

Whole Effluent Toxicity Testing Expert Committee Meeting Summary

March 20, 2019

1. Welcome and Announcements

Rami welcomed everyone to the meeting. Attendance is recorded in Attachment 1, below. Minutes from February 20 were approved, with Ginger and Beth abstaining due to their absence on February 20.

2. Updates

Rami continues his efforts to contact Kelly Black of Neptune, Inc.

Rami was asked to participate in a meeting with several ELAB members and the EPA DMRQA Coordinator, and possibly other EPA personnel. Pete will be included in this meeting, and Rami has asked that Sharon Mertens (former TNI Board Chair and ELAB member) be invited as well.

3. List of Relevant SIRs for V1M7

All expert committees have been asked to provide status updates for Standard Interpretation Requests (SIRs) and whether/how they were addressed in the 2016 revision of the Environmental Lab Sector Standard. A multi-tab spreadsheet was circulated, with each module having a separate tab, with a request that the status be determined and the completed updates returned by August.

Only one relevant SIR exists for WET, from the 2003 NELAC Standard – SIR #76 (see https://nelac-institute.org/content/load_sir.php?SIR=76). The language of the standard was not changed when the 2009 TNI Standard was created, and the 2016 Standard does not have a revised Module 7. The only comment added was that the WET committee would consider this SIR in its current revision, and Rami returned the spreadsheet to Ilona immediately after the meeting.

4. Revising V1M7

Since the February meeting, Rami prepared a few questions and has asked them of the ABs on the committee, about whether they have additional requirements about DOCs in their state regulations. Not all AB stakeholders on the committee had responded by meeting time, so further discussion is postponed until April. Lynn will consolidate these responses and distribute them for the April meeting.

Rami noted that the committee has repeatedly discussed the IDOC issue in recent months, with no resolution, and suggested that participants use this meeting to identify other issues in the standard that they would like to see addressed in the revision.

Chandra had shared a new SOP from his lab, about training of new analysts, in hopes that it might be helpful with the IDOC discussion. After he briefly reviewed the SOP, discussion raised the following points:

- SRTs are used for training rather than actual effluent samples, because most WET samples are not toxic. For an SRT, the manager will know the expected results, but a new technician will essentially be working with an “unknown” sample. Normally, a trainee will not be performing the entire SRT solo.
- Some labs do not want unproven technicians handling client samples.

- When adding one or more new people to a work cell (whether in training or already trained), it is important to establish that the SRT results remain constant.
- Technicians need only to be trained on the work they will do. For instance, if someone is hired as “weekend only” staff, then only the maintenance tasks needed over weekends are required training.
- Typically, participation in 4 SRTs with expected results is considered adequate training for a new employee to work independently. Less than that would require a co-signoff on the test outcome.
- Training for test methods where no SRTs are available requires a different approach, such as for some sediment tests. EPA sediment methods require 5 SRTs, but when SRTs are not available, successful recovery of the animals from sediment is still key to determining survival.
- Some participants use written tests to verify training, with different tests at different times during the training period (which can be up to a year). This requires setting test acceptance limits for both the written and the lab tests that a new employee must perform.
- Consider how much specificity belongs in the standard versus in the lab’s SOPs.

In additional discussion, participants expressed a desire to modify the language from SIR 76 (see above) in the current revision, and appeared to form consensus around the concept of rounding the time to the units stated, rather than using the precise minute as a cut-off. Later discussion noted these issues:

- Possible negative effects from rounding, such as when a test is ended early and regulators question why
- What action counts as ending the test – beginning to count organisms or ending the counts?
- Rounding is less critical for chronic tests than for acute ones.
- Maybe define “time windows” in the standard, subject to client modification, for both holding times of samples and take-down times for tests.
- Consider factors influencing test timing, such as animal cannibalism when not fed or lab need to use space in afternoon to set up a different test.
- Consider how much specificity belongs in the standard versus in the lab’s SOPs.

NOTE: This concept (and others discussed later in the meeting) have been added to the “response-to-comments” file to ensure that they are considered as the revision of V1M7 proceeds.

Other topics raised for consideration were sample hold times, and temperature upon receipt, and how these should be recorded – whole numbers or how many decimals.

5. Next Meeting

The next teleconference meeting will be at **1 pm Eastern on Wednesday, April 17, 2019**. An agenda and documents will be sent before the meeting.

Attachment 1

Committee Membership

Member	Affiliation	Email	Category	Term Expiration	Present
Ginger Briggs	Bio-Analytical Laboratories	bioanalytical@wildblue.net	Lab	Dec. 2020 (2)	Yes
Chris Burbage	Hampton Roads Sanitation District	cburbage@hrsd.com	Lab	Dec. 2020 (2)	Yes
Kari Fleming	WI DNR	kari.fleming@wisconsin.gov	AB	Dec. 2020 (2)	No
Amy Hackman	Penn. Dept. Environ. Protection	ahackman@pa.gov	AB	Dec. 2020 (2)	No
Sarah Hughes	Shell Oil Co.	s.hughes@shell.com	Other	Dec. 2021 (1)	Yes
Pete De Lisle (Vice Chair)	Coastal Bioanalysts Inc.	pfd@coastalbio.com	Lab	Dec. 2020 (2)	Yes
VelRey Lozano	USEPA Region 8	Lozano.VelRey@epa.gov	Other (Affiliate)	Dec 2020 (1)	No
Rami Naddy (Chair)	TRE Env. Strat. LLC	naddyrb.tre@gmail.com	Lab	Dec. 2020 (2)	Yes
Teresa Norberg-King	USEPA	norberg-king.teresa@epa.gov	Other (Affiliate)	Dec. 2020 (2)	No
John Overbey	American Interplex Corp.	joverbey@americaninterplex.com	Lab	Dec 2020 (1)	No
Chris Pasch	Alan Plummer Associates, Inc.	cpasch@apaienv.com	Other	Dec. 2020 (2)	Yes
Michael Pfeil	Texas Comm. Environ. Quality	Michael.pfeil@tceq.texas.gov	AB	Dec. 2020 (2)	Yes
Michele Potter	New Jersey Dept. of Environ Protect.	Michele.Potter@dep.nj.gov	AB	Dec. 2020 (2)	No
Steven Rewa	Environmental Resources Management	steven.rewa@erm.com	Lab	Dec. 2020 (2)	Yes
Beth Thompson	Shealy Consulting	bthompson@shealyconsulting.net	Lab	Dec 2020 (1)	Yes
Elizabeth West	LA DEQ LELAP	elizabeth.west@la.gov	AB	Dec. 2020 (2)	Yes

Associate Members					
Silvia Bogdan	EPA R6	Bogdan.silvia@epa.gov	Other (Assoc.)		No
Steve Boggs	CA ELAP	steve.boggs@waterboards.ca.gov	Other (Assoc.)		No
Thekkekalathil "Chandra" Chandrasekhar	FL DEP	Thekkekalathil.Chandrasekhar@dep.state.fl.us	Lab (Assoc.)		Yes
Michael Chanov	EA Eng., Sci. &Tech.	mchanov@eaest.com	Lab (Assoc.)	--	No
Stephen Clark	Pacific EcoRisk	slclark@pacificecorisk.com	Lab (Assoc.)		No (Krista Prosser sub.)
Erin Consuegra	ERA LAB	econsuegra@eralab.com	Lab (Assoc.)		No
Kevin Dischler	Element Materials Technology	Kevin.dischler@element.com	Lab (Assoc.)	---	No
Monica Eues	CK Associates	Monica.eues@c-ka.com	Lab (Assoc.)		No
Nicole Fortin	Honolulu City Lab	nfortin@honolulu.gov	Lab (Assoc.)		No
Christina Henderson	Bio-Aquatic Testing, Inc.	chenderson@bio-aquatic.com	Lab (Assoc.)		No
David Johnston	Valero Refining Co - Benecia	david.johnston@valero.com	Lab (Assoc.)		No
Linda Nemeth	Northwestern Aquatic Sciences	lnemeth@tds.net	Lab (Assoc.)		No
Mark O'Neil	Environmental Enterprises USA, Inc.	moneil@eeusa.com	Lab (Assoc.)	---	Yes
Katie Payne	Nautilus Environmental	katie@ nautilusenvironmental.com	Lab (Assoc.)		Yes
Christina Pottios	Los Angeles Cty Sanitation Districts	cpottios@lacsdsd.org	Lab (Assoc.)		No
Greg Savitske	US EPA OECA	Savitske.gregory@epa.gov	Other (Assoc.)		No
Shain Schmitt	ESC Lab Sciences	sschmitt@esclabsciences.com	Lab (Assoc.)		No
Jordan Thorngren	Eurofins (Horsham, PA)	jordanthorngren@eurofinsUS.com	Lab (Assoc.)		No
Craig Watts	Hydrosphere Research	cwatts@hydrosphere.net	Lab (Assoc.)		No
Tom Widera	ERA	twidera@eraqc.com	Other (Assoc.)		No
Lynn Bradley	TNI Program Administrator	Lynn.Bradley@nelac-institute.org			Yes