

**Summary of the NELAP Accreditation Council Meeting
February 5, 2020 10:30 am PST
Forum on Laboratory Accreditation, Newport Beach, CA**

1. Welcome and Introductions

The NELAP Accreditation Council (AC) met at 10:30 pm Pacific on Wednesday, February 5, 2020. Attendance is noted in Attachment 1.

Council members were invited to introduce themselves, whether present in person or by teleconference.

2. Implementation Status for 2016 TNI Environmental Laboratory Sector Standard

The formal implementation date for the new standard was set as January 31, 2020. All ABs present were asked to provide the current status of their implementation or plans to do so, and the responses are provided in the table below.

Implementation Plans for 2016 TNI ELS Standard – 2/5/2020		
State	Process for Implementing the New Standard	Anticipated Implementation Date
FL	FL adopted the TNI 2016 Standards by regulation on September 26, 2018. Laboratories were granted a grace period until April 1, 2019, to implement the new standards	Fully implemented on April 1, 2019
IL	Rulemaking was finalized in July 2019, with a 6 month integration period and full implementation on January 31, 2020	January 31, 2020
KS	Rulemaking underway, but slowly. Is allowing labs to upgrade now.	Early 2021, hopefully
LA DEQ	Regulation updates delayed	unknown
LA DOH	Rulemaking initiated, hope to complete by June 2020, plus time for labs to comply	End of 2020, hopefully
MN	Adopts by statute, and is updating its databases now. Full implementation by the end of 2020 but is encouraging labs to implement 2016 standard now	December 31, 2020
NH	Rulemaking underway, is allowing labs to upgrade now	End of 2020, hopefully
NJ	Incorporated into regulation by reference	January 31, 2020
NY	Adopts by reference; is rewriting regulation to update other aspects on separate timeline	Hopes to complete regulation by the end of 2020
OK	Hopes to begin rulemaking later in 2020, is allowing labs to upgrade now	uncertain
OR	Requires rulemaking plus time for labs to comply; database development is underway	October 1, 2020
PA	Incorporated into regulation by reference, all labs will be required to have the 2016 standard implemented	June 30, 2020

	by July 2020	
TX	Incorporated into regulation by reference	January 31, 2020
UT	Rulemaking underway; allowing labs to upgrade to 2016 now	Several more months needed, but during 2020
VA	Rulemaking begun; timeframe for completion unknown	Unknown

3. Status of PT Implementation

The PT Volumes (V3 and V4) were fully implemented on January 31, 2020. All PT reports issued after January 31, 2020, will be done in compliance with the 2016 Standard. ABs that have not fully implemented Volumes 1 and 2 will have potential issues with this.

4. Additional PT Issues

Maria Friedman, Chair of PTPEC, spoke to address several additional PT issues that have arisen either through Analyte Request Applications (ARAs) or implementation of the 2016 Standard.

MPN Technology Separation – a request to provide separate PTs for tube and well tests for the MPN coliform analysis was approved after multiple conversations between EPA, PTPEC and the NELAP AC. This change was scheduled to be effective for the Drinking Water FoPT on July 1, 2020, however that date may be moved because the PTPEC still needs to approve the Non-Potable Water FoPT table. The PTPEC would set the effective dates for both tables to the same date to avoid confusion, because both tables would have similar updates to the MPN FoPTs. The Council was concerned that labs need clear information about this change, since it will be the first time that PTs based on technology have been required. PTPEC’s initial plan was for the PT Providers (PTPs) to advise labs of the change, and Maria noted that there are 600 subscribers to the notices of change in FoPT tables, so that combined with an announcement on the TNI website, PTPEC believes this to be adequate information. One AB expressed concern that labs with standing orders might be caught unaware, and another AB wanted labs to be made aware of possible additional costs in the event that both PTs would need to be purchased in order to comply with the DMR-QA and NPDES permits. A PTP spoke up to say that labs will be notified in advance, based on the degree of change to the FoPT table.

Aroclor/PCB Qualitative PT – the Council has tried several different approaches to solving the long-standing issue that a lab can continually fail the Aroclor PT yet retain accreditation when the same congener is not failed twice in a row. The most recent effort was to add a qualitative PT, where identification of the congener(s) could be paired with the quantification, in order to better establish the lab’s ability to correctly identify and analyze Aroclors. A question arose about procedure when a lab is not accredited for all 7 Aroclors in the PT, and the response was that the lab should only report those for which it is accredited. Another suggestion was that the additional two Aroclors (presently not included in the PT but with methods available for accreditation) be added to the PT. Maria did not indicate whether this ARA has yet been approved.

Change to Analyte Codes – Dan Hickman, TNI’s Database Administrator, had requested a change to the analyte code and name for EPA 1664. Maria explained that PTPEC had made a change for this FoPT in 2015, and Dan was suggesting it was still not correct. Dan

explained that certain analytes were defined by method, particularly for oil and grease, and that some new codes for analytes are also defined by method, but the PTPs continue using the old codes, so that this request was asking that the codes in the FoPT table be changed to match the analyte codes used in LAMS. Dan indicated that he will follow the Council's preference, whether to continue using the "old" codes or switch to the new ones, but that he will only retain one set of codes for these method-defined analytes, to be used in LAMS.

An Unintended Consequence of V3 that Must Be Addressed – Dan Hautman of EPA/OGWDW explained that if a result is greater than or less than (> or <), it is a failure in the current PTRL reporting for PTs, however, there are a few microbiology tests where > or < reporting is appropriate – flashpoint, WET and some quantitative microbiology methods. Dan recommended that the ABs manually review these scores if failures are reported, so that labs providing the correct results are not deemed to have failed the PTs. One commenter noted that the labs wanted it that way, when the standard was written, because it is appropriate for all chemistry tests, but since ABs can legitimately review PT results, this can be handled. Dan noted that for drinking water microbiology, any value of "greater than" should be an alarm, since no microbes should be present. Dan also discussed whether PTs should be run as a new source (with serial dilutions to establish the appropriate range) but the standard states that a lab must follow the instructions for PT samples, so that performing any other type of dilution would be a finding during assessment.

5. LAMS Update from Dan Hickman, TNI Database Administrator

Dan expressed satisfaction that all but one of the 15 NELAP ABs now have their fields of Accreditation in LAMS. While the requested updates are not universally done every two weeks, the database is much more current than in the past.

Dan did ask that ABs fix the "tiny errors" that cause difficulty, such as methods without a method code, and also requested that, even if there is no change, the ABs should upload the previous file so that the date shows the information to be current. Also, a lab will not automatically become inactive if its accreditation is simply not reported during an upload – the AB needs to manually change the status; he will send custom lists to ABs about what's not inactive but still accredited for clean-up purposes. He has created a new LAMS manual that will discuss the "little fixes" needed. Dan also stated that he encourages labs to review their data in LAMS as a quality control check.

He also announced that the generic application is actually in use, and is working well. Dan plans to do a webinar about its use.

Dan explained that for the oil and grease inactive method and analyte codes, especially those with CAS numbers in the FoPT tables, the PKN was wrong in the recent list of inactive codes sent to NELAP ABs, but that the code in the FoPT table is correct.

Dan also explained that he has asked the WET Expert Committee to consider simplifying the current 130 method codes for 30 methods. Presently, a method may have multiple codes, each signifying a different combination of variable parameters (temperature, water type, etc.) and for any new combination, a new method code is needed. He asks that there be only one method code for each method and endpoint (since methods can report different endpoints), with the variable parameters added as a footnote in LAMS. He explained that this would constitute accreditation at the "system level" with the specific parameters defined by the client, for any given analysis. The NELAP ABs will need to agree to this, although the WET committee has been asked to address it.

6. Issue with New MDL Procedure

Val Slaven, Chair of the Chemistry Expert Committee, explained that where a method-prescribed Method Detection Limit (MDL) exists (typically lower than the new procedure), labs are being held to the method requirements, so that the labs are then needing to do “weird things” to meet section 1.4 of the Chemistry module, V1M4. She conceded that it may be the state programs (regulators) imposing this requirement, but that the effect is that labs are being cited (findings) for meeting client needs.

This issue has some ethical and data integrity issue concerns, because if a lab tells the client that the lab cannot do the MDL requested (what’s in the method) then the client will likely go find another lab that agrees to meet the request, even though it is not possible to do so under the standard.

Minnesota asked for examples of methods falling into this category of MDL prescriptions, and Val agreed to send a list to Lynn for distribution.

7. Next Meeting

The next teleconference meeting will be Monday, March 2, 2020, at 1:30 pm Eastern. An agenda and documents will be provided in advance.

Attachment 1

STATE	REPRESENTATIVE	PRESENT
FL	Carl Kircher E: carl.kircher@flhealth.gov	Yes
	Alternate: Vanessa Soto E: Vanessa.sotocontreras@flhealth.gov	No
IL	Celeste Crowley T: 217-557-0274 F: 217-524-6169 E: celeste.crowley@illinois.gov	Yes (phone)
	Alternate: Dave Reed Dave.Reed@Illinois.gov	No
	For information purposes: John South John.South@illinois.gov	No
KS	Paul Harrison paul.harrison@ks.gov	Yes
	Alternate: N. Myron Gunsalus 785-291-3162 E: ngunsalus@ks.gov	No
LA DEQ	Kimberly Hamilton-Wims T: 225-219-3247 E: Kimberly.Hamilton-Wims@la.gov	No
	Alternate: Elizabeth West elizabeth.west@la.gov	No
LA DOH	Grant Aucoin Grant.aucoin@la.gov	Yes (phone)
	Alternate: Scott Miles Scott.Miles@la.gov	No
MN	Lynn Boysen E: lynn.boysen@state.mn.us	Yes
	Alternate: Stephanie Drier 651-201-5326 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: Brian Lamarsh Brian.Lamarsh@des.nh.gov	Yes
NJ	Michele Potter T: (609) 984-3870 F: (609) 777-1774 E: michele.potter@dep.nj.gov	Yes (phone)
	Alternate : Rachel Ellis E: rachel.ellis@dep.nj.gov	No
NY	Victoria Pretti 518-485-5570 E: victoria.pretti@health.ny.gov	Yes
	Alternate: Lynn McNaughton E: lynn.mcnaughton@health.ny.gov	No
OK	David Caldwell (405) 702-1000 E: David.Caldwell@deq.ok.gov	Yes
	Alternate: Chris Armstrong (405) 702-1000 E: chris.armstrong@deq.ok.gov	No
OR	Lizbeth Garcia 971 865 0443 E: LIZBETH.GARCIA@dhsosha.state.or.us	No
	Alternate: Stephanie Ringsage STEPHANIE.B.RINGSAGE@dhsosha.state.or.us	No
	Included for information purposes: Ryan Pangelinan E: Ryan.pangelinan@dhsosha.state.or.us	No
	Included for information purposes: Sara Krepps Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (503) 693-5704 E: sara.krepps@state.or.us	No
PA	Dana Marshall E: dmarsshall@pa.gov	Yes
TX	Ken Lancaster T: (512) 239-1990 E: Ken.Lancaster@tceq.texas.gov	Yes
	Alternate: Kristy Deaver T: (512) 239-6816 Kristy.deaver@tceq.texas.gov	Yes

UT	Kristin Brown T: (801) 965-2540 F: (801) 965-2544 E: kristinbrown@utah.gov	Yes
	Alternate: Alia Rauf T: 801-965-2511 E: arauf@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 PA and EC	Lynn Bradley T: 540-885-5736 E: lynn.bradley@nelac-institute.org	Yes
EPA Liaison	Eric Graybill Graybill.eric@epa.gov	Yes
California	Christine Sotelo Christine.Sotelo@waterboards.ca.gov	No
Guests:		