TNI PT Program Executive Committee
Meeting Summary

April 17, 2014

1. Roll call and approval of minutes:

   New Chair, Maria Friedman, called the TNI PT Program Executive Committee (PTPEC) meeting to order on April 17, 2014, at 1 PM ET by teleconference. Attendance is recorded in Attachment A – there were 12 Executive Committee members present. Associate members on the phone: Jeff Lowry (Phenova), Carl Kircher (FL DOH), Jennifer Best (EPA), Randy Querry (A2LA), Rami Naddy and Shawn Kassner (Phenova).

   Maria reviewed the handouts everyone should have received for the meeting.

   The meeting minutes from March 20, 2014 were reviewed. A motion was made by Susan and seconded by Jennifer to approve the minutes. There was no additional discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

   Maria thanked Jennifer for her work on the PTPEC. Jennifer will be stepping off the committee to work on a new lab analyst certification program in NJ. Carl commented that ISO 17024 helps with guidance on personnel certification.

2. Subcommittee Updates

   <u>WET FoPT Subcommittee:</u>

   Rami Naddy (Chair – WET FoPT Subcommittee) sent recommendations to the PTPEC (Attachment D). The subcommittee wanted to look at instructions that would help laboratories. He also noted that it is important for the PT Provider to specify certain instructions for WET PTs because different states have different requirements.

   Susan asked if this is something that belongs in the standard – not on the FoPT table. It was commented that this could not be added to the standard.

   Jeff commented that PT Providers cannot specify specific requirements in the method. It would need to be on the FoPT table – not in the PT Provider instructions. Shawn was in agreement. Carl also commented that the information belongs on the FoPT table as a footnote if needed, as already suggested in Maria's e-mail on this subject.

The WET FoPT Subcommittee's concern was to build consistency in the PT and thought that one of the best ways to do this was to provide additional instructions/requirements with the PT.

Andy commented that client conditions are different for each client. The labs are used to receiving specialized requests.

Jeff commented that many years ago they (PT Providers and EPA) compared the difference between 20 degrees and 25 degrees and found no difference in the result, so the test at 25 degrees was left in.

Carl noted that PTs should be run under similar situations so that the data is comparative.

It was asked if there is precedent for requesting PT Providers to put anything into instructions. EPA includes information in DMRQA requirements, but does not request that the PT Provider include additional information.

Carl would prefer to see the WET information in the FoPT tables. Jeff agreed, but some of it needs to be more specific. An example: Organism age and number of reps – needs to be more specific or leave it out.

Rami will update the recommendation through the month via email. Committee members are asked to provide feedback by email.

Chem FoPT Subcommittee:

Stacie sent an email regarding the Cyanide update. Carl has not received an email. The email will be resent.

Metribuzin was discussed during the previous Chem FoPT Subcommittee meeting. The committee didn't have a quorum so a request for additional information was requested from other members.

Carl recommends maintaining the analyte as currently listed or that Metribuzin be eliminated as a PT.

Carl reviewed the comments from other Chem FoPT Subcommittee members.

Maria would like to review the process of how this question came to the PTPEC. Maria and Ilona will work on this and make it clear what route should be used for these types of concerns and complaints. TSS was handled through the TNI Complaint process.

Carl will take this back to the Chem FoPT Subcommittee and will provide a formal recommendation to the PTPEC. Maria requested to have the recommendation submitted asap (at least 2 weeks) prior to the next call since this issue has been brought up to the

Executive Committee since December 2013. She would like the committee to have this resolved via e-mail, if possible, instead of waiting for the next call.

New data need to be supplied to the subcommittee before more FoPTs can be considered. The next class of analytes will be metals. They will begin work on the application when they have a full quorum to vote.

Microbiology FoPT Subcommittee Report

Susan reviewed the subcommittee's recommendation (see Attachment E).

The subcommittee recommends not specifying preparation ranges on the DW FoPT table for qualitative microbiological PT samples.

Jennifer Louden motioned to accept the micro recommendation. Eric Smith seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion passed. The committee's work has been completed. Maria thanked them for all their work.

FoPT Table Update Subcommittee

The subcommittee needs to elect a new chair.

Ilona will reach out to the subcommittee to start the process of identifying a new chair.

SOP Subcommittee

A DRAFT subcommittee scope was distributed to the PTPEC. Nicole noted that the scope should not discuss implementation. The subcommittee only recommends the SOP to the PTPEC.

A motion was made by Susan to approve the scope for the PTP SOP Subcommittee as modified by Nicole (Attachment F). The motion was seconded by Patrick and unanimously approved.

Shawn noted that Volume 4 of the Standard is diminishing. More will be placed into SOPs.

SOP priorities will be reviewed and discussed with the PTPEC when the list of SOPs needed is completed.

Carl asked if the FoPTs will continue to be reviewed and updated since a table management SOP exists. Eric and Nicole commented that the FoPT committees will continue to review the tables. The SOP only covers how people outside of the PTPEC can request changes to the table.

3. New Business

None.

4. Action Items

- See Attachment B.

5. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be May 15, 2014 at 1pm EDT.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 2:23pm EDT. Andy motioned, Jennifer seconded. Unanimously approved.

Attachment A

Participants
TNI
Proficiency Testing Program Executive Committee

Members	Affiliation	Contact Information
Stacie Metzler (2009) **Absent**	HRSD	757-460-4217 smetzler@hrsd.com
Maria Friedman (2014) - **Present**	TestAmerica	949-260-3201 maria.friedman@testamericainc.com
Ilona Taunton, Program Administrator **Present**	TNI	828-712-9242 tauntoni@msn.com
Eric Smith (2010) **Present (Joined 1:30pm)**	ALS Environmental	904-394-4415 eric.smith@alsglobal.com
Justin Brown (2011) **Present**	Environmental Monitoring and Technologies, Inc.	847-875-2271 jbrown@emt.com
Susan Butts (2012) **Present**	South Carolina DHEC	(803)896-0978 buttsse@dhec.sc.gov
Patrick Brumfield (2012) **Present**	Sigma-Aldrich RTC	(307) 721-5488 Pat.Brumfield@sial.com
Michella Karapondo (2011) **Present**	USEPA	513-569-7141 karapondo.michella@epa.gov
Jennifer Loudon (2013) **Present**	Raritan Township Municipal Utilities Authority	(908) 782-7453 x19 JLoudon@rtmua.com
Nicole Cairns (2012) **Present**	NY State DOH	(518) 473-0323 nlc02@health.state.ny.us
Joe Pardue (2011) **Present**	Pro2Serve, Inc.	423-337-3121 joe_pardue@charter.net
Dr. Andy Valkenburg (2011) **Present**	Energy Laboratories, Inc.	406-869-6254 avalkenburg@energylab.com
Ron Houck **Present**	PA DEP	rhouck@pa.gov
Matt Sica **Present**	ACLASS	msica@anab-aclass.org

Attachment B

Action Items – TNI PT Executive Committee

	Action Item	Who	Expected Completion	Actual Completion
165	Follow-up on need for NEFAP EC approval of the FSMO FoPT Table.	Eric	Next Meeting	4/18/13: Ilona – will ask NEFAP EC if they need to approve the Lead table.
185	Send updated DW table with Footnote 15 to NELAP AC for approval.	Stacie	4/1/12	Stacie submitted this. Need to confirm approval.
196	Prepare final response to Complaint and forward to committee for approval.	Stacie	10-18-12	
205	Follow-up on membership candidates.	Stacie	6/19/13	In Progress
213	Update FoPT Subcommittee lists and give to Ilona for corrections on the website.	Stacie	Next Meeting	
214	Update Tin, Total Xylene and Total Cyanide on FoPT tables and submit for approval.	Carl Stacie	Next Meeting	In Progress
217	Cyanide and Footnote 15 needs to be updated on the DW table. There is a question about analyte code. This needs to be researched and a proposed update made to the PTP EC to complete this action item.	Michella	Next Meeting	
224	Send Metribuzin request to Chem FoPT Subcommittee.	~~Stacie~~ Maria	4/4/14	Complete
226	Send FoPT table with need for Cyanide update to Carl Kircher. Due back to PTPEC before next meeting.	Stacie	4/4/14	

	Action Item	Who	Expected Completion	Actual Completion
227	Distribute WET FoPT Subcommittee report to PTPEC.	Stacie	4/15/14	Complete
228	Post FoPT Table Update Scope to website.	Ilona	4/15/14	Complete
229	Prepare DRAFT Scope for SOP Subcommittee and distribute to PTPEC for review.	Stacie Ilona	4/15/14	Complete
230	Correct postings for Lead and Protozoa FoPT tables.	Ilona	4/15/14	Complete
231	Meet to discuss how information is requested from PTPAs and how it relates to PT Providers.	Ilona Maria	4/15/14	
232	Update WET Recommendation and sent to Ilona for distribution and email comments.	Rami	5/6/14	
233	Review complaint process.	Maria Ilona	5/14/14	
234	Contact FoPT Table Subcommittee to begin process of selecting a new chair.	Ilona	5/14/14	
235				

Attachment C

Backburner / Reminders – TNI PT Executive Committee

	Item	Meeting Reference	Comments
7	Add the Field PT Subcommittee to the limit update SOP during its next update.	3/4/10	
11	Evaluate how labs are accredited for analytes that co-elute.	5-19-11	
12	PTPA Evaluation Checklist needs to be updated prior to next round of evaluations.	8-6-13	
13	Charter needs to be updated in November.	Ongoing	
14	When new limits are established for the FoPTs, what is considered to be a statistically significant change to the old rates? At what point is it appropriate to question new limits? This lends to the TSS discussion a few months ago. Patrick commented that it would make sense to look at changes to pass/fail rates 6 months after new limits are effective. This possible addition to procedures should be evaluated when updating the limit acceptance SOP. 3/20/14: Eric noted that there are some logistics with doing a 6 month review. This may need to be a separate committee so it does not hamper the progress of the Chemistry FoPT Subcommittee.	2/20/14	

Attachment D: WET FoPT Subcommittee

Whole Effluent Toxicity (WET) Testing Fields of Proficiency Testing Subcommittee for Acceptance Criteria

RE: Recommended revisions to PT instructions

Summary: The WET FoPT Subcommittee for Acceptance Criteria reviewed the PT instructions issued by PT providers to laboratories. This was initially done to provide background information on test preparation. During the review, however, the committee noted some inconsistencies with the EPA method manuals.

Recommendations to PT Providers for Revision of Test Instructions

- Current test instructions specify the use of Forty Fathoms seawater for all saltwater tests. The Forty Fathoms brand of sea salts is no longer marketed. We recommend that the instructions substitute the term “synthetic seawater” in place of “40 Fathoms Seawater” and “40FSW”.

- The dilution instructions for the sheepshead minnow chronic toxicity test (EPA Method 1004.0) do not yield sufficient volume to complete the test in accordance with the method. The initial volume prior to serial dilution must be a minimum of 6 L to provide the required 3 L per test dilution. This is consistent with the method recommendation of a 6 L volume of effluent. We recommend that the toxicant volume and dilution instructions be revised to ensure sufficient volume for test performance.

- In order to ensure consistency in test conditions, PT providers should include in the instructions the following information in tabular format for each test:

  - temperature
  - test duration (need to specify that test duration of the *C. dubia* chronic study is: until 60% or more of the surviving control females have three broods, maximum test duration 8 days)
  - organism age
  - renewal frequency (none, daily, or at 48-h)
  - salinity for saltwater studies
  - dilution water (mod hard water with hardness of 80-100 mg/L & alkalinity of 57-64 mg/L)
  - dilution series (0, 6.25, 12.5, 25, 50, & 100%)
  - # of reps
  - # of organisms per test chamber

Background: PT providers issue a set of basic instructions regarding dilution preparation

and testing with each PT sample. These instructions are largely consistent, providing information on the test method, the dilution water, tested species, test duration, serial dilution steps, etc. During the review process, it was noted that though the instructions were relatively consistent amongst the PT providers, there were two items that were inconsistent with the EPA methods manuals.

- Forty Fathoms seawater: Several providers made explicit references to the use of Forty Fathoms sea salts. Artificial sea salts are no longer marketed under the brand name “Forty Fathoms”. Current EPA guidance for acute and chronic toxicity tests specifies the use of commercial sea salts and provides examples such as Forty Fathoms and HW Marinemix or equivalent. The use of the term “artificial seawater” or “synthetic seawater” should replace the term “Forty (40) Fathoms seawater”.

- Dilution Volume: The test instructions for the sheepshead minnow chronic toxicity test do not yield sufficient volume to complete the test in accordance with EPA methods. The reference toxicant dilution instructions yield 3 - 4 L of test effluent prior to serial dilution. Serial dilution reduces the volume of each test concentration to 1.5 – 2 L. The test requires four replicates per treatment with a minimum volume of 500 – 750 mL per test chamber, depending on loading and dissolved oxygen concentrations. Thus the volume required for each test concentration is 2 – 3 L. The method recommends an initial effluent sample volume of 6L. The dilution instructions need to be revised to provide sufficient volume for each test concentration.

Attachment E: Microbiology FoPT Subcommittee

PTEC FoPT Microbiology Subcommittee

Original Scope:

Determining preparation ranges for qualitative microbiology FoPTs:

Currently, there are a wide range of concentrations used in qualitative microbiology PT. These concentrations must be meaningful to reflect a laboratory's performance, and meet the requirements of regulatory programs. The subcommittee should gather input from ABs, EPA along with PT provider data to determine the appropriate concentration ranges for use in qualitative microbiology PTs.

Recommendation to the TNI Proficiency Testing Program Executive Committee (PTPEC):

The subcommittee spent about a year reviewing the possibility of determining preparation ranges for qualitative microbiology drinking water PT samples. The ranges, if deemed appropriate would be specified on the drinking water FoPT table.

The subcommittee reviewed historical data from EPA to determine the preparation ranges previously used when EPA ran the PT program. It was determined that preparation ranges were not specified at this time and the amount of bacteria in the PT samples were in the 10^5-10^7 range.

Data was requested from five PT providers that prepared qualitative microbiological PTs. Data was received from three PT providers. A summary of the data received was presented at the Louisville meeting held in January 2014. The following is a breakdown of the low to high ends (total ranges) of the made-to values of microbiological qualitative PT sample data collected between three providers over 10 studies:
Total coliform +/ *E. coli.* +: 24-249 CFU
Total coliform +/ *E. coli.* -: 30-504 CFU
Total coliform -/ *E. coli.* -: 38-550 CFU
See the attached spreadsheet for the complete analysis of data collected as presented in Louisville.

There was much discussion over whether or not it was appropriate to specify preparation ranges as well as what those ranges should be. Generally, there was concern over preparation ranges being too low (generally < 20CFU) and that low preparation ranges generate a higher probability of false negative results. There was also general concern over putting too much bacteria in the samples that there would be no challenge presented to laboratories in passing PT samples as well as the possibility of overwhelming the capability of some methodology.

However in these discussions, there were other factors to consider on whether or not specifying preparation ranges were appropriate. If a change in requirements affecting PTs was going to be considered, the cost/method must be carefully considered. Factors affecting the cost included the amount of testing required of PT providers, whether or not extra stipulations on preparation ranges were needed, whether or not PT providers needed to assess the efficacy of a PT sample with 10 samples or 1 sample (enumerative vs qualitative).

After much discussion and consideration, the subcommittee has decided not to recommend specifying preparation ranges for qualitative PT samples based on several factors:

1) The cost versus benefit could not accurately be determined. Since specifying preparation ranges could alter and add to the work process of some PT providers, some increase in cost can be expected but this could not be determined from the information the subcommittee was given.
2) The data reviewed by the subcommittee could not definitively portray a need for specifying preparation ranges. If, in the future, more data is provided to the PTPEC to document a problem with qualitative PT samples, this item should be taken up again and data reviewed by the subcommittee.
3) Failure rates are not high for qualitative PT samples. Accrediting bodies (ABs) have not brought any concerns over qualitative PT samples to the PTEC.

Therefore, based on the inconclusive data to support a change, the subcommittee does not recommend preparation ranges be specified on the FoPT drinking water table for qualitative microbiological PT samples. The subcommittee does recommend that the discussion of specifying concentration ranges for qualitative PT samples be reopened if more data becomes available to support specific appropriate ranges.

Attachment F: PTP SOP Subcommittee

Proficiency Testing Program Executive Committee
Standard Operating Procedure Subcommittee
(PTPEC – SOP)

2014 Scope

(Revised: 04-17-14)

Scope:

The sub-committee develops and recommends standard operating procedures (SOP) to the Proficiency Testing Program Executive Committee (PTPEC) that define the roles and responsibilities of the PTPEC. The sub-committee is a branch of the PTPEC and will be working with various members from different committees to develop, review, and recommend SOP's to the PTPEC for the TNI PT Program.

The committee will hold regularly scheduled meetings, post meeting minutes, and provide regular updates, as well as, target completion dates for developing and recommending SOP's to the PTPEC on an on-going basis. The SOP's developed by this committee will be submitted to the PTPEC for approval.

Considerations:

- Volunteer member organization with time constraints.
- Limited funding.

Available Resources:

- Volunteer committee members
- Existing national and international consensus-based standards
- EPA Cooperative Agreement
- TNI Website and other TNI support services (administrative, technical editing, etc.)
- Teleconference and web-based services
- Industry experts

Additional Resources Required:

- IT support for Webex
- Conference line availability for committee meeting

Anticipated Meeting Schedule:

- Monthly Committee Teleconferences (open to all Members)
- Additional committee teleconferences as needed

Program Administrator: Ilona Taunton