FL – technical review underway

KS – ET awaits revised SOPs to address technical review and findings from site visit.

NOTE: AC members suggested that KS amend its corrective action response, as a way to resolve the decision of whether to revise SOPs immediately and then in a few months, versus waiting until organizational structure is settled.

LA DHH – onsite completed; observation scheduled for November.

NH – awaiting onsite report, expected by mid-October. Delayed due to MN shutdown.

NJ – completeness review deficiencies have been addressed; technical review is underway.

NY – onsite report delivered September 29

PA – site visit this week, along with observation; the Region 3 staff will conduct their drinking water oversight of the non-NELAP (dual) program, the end of the week.

UT – onsite report sent; response due next week

Follow-up from previous AC meeting: Voting on the Drinking Water (DW) and Chemical & Solid Materials (SCM) Field of Proficiency Testing (FoPT) Tables was completed, and both tables were adopted unanimously.

3. Extending the Recognition of ABs Undergoing the Evaluation Process

Lynn asked that the AC act in accordance with section 6.15 of the Evaluation SOP (SOP 3-102, rev. 3, pending approval by the TNI Policy Committee) to extend the Recognition Certificates of KS, NH, and LA DHH, since these evaluations are taking longer than the anticipated 270 days. All 3 of those certificates expired September 15, 2011. Aaren asked that PA, UT, and NY be included, since PA & UT expire October 20 and NY expires November 3, making it unlikely that these three will be completed before their expiration dates; this would prevent having to hold a similar vote at the next AC meeting.

Extensive discussion ensued, about how best to ensure that the ABs are not given unlimited time to complete their evaluations, including some discussion about the role of Provisional Recognition in the process, but it was finally agreed that the Evaluation Teams

are already charged with determining how long is enough. All time delays thus far have been due to workload issues for the state AB staff leading or serving on the teams, including aftermath of the Minnesota government shutdown; none have been due to ABs delaying the process.

For the record, provisional recognition would not be a possibility until the team recommendations are prepared for AC consideration.

A motion was made to extend the recognition for each of the six (6) ABs until the recommendation of its Evaluation Team can be voted upon by the AC. The voting was accomplished with one roll call -- each AB voted on all 6 extensions, or else recused itself from the vote on its recognition and voted for the other 5, if it was affected. The four absent ABs were polled by email, and as of close-of-business the following day (October 4, 2011), all extensions were unanimously approved.

No AB has had its recognition lapse; all 15 AB recognitions are still in effect. For most, these minutes will serve as the extension's "temporary certificate" but upon request, an AB may receive a letter from the AC Chair stating that its recognition continues beyond the date on its certificate. PA indicated that it does not require a letter; its recognition and evaluation are being handled by the AC Vice Chair, Steve Stubbs (TX.)

Per the Evaluation SOP, at the end of the evaluation cycle, renewal certificates will be dated to expire 3 years from the current certificate's date. It was recommended that the next round of evaluations begin a year in advance, instead of 9 months; this change can be made to the SOP along with others that may become apparent during the current evaluation cycle.

4. Further Discussion on the draft Bill of Rights for Labs

Cathy briefed the AC about her conversation with Alfredo Sotomayor, Chair of the Consistency Improvement Task Force, about the draft Bill of Rights. She shared her concerns that the "interpretive" wording used in this document, modified from the standard itself, actually becomes misleading and in some cases, could imply "rights" not part of the actual standard, and that, while a positive document supporting the laboratory's active role in accreditations has value, a "bill of rights" might not be the most appropriate format to convey that message. Additionally, some cited references to the standard are incorrect or irrelevant to the text of the draft document, and some typos require correction. Alfredo was receptive to these comments and committed to taking them back to the workgroup that drafted the document.

5. WET PT Issues

The PT Expert Committee had asked the AC to formulate a recommendation for how to address the conflict that PTs for WET are presently required by the standard, because they are included in the FoPT tables, but yet only one PT/year is available and that through the DMRQA. Since neither PT representative (Eric Smith, PT Executive Committee, or Mitzi Miller, PT Expert Committee) was able to participate in the call, this issue will be addressed at the next meeting.

NOTE: After the AC meeting, the PT Expert Committee has expressed its belief that this issue must be addressed urgently, and in email correspondence following the AC meeting,

has sought to involve the Consensus Standards Development Executive Committee as well as the TNI Board of Directors to ensure rapid resolution

6. Next meeting

The next AC meeting will be Monday October 17, at 1:30 pm EDT. Agenda items (thus far) will be:

- Welcome and Roll Call
- Approval of Minutes
- Update on Renewals
- Discussion and possible vote on WET PT issue – Eric Smith and Mitzi Miller invited as resource people
- Other issues that may appear before the meeting convenes

Attachment 1

STATE	REPRESENTATIVE	PRESENT
CA	George Kulasingam T: (510) 620-3155 F: (510) 620-3165 E: gkulasin@cdph.ca.gov	no
	Alternate: Jane Jensen E: jjensen@cdph.ca.gov	yes
FL	Stephen Arms T: (904) 791-1502 F: (904) 791-1591 E: steve_arms@doh.state.fl.us	no
	Alternate: Carl Kircher E: carl_kircher@doh.state.fl.us	no
IL	Scott Siders T: (217) 785-5163 F: (217) 524-6169 E: scott.siders@illinois.gov	no
	Alternate: TBA	
KS	Michelle Wade E: MWade@kdheks.gov Ph: (785) 296-6198 Fax: (785) 296-1638	yes
	Alternate: none	no
LA DEQ	Paul Bergeron T: 225-219-3247 F: 225-325-8244 E: Paul.Bergeron@la.gov	yes
	Altérnate: TBD	
LA DHH	Donnell Ward T: E: donnell.ward@la.gov	yes
	Alternate: TBD	
MN	Susan Wyatt T: 651.201.5323 F: E: susan.wyatt@state.mn.us	no

	Alternate: Stephanie Drier E: stephanie.drier@state.mn.us	no
NH	Bill Hall T: (603) 271-2998 F: (603) 271-5171 E: george.hall@des.nh.gov	yes
	Alternate: TBD	
NJ	Joe Aiello T: (609) 633-3840 F: (609) 777-1774 E: joseph.aiello@dep.state.nj.us	yes
	Alternate : TBD	
NY	Stephanie Ostrowski T: (518) 485-5570 F: (518) 485-5568 E: seo01@health.state.ny.us	no
	Alternate: Dan Dickinson E: dmd15@health.state.ny.us	no
OR	Gary Ward T: 503-693-4122 F: 503-693-5602 E: gary.k.ward@state.or.us	no
	Alternate: Scott Hoatson T: (503) 693-5786 hoatson.scott@deq.state.or.us	no
PA	Aaren Alger T: (717) 346-8212 F: (717) 346-8590 E: aaalger@state.pa.us	yes
	Alternate: Dwayne Burkholder dburkholde@state.pa.us	
TX	Stephen Stubbs T: (512) 239-3343 F: (512) 239-4760 E: sstubbs@tceq.state.tx.us	no
	Alternate: Steve Gibson E: igibson@tceq.state.tx.us	yes

UT	David Mendenhall T: (801) 584-8470 F: (801) 584-8501 E: davidmendenhall@utah.gov	yes
	Alternate: Kristin Brown E: kristinbrown@utah.gov	no
VA	Cathy Westerman T: 804-648-4480 ext.391 E: cathy.westerman@dgs.virginia.gov	yes
	Alternate: Ed Shaw T: 804-648-4480 ext.152 E: ed.shaw@dgs.virginia.gov	no
	NELAP AC Program Administrator and Evaluation Coordinator Lynn Bradley T: 540-885-5736 E: lynn.bradley@nelac-institute.org	yes
EPA Liaison	Arthur Clark T: 617-918-8374 F: 617-918-8274 E: clark.arthur@epa.gov	yes
EPA Liaison effective 2012	Marvelyn Humphrey T: (281) 983-2140 E: Humphrey.Marvelyn@epa.gov	yes
	Quality Assurance Officer Paul Ellingson T: 801-201-8166 E: altasnow@gmail.com	no
	Oklahoma: David Caldwell	no
	Guests: none present	