

Summary of the NELAP Accreditation Council Meeting

December 19, 2011

1. Roll call and Approval of Minutes

The NELAP Accreditation Council (AC) met at 1:30 pm EST on December 5, 2011. Minutes of the December 5, 2011, meeting were approved. Those members in attendance are listed in Attachment 1.

2. Updates on AB Renewals

Lynn reported on the status of ongoing evaluations:

CA – technical review underway, team requests 3-4 week extension.

FL – on-site report sent

KS – awaiting revised SOPs to address technical review and findings from site visit; extension granted until December 31

LA DHH – site report response in team review

NH – revised onsite report sent, and revised response in preparation

NJ – technical review sent, scheduling of site visit initiated

TX – renewal letter sent, TX received 30 day extension to prepare application

Lynn also noted that this is Art's last meeting with the AC, and thanked him for all his hard work. Art replied that he's enjoyed his work and his time with the AC.

3. Rescheduling of January 2012 AC Meetings

Since both of the regular AC meeting dates in January 2012 are holidays, Aaren asked whether to reschedule for the following Tuesday or for 2nd and 4th Mondays instead. Tuesdays seemed the better option, but an email poll will be taken before the meeting is scheduled.

4. Follow-up to TNI Board Meeting

The TNI Board met December 14, and nearly the entire meeting was devoted to discussion of the ACIL article and how ACIL's actions might impact lab accreditation. The Board Chair, Steve Arms, began the issue with a discussion of TNI's Conflict of Interest policy; no conflicts were identified during the discussion. Judy Morgan, chair of ACIL Environmental Sciences Section, expressed her belief that the ACIL newsletter article was inconsistent with ESS's objective. Judy believes that ACIL's national accreditation initiative arises more out of frustration with the number of states missing from the accreditation program now.

Judy Duncan provided some thoughts about the perspective of APHL's environmental group about accreditation, since she has been working with them in recent years. Aaren discussed her impressions of the AC's reaction, noting that the AC did not have a formal

agreed-upon response, and asked the Board for support of the AC.

Somehow, the Board heard Aaren's request for an expression of support as a request instead to take a stand in opposition to ACIL's white paper and actions, and clearly stated that the TNI Board would not take any position regarding the actions or policies of another organization. There was some sentiment among the Board that nothing should be done until the recommended options presented by the AB Assistance Task Force have been addressed, although several Board members mentioned how the Board has consistently supported by its actions, the Accreditation Council.

Finally, the Board asked that the AC submit a clear request (in writing) of what we want from the TNI Board. The Executive Committee of the TNI Board has agreed to prepare a strawman position paper supporting NELAP.

Aaren asked for additional input from the AC before drafting our request, and several participants spoke up supporting that the request be "for support of a national accreditation program with state ABs (NELAP ABs) as an important component." Aaren will draft her thoughts, circulate it for comments and then send it to the Board, and will include information about workloads and personnel (see #5 below.)

5. Feedback from MN Meeting with ACIL Representative

Upon request, Susan provided feedback from her meeting with Steve Vanderboom. His perspective was not that state accreditation should be abolished, but rather his intent was to have an open conversation with MN about using all of the options available, including third party assessors (TPAs,) and that he would be taking information from Susan about TPAs back to ACIL.

This led to discussion about whether there are a sufficient number of TPAs to meet the need. Susan indicated that only one of the third party accrediting bodies responded to MN's invitation to participate in its contract process for TPAs, and Lynn indicated that only 5-6 are presently working for the NELAP ABs that use TPAs. Apparently not all of those have completed the EPA drinking water certification course. We joked wryly that perhaps the laid off state assessors could fill the assessor needs of the 1627 current NELAP accredited labs.

This did bring up another, previously unidentified issue – that if the state accrediting bodies are privatized, there would still need to be a state procurement process for selecting the assessors or accreditation body to recommend accreditations to the state. It seems that the ACIL white paper presumes no state oversight but merely acceptance of any ISO-recognized accreditations, which is probably not going to be possible in most states.

6. Time for Meeting with ACIL ESS

From looking at the meeting schedule for conference in Sarasota, the AC determined that Tuesday morning, January 31, will be the optimum time to meet with the ACIL representatives. The purpose was agreed to be a free exchange to clear misconceptions, to clarify mutual misunderstandings, and to possibly align missions in support of a national accreditation program.

The AC prefers that this initial meeting be closed, with just ACIL ESS and NELAP ABs present. The AC will report on this initial meeting at its session the following morning, and

doubtless there will be additional discussion with other parties then. We also expect to plan a follow-on meeting with broader participation at the summer conference in Washington, DC.

Lynn will draft an invitation for Aaren to send to Judy Morgan (ESS chair) with a courtesy copy to the ACIL Executive Director, Milton Bush.

7. PT question from TNI Executive Director

With a few moments remaining, Aaren sought to discuss a question raised by Jerry Parr, about whether labs should report PT results only for the method used to run the PT sample, or if it should be reported for all methods for that analyte. Discussion rapidly illustrated that practices vary across ABs, but the sense of the group was that the complaining party needed to take up the issue with its primary AB, and then, if a satisfactory resolution cannot be reached, come directly to the AC with its complaint. Aaren will advise Jerry of the response.

Two other points arose. First, how to use a remedial PT in the scheme of 2-out-of-3 passes (the most recent "3" will include the remedial PT.) Second, there seems to be a national problem with a Colisure PT. The vendor admits to using a wrong strain of *E. coli*. Art asked that Jennifer Best of the Drinking Water Technical Support Center in Cincinnati be notified.

7. Next meeting

The next AC meeting will be Tuesday January 3, at 1:30 pm EST, assuming the poll indicates enough people can be present. If that date won't work, a notice will be sent in advance. Agenda items (thus far) will be:

- Welcome and Roll Call
- Approval of Minutes
- Update on Renewals and also efforts agreed upon by NELAP evaluators to revise the evaluation documents and process
- Vote(s) on renewal recommendations for NELAP ABs (if received in time to distribute)
- CITF discussion, Kathy Gumpfer invited (if she responds)
- More follow-up to the TNI Board meeting if needed
- Discussion and possible vote/decision on AB/TF Recommendation #5 (summary of LAS EC findings about availability of reports distributed with draft minutes)

Attachment 1

STATE	REPRESENTATIVE	PRESENT
CA	George Kulasingam T: (510) 620-3155 F: (510) 620-3165 E: gkulasin@cdph.ca.gov	yes
	Alternate: Jane Jensen E: jjensen@cdph.ca.gov	no
FL	Stephen Arms T: (904) 791-1502 F: (904) 791-1591 E: steve_arms@doh.state.fl.us	yes
	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	
LA DEQ	Paul Bergeron T: 225-219-3247 F: 225-325-8244 E: Paul.Bergeron@la.gov	no
	Alternate: 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	yes

	Alternate: Stephanie Drier E: stephanie.drier@state.mn.us	yes
NH	Bill Hall T: (603) 271-2998 F: (603) 271-5171 E: george.hall@des.nh.gov	no
	Alternate: TBD	
NJ	Joe Aiello T: (609) 633-3840 F: (609) 777-1774 E: joseph.aiello@dep.state.nj.us	no
	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	yes
	Alternate: Scott Hoatson T: (503) 693-5786 E: 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 E: dburkholde@state.pa.us	
TX	Stephen Stubbs T: (512) 239-3343 F: (512) 239-4760 E: sstubbs@tceq.state.tx.us	yes
	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	yes
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	no
	Quality Assurance Officer Paul Ellingson T: 801-201-8166 E: altasnow@gmail.com	no
	Oklahoma: David Caldwell	yes
	Guests: none	