

TNI PT Board Meeting Summary November 5, 2009

1) Roll call and approval of minutes:

Chairman Eric Smith called the TNI PT Board to order on November 5, 2009, at 1:00 PM EST. Attendance is recorded in Attachment A. Associate members, Chuck Wibby, Dan Tholan and Jeff Lowry, were also present. The meeting was adjourned at 2:30pm EST (Motion: Carl. Second: Gary. Unanimously approved.)

The minutes from the last meeting (October 15, 2009) were reviewed, but they could not be approved due to low attendance at the meeting. They will be reviewed for approval at the 11/19/09 meeting.

2) Low Level Mercury and Low Level Total Residual Chlorine

Eric received the following e-mail from Patrick Yellin:

An issue has surfaced, of some analytes that are in some states' permits but are not part of The Nelac Institute's (TNI) Fields of Proficiency Testing (FoPT) tables. These analytes specifically are:

§ Low level mercury

§ Low level total residual chlorine

Under Chapter 2 Appendix C Section C.4.1 Additional Matrix/Analyte Groups, in the 2003 NELAC standard for Proficiency Testing, I am requesting that these two analytes be added to the FoPT. The justification for this request is that several states are requiring these analytes in their NPDES permits. This will help to improve the coverage of Discharge Monitoring Report - Quality Assurance (DMRQA) studies.

I am seeking to have these analytes made effective prior to the start of DMRQA Study 30, which is currently slated to start on February 15, 2010.

However, in order to allow the use of WP from the start of the 2010 calendar, it would be necessary to have the analytes made effective by January 1, 2010.

Please note that the "regular" level mercury and total residual chlorine are still needed in DMRQA studies. .

I have polled state coordinators on what analytes they use and what the typical permit limits are. Attached are the responses that I received. (This is Attachment B in the 11-3-09 Chemistry FoPT Subcommittee Minutes.)

If you have any questions, please feel to contact me via email at yellin.patrick@epa.gov, or at 202.564.2970.

Eric forwarded Patrick's e-mail to the Chem FoPT Subcommittee and it was discussed at their meeting on 11/3/09. Jeff Lowry is preparing an updated NPW FoPT Table for subcommittee approval at their 11/10/09 meeting. Once approved, it will be forwarded to the PT Board for approval at the 11/19/09 meeting. These additions will be recommended with an implementation date of January 1, 2010. A concern was raised as to whether these analytes need to be put on the PT Provider scopes and whether A2LA needs to be able to add this to the database. Dan said it was not a problem.

Another concern was raised about concentration specific PTs. Must the lab run both the high and low level? For example, Florida requires labs to run both. Others states may allow labs to choose which to run. It would be helpful if NELAP would write a policy. Eric Smith will send a request to the NELAP Board to clarify this potential issue.

An announcement should go out to the PT providers to give them a heads-up that this is coming. This will be done after our next meeting. These two analytes will be effective January 1, 2010.

3) Chemistry Subcommittee Progress

There are still quite a few Experimental PTs left to look at on the DW table. The goal is to get this to the PT Board before the meeting on November 19th.

4) PT Provider Assessments – A2LA Update

Does A2LA plan to use the same 2003 checklist or will they use a new TNI standard checklist based on Vol 3 and 4? Randy Querry sent an e-mail on 11/3 that answers this question:

It is our plan to implement the new TNI standards for the 2010 renewal assessments along with the ISO/IEC 17043 Standard that is going to replace ILAC G13:2007.

We can have the TNI checklist to you by early December. We would like to have them approved so that we can begin using them in early 2010, perhaps as early as February.

Gary asked about a status update on the database. Can A2LA give an update in Chicago about how things are going with the database?

5) Chicago Meeting

Agenda:

- A2LA –20 min. Talk about new standard and checklist. Also talk about new plans for conducting assessments and provide an update on the database.
- Carl will provide a Chemistry FoPT Subcommittee update. This should include the new Chemistry FoPT tables.

Let Eric know if you have any other ideas for additional topics.

6) Discussion: A2LA Draft Documents Associated with the SSAS Program

Carl reviewed the A2LA checklist to be used for the SSAS providers and provided comments via e-mail to the Board. Dan commented that it looks like Carl may have worked from the wrong version of the SSAS standard. Some of Carl's concerns are addressed in the current version of the standard.

A2LA will respond to Carl's comments. Carl and Dan will work through the issues and Carl will provide an update via e-mail to the PT Board prior to the next November meeting.

Eric asked about including information about the SOW in the General Requirements document. Dan wasn't sure where Jerry and Randy were in this discussion. Dan will check with Randy. In section 14 – appeals procedure – there isn't anything about a notification to the PT Board. Eric will provide some questions in an e-mail for Dan to respond to.

If anyone has any comments on the checklist or the General Requirements documents that Eric distributed, please forward your comments to Dan and the PT Board.

7) Discuss Standard Interpretation Requests 72, 75, 80, 91, and 95

Comments for 72, 75, 80 and 91 are included in the tables in Attachment B (Standard Interpretation Requests.)

95: Stacie reported that it appears that the standard is in conflict with the Appendix. Kirstin has e-mailed Jerry and is waiting for a response. She will prepare a response and send it to the PT Board for review. Eric asked that a status update be sent to the PT Board members before the meeting on the 19th if Stacie has not already provided a Draft response to the PT Board.

8) New Items

None.

9) Open Action Items

The Action Items table was reviewed and updates were made directly into the table.

10) Next Meeting

The next meeting of the PT Board will be Thursday, November 19, 2009, at 1pm EST..

Action Items are included in Attachment C and Attachment D includes a listing of reminders.

Attachment A

**Participants
TNI
Proficiency Testing Board**

Members	Affiliation	Contact Information
Eric Smith, Chair (2009) Present	TestAmerica	615-726-0177 x1238 eric.smith@testamericainc.com
Ilona Taunton, Program Administrator Present	TNI	828-712-9242 tauntoni@msn.com
Gary Dechant Present	Analytical Quality Associates, Inc.	970-434-4875 gldechant@aol.com
Amy Doupe Present	Lancaster Laboratories, Inc.	717-656-2300 x1812 aldoupe@lancasterlabs.com
Steve Gibson Absent	Texas Comm. on Env. Quality	512-239-1518 jgibson@tceq.state.tx.us
Svetlana Isozamova Absent	Accutest Laboratories – Southeast Division	407-425-6700 svetlani@accutest.com
Michella Karapondo Absent	USEPA	513-569-7141 karapondo.michella@epa.gov
Carl Kircher Absent	Florida DOH	904-791-1574 carl_kircher@doh.state.fl.us
Stacie Metzler Present	HRSD	757-460-4217 smetzler@hrsd.com
Matt Sica Absent	State of Maine	207-287-1929 matthew.sica@maine.gov
Curtis Wood Absent	Environmental Resource Associates	303-431-8454 cwood@eraqc.com

Attachment B

Standard Interpretation Request Reviews

#72

Section (eg. C.4.1.7.4)	SCM FoPT (7/1/07) ; NELAC Analyte 1935, footnote 13
Describe the problem:	The SCM PT standard for TPH references HEM/SGT on the FoPT. HEM/SGT is a method defined analyte for method to 1664A. The scope and application section of 1664A says that it is for "surface and saline waters and industrial and domestic aqueous wastes". Therefore, the method has to be modified to be performed on solid and chemical materials. Is it appropriate to have a required PT for a non-standard method?
Comments	Gary: It is appropriate to have a PT for any analyte/method where the method is used with sufficient frequency and in support of environmental decision making regardless of the source of the method. Eric will take a lead on this question. He will forward his suggested response to the Board members and look for comments to help finalize the response.
Response	

#75

Section (eg. C.4.1.7.4)	2.2.1, Appendix C.3
Describe the problem:	The result for EDB of <0.500ug/L was scored "not acceptable", against the true value of 0.299ug/L and limits of 0.179-0.419ug/L. This result is not identified as consideration for unacceptable criteria. We disagree, and feel that this result should be scored acceptable. 0.299ug/L is less than 0.500ug/L.
Comments	Gary: EDB has an MCL of 0.05 ug/L. I believe that if the laboratory is supporting any regulatory work or if they ever report a value to a client at a concentration below 0.500 ug/L then their score is unacceptable. I would also argue that if the laboratory cannot meet the MCL or generally accepted MDL then the method is a modified method and should not reference the regulatory method without noting that it is modified. Eric: The PTRL on the table states to report to 0.1 ug/L. Need to use technology that allows you to get to the PTRL.

	<p>Carl: Is the lab trying to run this by 524.2?</p> <p>Eric will add some language to Gary's response. He will send out suggested language to the PT Board for comment.</p>
Response	

#80

Section (eg. C.4.1.7.4)	List of analytes that required Proficiency Testing
Describe the problem:	<p>We are currently accredited for method SW 846 8151, but we want to add Pentachlorophenol by 8151 to our scope. Pentachlorophenol is not listed as requiring PT with the other Herbicides that are analyzed by 8151 that are listed. Therefore, I interpret that as Pentachlorophenol by method 8151 does not require PT.</p> <p>Our Accrediting Body says otherwise. They contend that because Pentachlorophenol is listed under the Acid Extractables (Method 625 or 8270) that require PT, it also requires PT if we want to add it to our 8151 scope.</p> <p>Please advise. Thank you.</p>
Comments	<p>Gary: Pentachlorophenol is listed as an analyte for 8151 and is included in the PT sample for herbicides. While the tables have classified pentachlorophenol as an acid this is a general classification and does not imply an analytical method. The acceptance criteria are not method specific at this time so I would say there is a valid PT sample available and the lab is required to report it if wants accreditation.</p> <p>Eric: Need to note the e-mail that Steve Arms sent regarding the initial intent of the standard. This should impact a response on this request. Also should include information on what the Chem FoPT Subcommittee is doing. Eric will draft a response.</p> <p>Jeff: The PT Board should evaluate if questions like this require some additional action on the PT Board part. Is a low level PT for Pentachlorophenol needed?</p>
Response	

#91

Section (eg. C.4.1.7.4)	C.1.1.1 and C.1.1.2 retrieved from: http://www.a2la.org/checklists/NELAC_CH_2_Pt_Provider_Checklist.pdf
Describe the problem:	<p>My question stems from the recent DMR-QA 29 Study that my laboratory participated in, specifically the settleable solids parameter (SM2540F, volumetric). I am looking for clarification as to why a test that does not produce answers to three significant figures can be held to such a standard when it comes to PT acceptance ranges.</p> <p>When calculating an answer, SM 1050B instructs to round off an answer to “as few significant figures as are present in the factor with the fewest significant figures”. For Settleable Solids, it is not possible to report to three significant figures. Therefore, as in our case, an assigned value of 25.6 ml/l for the PT sample is not even a realistic/obtainable result. To then take such data and use it to calculate acceptance ranges ends up limiting the labs further than they should be. Meaning, the assigned acceptance range of 20.0-32.9 ml/l for our sample is really saying 20.0-32.0 because the test doesn’t allow detection at a third significant figure. For this particular test, calculating limits this way will always result in the labs having a narrower range than intended, 0.9 ml/l in this case.</p> <p>I appreciate all feedback on this matter. Thank you,</p>
Comments	<p>Gary: I would argue this is a PT expert committee issue in that I was unable to find in the standard the acceptable practice for rounding acceptance criteria or results to make sure that the criteria and result were compared at the same number of significant figures nor could I find a reporting requirement for the laboratory to report to 3 significant. PT providers have a 3 significant reporting requirement but the laboratories do not.</p> <p>Carl: On the last SIR, we can add that the issue will be forwarded to the Chem. FoPT Subcommittee since Settleable Residue is an Experimental analyte that must be examined in the near future.</p> <p>Jeff: Is this a technical question? 1050B requires that you round your result to 2 significant figures.</p> <p>PT providers do request the results to be reported to 3 significant figures.</p> <p>Carl will write-up a proposed response.</p>
Response	

Attachment C

Action Items – TNI PT Board

	Action Item	Who	Expected Completion	Actual Completion
10.	Let the new Chemistry FoPT Subcommittee know that information is available from NY regarding extraction/prep methods and PT results.	Carl / Ilona	When Chemistry FoPT Subcommittee is formed.	Describe what this is. Soil in metals too? SVOA.
17.	Work on language for new TNI policy based on NELAC Policy #16 and EPA Criteria Document.	Chuck	Eric will follow-up with Chuck to determine a date.	Looking for volunteer to help Chuck.
42	Submit modified footnote based on the micro discussion during the 3/19/09 meeting.	Eric	Before tables are finalized.	
60	Post SOP 4-001 on the PT Board's website when finalized.	Ilona	When finalized.	
64	Fix typo in WS Table.	Eric	10/19/09	Open
65	Is PT Board membership limited to 10 or 15. PT Board's operational SOP 4-003 states 15, but document Ilona saw stated 5-10.	Ilona	11-19-09	Out before end of week.
66	Review SSAS documents forwarded by Randy Querry. Must be prepared to vote in November 19 th meeting.	All	11-19-09	
70	Reassess need to contact PT Providers to give them a heads-up on the FoPT table updates.	Eric	11/19/09	
71	Prepare letter to Chem FoPT Subcommittee regarding the need to look at pH studies above 8.	Eric	10/19/09	
73	Forward SOP 4-001 R 3.0 to the Policy Committee and Chem FoPT Subcommittee.	Eric	10/16/09	
74	Provide announcement to PT Providers regarding new NPW low level analytes effective 1-1-10.	Eric	11/24/09	

	Action Item	Who	Expected Completion	Actual Completion
75	Carl and Dan will work on the review of the SSAS documents. A summary will be provided to the PT Board prior to the 11/19 meeting.	Carl Dan	11/18/09	
76	Dan will check with Randy on the status of the SOW. Eric had suggested that it be included in the General Requirements.	Dan	11/19/09	
77	Send an e-mail to the NELAP Board for clarification on how multi-level concentration PTs must be run. Does the lab choose which to run? Must all be run? Etc	Eric	11/19/09	
78	In section 14 of the General Requirements document – appeals procedure – there isn't anything about a notification to the PT Board. Eric will provide some questions in an e-mail for Dan to respond to.	Eric	11/19/09	
79	Provide a draft response to SIR 72, 75 and 80. Distribute to Board via e-mail.	Eric	11/19/09	
80	Provide a draft response to SIR 91 and distribute to Board via e-mail.	Carl	11/19/09	
81	Provide a draft response to SIR 95 or provide an e-mail update prior to the next meeting.	Stacie	11/18/09	

Attachment D

Backburner / Reminders – TNI PT Board

	Item	Meeting Reference	Comments
3	Send A2LA a formal request to ask PT Providers if PT data can be shared with the Board. Needs to be done before 8/09.	1/14/09	
5	Update PTPA Review SOP.	n/a	
6	DW Table Micro Total Coliform Rule Request	10/15/09	9 out of 10 vs. 10 out of 10