

**SUMMARY OF THE  
TNI LABORATORY PROFICIENCY TESTING EXPERT COMMITTEE MEETING**

**SEPTEMBER 7, 2018**

The Committee met by teleconference on Friday, September 7, 2018, at 11:00 am EST. Chair Nicole Cairns led the meeting.

**1 – Roll call**

Fred Anderson, Advanced Analytical Solutions (PT Provider)	Absent
Jim Brownfield, ESC (Laboratory)	Present
Nicole Cairns, NYSDOH (Chair; Laboratory)	Present
Thekkekalathil Chandrasekhar (Chandra), FLDEP (Laboratory)	Present
Rachel Ellis, NJ DEP (AB)	Present
Patrick Garrity, KYDOW (AB)	Absent
Craig Huff, ERA (PT Provider)	Present
Susan Jackson, SC DHEC (AB)	Absent
Tim Miller, Phenova (PT Provider)	Present
Reggie Morgan, Hampton Roads San. Distr. (Lab)	Present
Ken Jackson, Program Administrator	Present

Associate Committee Members present: Shawn Kassner, Neptune; Jason Poore, A2LA.

**2 – Previous Minutes**

It was moved by Jim and seconded by Chandra to approve the minutes of July 13, 2018. All were in favor. Tim asked for two corrections to the draft minutes of August 7, 2018. The first was an editorial correction, and the second was in Section 5 on the scoring of microbiological PTs. The second sentence of the paragraph should read “It concerned laboratories reporting greater-than (>) values for PTs despite the method permitting this.” With these changes in place it was moved by Tim and seconded by Reggie to approve the minutes. All were in favor.

**3 – Training Webinar**

Nicole had been asked to present a training webinar on the 2016 VIM1 in September. She had sent her draft slide presentation to the committee for comments, and had received feedback.

**4 – PTRL Guidance Document**

A joint set of comments on the guidance document from LASEC and the NELAP Accreditation Council was considered.

**Comment 1**

The document required page numbers and document control information. Ken said he would take care of that.

**Comment 2** stated “On page 3, in the language about reporting below the LOQ, additional language is needed to recommend that the lab should note that fact in its report to the PT provider.”

The committee was unsure what was being asked for. Craig asked what the PT Providers would be expected to do with the information. This recommendation did not reflect a requirement in the standard, so there was no mandate for the laboratory to do anything; therefore, it was suggested to give options to the laboratory; e.g., allow them to report without qualification. Craig added that PT Providers could say J values are not accepted for PT results, but he had not seen this to be a problem anyway. Nicole would ask LASEC what was the intent of this comment, and its resolution was tabled until the October conference call.

**Comment 3** stated “In the “Evaluating and Reporting...” section, Example 2 Option 1 needs additional explanation about why the lab is not allowed to qualify PT samples, beyond just “not required.” Also, for Example 4 in this section, the lab should only report <7.0 ug/l or 5.2 ug/l, not “<5.2 ug/l” as suggested.

Chandra said there is no uniformity on the use of qualifiers between laboratories, so he said that was a good reason for not allowing qualifiers. The cited sentence was: “Qualification for reporting a result below the Lab LOQ is not required nor accepted by PT Providers.” After discussion the committee decided to expand the sentence to read: “Qualification for reporting a result below the Lab LOQ is not required nor accepted by PT Providers, and quantitative results reported with any alpha character will be scored as no evaluation per Volume 3 of the 2016 TNI Standard.” Regarding the last sentence of the comment, the guidance already stated: “Report <7.0 µg/L or the numeric value of 5.2 µg/L”, and it did not state “<5.2 µg/L”

**Comment 4** said “One individual submitted an email... comment requesting adding an additional example, under "The Derivation of PTRLs" to read: “Example #3 - Endrin in Solid and Chemical Materials (Study Mean and regressed Standard Deviation Limits)” The example offered by the commenter included a quote from the FoPT Table, which reads: "If the lower acceptance limit generated using the criteria contained in this table is less than 10% of the assigned value or the PTRL, the lower acceptance limits are set at 10% of the assigned value or the PTRL whichever is higher."

Shawn suggested, instead of including this example, just modifying the opening statement under the header “The Derivation of PTRLs” that currently stated “A PTRL for a specific analyte is derived by calculating the lower acceptance limit for that analyte when it is spiked into a PT at the lowest concentration.” His modified sentence would read “A PTRL for a specific analyte is derived by calculating the lower acceptance limit (which will be no lower than 10% of the assigned value) for that analyte when it is spiked into a PT at the lowest concentration.” This generated a lengthy discussion when committee members were divided on whether it would add clarification or confusion. It was finally decided to not include the suggested example.

This concluded the consideration of comments. Nicole would circulate a revised draft of the guidance document after consulting with LASEC on the second comment. Ken would then add the necessary document control information, and it was intended to vote on the document during the October conference call.

## **5 – Standard Interpretation Request (SIR)**

In its on-going review of past SIRs, Nicole asked the committee to reconsider Item 8 on the table. This was discussed during the July 13 conference call, when it had been questioned if a policy document had ever been written for evaluation of “less than” reporting using the 2003 standard. Nicole had then questioned Jerry on this, and he confirmed a policy document was never written. Therefore, the final response to this SIR did not address the problem, but the SIR was not applicable to the 2009 or 2016 standard. Nicole would modify the response and re-circulate it to the committee to close the SIR out on the next call.

## **6 – Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:20 pm EDT.