

Whole Effluent Toxicity Testing Expert Committee Meeting Summary

June 20, 2018 1 pm Eastern

1. Welcome and Announcements

Rami welcomed everyone to the meeting. Attendance is recorded in Attachment 1, below. The minutes from May 16, 2018, were approved by acclamation.

2. Status Updates on Follow-Up Items from Conference

NEFAP – no report.

WET Methods for the TNI Method Compendium in LAMS – Rami found individual methods published on the EPA website and sent those to Dan, who was putting them in the compendium. Rami will ask Dan to add a note that people needing full information should refer to the EPA Method Manuals.

FoPT Analyte Codes – Rami reported that only two comments have been received on the analyte codes tentatively assigned by Dan, as recommended by Craig Huff. These are essentially a new code for each test with each set of conditions and endpoint having a different code. Additional comments are still needed.

Discussion points were as follows:

- Should there be a different code for different waters? Some believe all dilution waters are equivalent, but others think that it makes a difference in the test outcomes. This is the biggest issue awaiting resolution, and may need to be deferred to PTPEC.
- If a lab changes the type of dilution water used (say, to Perrier), would they need to re-do all control charts? It might depend on the assessor, but perhaps the lab could compare results going forward and if a change is noted, then re-do the control charts. One participant noted that §416 of the EPA Manual requires the same dilution water.
- Should different species have different codes as well as different endpoints when the test protocols are the same?
- Concerns were expressed about obtaining analyte codes in the future if they don't exist from this assignment. [NOTE: New codes can always be requested.]

The consensus was that there are no identified “down sides” to having more analyte codes. Rami will discuss this with Craig and bring a final decision to the committee’s July meeting.

PTPEC Request from December – If Rami is unable to speak w/ Nicole Cairns before conference, he will ask Ginger or Elizabeth to talk with her in New Orleans.

SETAC Meeting in Sacramento, November, 2018 – Rami and Teresa and others have submitted an abstract (an invited paper) for the Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry. The topic will be “Improving the Laboratory Accreditation Process for WET Methods.” The abstract accompanies the email distributing these minutes, but is not part of the minutes.

Agenda for WET Session at Conference – Rami agreed to follow up with Elizabeth and Ginger (both absent) about who will moderate the conference session and to define the agenda. This session will be Tuesday afternoon, August 7, from 1-3 pm Central time; teleconference capability will not be available.

3. Revising the WET Module of the TNI Standard (V1M7)

Chemistry QA/QC – John and Michele were unable to attend this meeting; the planned draft final language will be distributed for review and discussion at the July committee meeting.

DOC/IDOC – Steve distributed revised language from the May meeting for discussion that addressed comments from the May meeting.

With the decision to propose the scope expansion in the “outline” of proposed changes (yet to come), review of changes moved forward to §1.6, the actual DOC language.

The following comments were made on this month’s draft:

§1.6.4.1, initial analyst training – the final sentence would cover outliers such as sediment testing and perhaps some phases of testing where SRT is not completely appropriate for training. Participants discussed whether “generic” language is adequate or if specifics are needed, and there was no support for adding specifics in this section, with the consensus being that each lab would be able to define its own processes and follow them. Participants noted that SRTs are not entirely appropriate for training, for two reasons: if the SRT fails, that’s a large investment to repeat and also, it is preferable to verify analyst proficiency in different subtasks of the SRT. This also allows a new analyst to begin working on those subtasks, once trained, rather than needing to wait until s/he could successfully complete an entire SRT.

§1.6.4.1.b – breaks out subtasks but specifies that the tasks be done within an SRT and that to count for training, the entire SRT should be successful.

At this point of the discussion, VelRey noted that she has found a searchable copy of EPA’s 1991 Manual for Evaluating WET Tests (EPA 600/4-90/6031) and distributed it to committee members. This document is also on the EPA website. While slightly outdated, in that it references 1980 method versions, it may help clarify distinctions between DOC for the lab and DOC for an analyst. She noted that it may be helpful to distinguish training requirements among lab managers, senior analysts and technicians.

There was general agreement that five SRTs per analyst (for training purposes) is overkill, but rather five SRTs should be for the laboratory, with training requirements defined by the lab. One AB participant indicated that eliminating the individual SRT requirements might not be acceptable, as an analyst should be included in four SRTs for chronic methods.

Other participants noted that the final language of the module needs to be “auditable.” The issue of training for part-time analysts (for example, weekend staff who would never be performing set-up for an experiment) may need to be addressed somehow.

Steve proposed keeping the DOC language as written in the June version, and adding as §1.6.8, “it is the responsibility of the laboratory to document that initial training of analysts is adequate.”

Consensus was not reached on whether training for a new technician (or analyst) “must” include a fixed number of SRTs (whether four or six) for acute tests, with additional tasks being added for chronic tests, or whether similar technologies could count for more than one particular test, in training documentation.

At this point, time was up. Rami asked that participants consider how to address the “similar technology” issue and also whether multiple SRTs will be included as part of the training requirements. Knowing that different assessors seem to require different things now, it will be important to clearly articulate what the committee agrees should be mandatory and what can be left to the discretion of the lab.

4. Next Meeting

The next teleconference will be Wednesday, July 18, 2018, at 1 pm Eastern. Teleconference information and an agenda will be provided in advance.

The WET Expert Committee will have a session at conference in New Orleans on Tuesday afternoon, August 7, but teleconference capability will not be available.

There is a chance that the Environmental Laboratory Advisory Board's (ELAB's) Monday afternoon, August 6 (1-5 pm, CDT), meeting at conference will include a conversation following up on the Washington, DC, meeting among TNI and WET members, ELAB members and EPA representatives. If this happens, all committee members will be informed. Since it is a public meeting of a Federal Advisory Committee, there would be teleconference capability and all committee members could participate. The planned informal Tuesday morning meeting may occur if the WET issue is not on the agenda for the ELAB meeting itself.

There will be no teleconference meeting at the regularly scheduled time of August 15, 2018. Monthly teleconferences will resume on September 19, 2018.

Attachment 1

Committee Membership

Member	Affiliation	Email	Category	Term Expiration	Present
Ginger Briggs	Bio-Analytical Laboratories	bioanalytical@wildblue.net	Lab	Dec. 2020 (2)	No
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)	Yes
Amy Hackman	Penn. Dept. Environ. Protection	ahackman@pa.gov	AB	Dec. 2020 (2)	Yes
Pete De Lisle (Vice Chair)	Coastal Bioanalysts Inc.	pfd@coastalbio.com	Lab	Dec. 2020 (2)	No
VelRey Lozano	USEPA Region 8	Lozano.VelRey@epa.gov	Other (EPA)	Dec 2020 (1)	Yes
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)	No

Associate Members					
Debmalya Bhattacharyya	NE OH Regional Sewer District	bhattacharyad@neorsd.org	Lab (Assoc.)		No
Silvia Bogdan	EPA R6	Bogdan.silvia@epa.gov	Other (Assoc.)		No
Steve Boggs	CA ELAP	steve.boggs@waterboards.ca.gov	Other (Assoc.)		Yes
Michael Chanov	EA Eng., Sci. &Tech.	mchanov@eaest.com	Lab (Assoc.)	--	No
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
Marshall Faircloth	FL DEP	joseph.faircloth@dep.state.fl.us	Lab (Assoc.)		Yes
Katie Fox	ATC Group Services	Katie.Fox@atcgs.com	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.)		Yes
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.)		No
Christina Pottios	Los Angeles Cty Sanitation Districts	cpottios@lacsds.org	Lab (Assoc.)		Yes
Shain Schmitt	ESC Lab Sciences	sschmitt@esclabsciences.com	Lab (Assoc.)		No
Greg Savitske	US EPA OECA	Savitske.gregory@epa.gov	Other (Assoc.)		No
Thekkekalathil "Chandra" Chandrasekhar	FL DEP	Thekkekalathil.Chandrasekhar@dep.state.fl.us	Lab (Assoc.)		Yes

Jordan Thorngren	Eurofins (Horsham, PA)	jordanthorngren@eurofinsUS.com	Lab (Assoc.)		No
Tom Widera	ERA	twidera@eraqc.com	Other (Assoc.)		No
Lynn Bradley	TNI Program Administrator	Lynn.Bradley@nelac-institute.org			Yes

Attachment 2

Action Items

	Action/Activity	Responsible Person(s)	Anticipated Completion	Comments
15	Draft language about DOC requirements	Steve and Pete, with others	??	Revised draft expected for June 2018 meeting
17	Draft language about QC requirements for water chemistry measurements	Michele, John, others?	??	Revised near-final draft language expected for June 2018 meeting
20	Work with TNI Database Administrator about WET methods in the compendium	Rami, Elizabeth		Follow-up work underway
21	Review FoPT table with inserted analyte codes	Rami, Michele, Beth, Chandra		Review of Dan's suggested list still needed