

**MINUTES OF  
THE NELAC INSTITUTE'S  
PROFICIENCY TESTING EXPERT COMMITTEE  
SUPPLEMENTAL PT CALL  
January 11, 2011**

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**Agenda Item 1: Standing Committee Operations**

The Proficiency Testing (PT) Expert Committee of The NELAC Institute (TNI) met by conference call on January 11, 2011. Committee Chairperson Kirstin McCracken led the call.

**Call to Order:** The teleconference was called to order at 1:40 PM ET.

The following committee members were present for this call:

Stacie Metzler  
Scott Hoatson  
Judy Morgan  
Kirstin McCracken  
Mitzi Miller  
Amy Doupe  
Roger Kenton  
Jim Webber  
Steve Arpie  
Shawn Kassner

Kirstin reported that Dan Tholen has resigned from the committee.

The following associate members were present for this call:

Rachel Ellis

**Agenda Item 1: SIR 118**

Committee reviewed the revised TIA sent by Scott and reviewed the proposed editorial changes suggested by Shawn and Lisa. Kirstin made a motion to approve the SIR language Scott proposed as amended during this call. Judy seconded the motion, all present on the call voting to approve the new revision. Kirstin will send final response to LASC.

**Agenda Item 2: TIA vs. WDS**

Kirstin told the committee that the AC said TIA's were OK even for VIM1 and she presented a proposed time-line of completion of proposed TIA language for presentation at the Savannah meeting then asked the committee if this time-frame was feasible. Those present on the call agreed that the time-frame was OK.

Stacie reported that the WET subcommittee has language drafted for the TIA and has also prepared a guidance document. Stacie with Kirstin's help need to decide which sections of the modules need to be revised to incorporate WET requirements.

Kirstin gave a quick recap on the AC concerns that were discussed at the 12/14/10 call.

Mitzi observed that the concerns were related to all of the changes made from 2003 NELAC to the TNI Standard and essentially the AC wants the standard taken back to 2003 requirements. Yes, the committee concurred. Mitzi then noted that there were problems with the 2003 standard; yes, the committee concurred. This led into a discussion of each of the AC concerns as carried over from the prior call.

For removal of use of non-accredited PTP, those present on the call agreed this clause could be removed. Kirstin will draft the TIA for this AC Concern.

Analysis Date: All present on the call agreed “analysis” could be replaced with “closing”. Kirstin will draft the TIA for this AC Concern.

Experimental: All present on the call agreed to remove the requirement for experimental PT so long as a requirement for a procedure to allow for the addition and removal of FoPT is included. Scott volunteered to draft the TIA for this AC Concern.

LOQ: Shawn reported that the AC has requested that the committee remove the allowance for a lab’s capability to report to zero; and to flag with an “\*” < values for which the value is greater than the lower acceptance limit. This led to debate. Scott and Steve propose that ABs should not require PTs if range of FoPT is inconsistent with lab’s calibration range. Steve proposed that the entire concentration range of the FOPT needs to be in line with the range of calibration or the lab should be exempt from the PT sample. Roger raised the potential long-term solution establishing multi-range PT samples. In the end however, those present on the call agreed the most viable solution at this time is to remove the specific requirement from VIM1 and include a statement that labs will report PTs using the same procedures as field samples. This raised the concern from Roger that some ABs may mandate reporting of estimated values in PT samples since some labs routinely report estimated values in field samples. The committee consensus is that that level to which PT samples are evaluated and reported is at the laboratory’s discretion so long as the practice is generally consistent with the way field samples are reported. Shawn will draft TIA language for the committee to review. Regarding the qualification of the report for < values, this proposal garnered considerable discussion. Steve raised the point that many labs use PT reports for marketing purposes and it is likely that these labs will object to the report flagged with qualifiers. Roger agreed and said a report full of asterisks will raise questions from the client. Judy and Kirstin thought that qualifiers would be OK since the results are still scored acceptable but did acknowledge that the qualifiers might raise concern. This led to discussion on the purpose of mandating PTRL reporting and calibration by some ABs and the impact this requirement has on the lab community. Kirstin noted that the purpose of PT is to test lab proficiency in their normal range of operation; not to standardize calibration ranges or RLs across laboratories. Lab’s establish LOQ based on client need and routine concentration in field samples; not on the concentration range of PT samples. It was noted by Scott that for drinking water the “client” needs and PT ranges are similar; but it was also recognized that for NPW and solid and hazardous waste there is wide variation between FoPT concentration ranges, PTRL and calibrations set by laboratories for the analysis of environmental samples. After much discussion the group decided the best option for now is to remove the reporting clause in VIM1 and replace with language that specifies that labs should report PT results per their normal procedures; and to allow the flagging of < values with an asterisk. All agreed that the language needs to be clear, concise and auditable. Shawn volunteered to draft the TIA for LOQ AC Concern.

#### **Agenda Item 4: Next Steps**

Savannah: The meeting session will begin with recap of 2010; then proceed to a working session with review of TIA language with public.

Call adjourned 3:04 PM.

**Attachment A**

**ACTION ITEMS  
TNI PROFICIENCY TESTING COMMITTEE**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Assigned To</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Date Complete</b>
1	Forward Scott draft SIR for editing	Kirstin	12/15/10	12/16/10
2	Draft TIA language to replace non-accredited PTP clause and analysis date	Kirstin	12/18/10	
3	Draft TIA language for experimental PT	Scott	12/18/10	
4	Draft TIA language for LOQ	Shawn	12/18/10	
5	Determine sections that require the addition of WET language	Stacie / Kirstin	TBD	

## Attachment B

### TNI PROFICIENCY TESTING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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