

Summary of the NELAP Accreditation Council Meeting
September 21, 2015

1. Roll Call and Approval of Minutes

The NELAP Accreditation Council (AC) met at 1:30 pm EST on Tuesday, September 1, 2015. The minutes from September 1 were approved. Those members in attendance are listed in Attachment 1.

The final email votes from the September 1 meeting are as follows:

- FL Renewal Recommendation – 13 yes votes with Florida abstaining
- Temporary Extension of Recognition for NJ and KS – 13 yes votes for NJ with NJ abstaining; 12 yes and one no vote for KS, with KS abstaining
- Approval of NPW and SCM Revised FoPT tables – 13 yes votes with one abstention.

2. Action Items Pending

None at present.

3. KS Renewal Recommendation from the Evaluation Team

In his current role as the alternate Lead Evaluator, Paul Ellingson was invited to be present for the discussion and anticipated vote on the team's recommendation that Kansas be provisionally renewed, contingent on a successful effort to complete assessments of all its overdue laboratories by May 31, 2016, with confirmation thereafter based on review of documentation for a selection of the assessed labs. Provisional recognition is described in NELAP's SOP 3-108.

Steve moved and Cathy seconded that the AC accept the recommendation of the evaluation team to grant provisional recognition to Kansas, with the conditions of 1) effective completion of the backlogged laboratories by May 31, 2016, and 2) effective use of the personnel for assessments. There were 13 yes votes, with KS abstaining.

4. Revisions of Mutual Recognition Policy 3-100 to Address Policy Committee Review

The AC approved this policy on June 15, 2015, and it is in use as "provisional" pending final approval by TNI's Policy Committee. The Policy Committee review offered three recommendations:

1. When discussing possible exemptions to the "home state" requirement (§IV-4), replace the example in parentheses with a new sentence. Suggested wording is "For instance, an AB may grant a waiver to the state's primacy laboratory from having to apply to its own state agency for accreditation." This rearrangement avoids possible confusion without altering meaning.
2. Please rephrase and clarify what a secondary AB is and is not allowed to do, in §V-2b. This stemmed from anecdotal information that one lab whose site visit from its primary was greatly overdue, was told by its secondary AB that the secondary AB would "perform the

site visit itself” in order to maintain the secondary accreditation status for the lab. Since that would be inappropriate, participants sought clarity on what information a secondary AB could and could not request.

3. To avoid confusion among labs that might misunderstand this section about resolving disputes between ABs, please add an additional sentence (§VII) stating that “disputes between a lab and an AB shall be resolved according to the AB’s policies.”

The second recommendation prompted extended discussion about what various state regulations require of all accredited labs as well as how a secondary AB might work with the lab’s primary AB to accomplish whatever oversight is desired or needed. The original intent (when the NELAC standard was prepared) was that no additional requirements beyond those in the standard could be added by a secondary AB.

With no agreement in sight, the discussion was suspended until a future date. The first recommendation did not provoke any discussion, and there appeared to be no issue with the third recommendation. At the end of the meeting, with time remaining, discussion picked up again, about the primary AB upholding its responsibilities as well as working with or delegating certain things to a secondary AB. No conclusions were reached.

5. Discussion of SW-846 Update V, per the Notice in the Federal Register, August 13, 2015, pp. 48522-48528

This notice, and the Update itself (published at <http://www.epa.gov/SW-846>), provide updated methods for the identification and analysis of RCRA-related wastes, and also introduce and explain new or modified concepts in use, such as Lower Limit of Quantitation and calculations of Relative Standard Error. Some participants were concerned about whether and how this update is consistent with, or conflicts with, the newly revised Calibration Standard as well as the Detection and Quantitation Standard currently undergoing the final stages of revision. Participants were asked to share further thoughts by email.

6. Discussion of Possible Revisions to the NELAP Evaluation SOP

Aaren stated that she plans to work with Cathy to revise the current SOP by streamlining the process, with a consideration for cutting costs of the evaluations, too, and asked if any others wished to participate. Kristin asked to join in the effort, as did Ken. This small group plans to bring its suggestions back to the AC before finalizing the revisions.

Issues to be considered are the potential cost escalations of using contracted third party evaluators as well as the rising costs of travel for site visits and observations, to see whether and how site visits and observations could be minimized (time and numbers) or eliminated by use of videoconferencing and other electronic communications. Another possibility is to tabulate prior findings to determine if they could have been identified without being present at the AB’s physical offices. It is also possible that some state staff could work – for pay – as evaluators, outside of their “day jobs.” This is not a possibility in all states, but it is for some.

Lynn noted that, in considering whether and how to modify site visits and observations, the Council should recognize that if NELAP chooses to no longer incorporate those, we will be intentionally diverging from the practices that are utilized in the remainder of the international laboratory accreditation community.

7. SIR Update

Since the previous AC meeting, a “two-week notice” email was issued for several Standards Interpretation Requests that have incomplete voting but do have approval by the required two-thirds majority of ABs. For one of these, SIR #132, there was a suggestion that the proffered (and approved) interpretation actually conflicts with the wording being incorporated into the revised standard, and that therefore #132 should not be published.

Lynn noted that the LASEC Chair, after due consideration, agreed with this position as well as the suggestion that the issue can only be clarified by actually defining certain types of volumetric glassware. It is established policy that definition language cannot be added through the SIR process, as that would actually expand the standard itself rather than “interpreting” it, so SIR #132 will be withdrawn and the submitter notified that the issue cannot be addressed through a SIR. This notification will also include a short paragraph apologizing for the prolonged delay and explaining that only upon extended discussion did we realize where the problem lay.

8. Next Meeting

The next teleconference meeting of the AC will take place on Monday, October 5, 2015, at 1:30 pm Eastern. An agenda and teleconference information will be sent out before the meeting.

Attachment 1

STATE	REPRESENTATIVE	PRESENT
FL	Stephen Arms T: (904) 791-1502 F: (904) 791-1591 E: steve.arms@flhealth.gov	Yes
	Alternate: Carl Kircher E: carl.kircher@flhealth.gov	Yes
IL	Celeste Crowley T: 217-557-0274 F: 217-524-6169 E: celeste.crowley@illinois.gov	Yes
	Alternate: Janet Cruse T: 217-785-0601 E: Janet.Cruse@illinois.gov	Yes
KS	N. Myron Gunsalus 785-291-3162 E: ngunsalus@kdheks.gov	Yes
	Alternate: Sara Hoffman shoffman@kdheks.gov	Yes
	Included for information purposes: Nick Reams nreams@kdheks.gov	Yes
LA DEQ	Paul Bergeron T: 225-219-3185 E: Paul.Bergeron@la.gov	Yes
	Altérnate: TBD	
LA DHH	Donnell Ward T: E: donnell.ward@la.gov	Yes
	Alternate: TBD	
MN	Lynn Boysen E: lynn.boysen@state.mn.us	Yes
	Alternate: TBD	
NH	Bill Hall T: (603) 271-2998 F: (603) 271-5171 E: george.hall@des.nh.gov	Yes
	Alternate: Tyler Croteau Tyler.Croteau@des.nh.gov	No

NJ	Michele Potter T: (609) 984-3870 F: (609) 777-1774 E: michele.potter@dep.nj.gov	Yes
	Alternate : Rachel Ellis E: rachel.ellis@dep.nj.gov	No
NY	Mike Ryan T: (518) 473-3424 F: (518) 485-5568 E: michael.ryan@health.ny.gov	No
	Alternate: Victoria Pretti victoria.pretti@health.ny.gov	Yes
	Included for information purposes: Lynn McNaughton lynn.mcnaughton@health.ny.gov	No
OR	Gary Ward T: 503-693-4122 F: 503-693-5602 E: gary.k.ward@state.or.us	Yes
	Shannon Swantek T: 503-693-5784 E: Shannon.swantek@state.or.us	Yes
	Included for information purposes: 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@pa.gov	Yes
	Alternate: Yumi Creason E: ycreason@pa.gov	Yes
TX	Ken Lancaster T: (512) 239-1990 E: Ken.Lancaster@tceq.texas.gov	Yes
	Julie Eldredge E: Julie.Eldredge@tceq.texas.gov	Yes
UT	Kristin Brown T: (801) 965-2540 F: (801) 965-2544 E: kristinbrown@utah.gov	Yes
	Alternate: Jill Jones T: (801) 965-3899 E: jilljones@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	Donna Ringel T: 732-321-4383 E: Ringel.Donna@epa.gov	No
California	Christine Sotelo Christine.Sotelo@waterboards.ca.gov	No
Oklahoma	David Caldwell E: David.Caldwell@deq.ok.gov	Yes
Guests:	Paul Ellingson, Lead Evaluator for KS Evaluation Team (departed after KS vote was completed) Lourdes Iturralde, LA DEQ (for information purposes, since Paul needed to depart early)	