

**Whole Effluent Toxicity Testing Expert Committee Meeting Summary
November 20, 2019 1:00 pm Eastern**

1. Welcome and Announcements

Rami welcomed everyone to the meeting. Attendance is recorded in Attachment 1, below.

2. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of October 16 were approved with the substitution of Rami's language for Lynn's draft paragraphs in section 3, reflecting discussion points to revise the initial strawman language, and with no negative votes. Beth, Ginger, Michele, Teresa and VelRey abstained from voting because they were absent from the October meeting. NOTE: the revised minutes from October were distributed to the committee along with the draft minutes of November 20.

In September, Rami had sent the text from the minutes of the August 5 session at conference in Jacksonville, describing the proposed paradigm for individual demonstrations of competency, to the AB stakeholders on the committee, asking whether they could support the suggested paradigm. Feedback from most was a tentative acceptance, with one AB objecting but providing no modifications that it would consider acceptable. This concept from August is very close to what Steve Rewa wrote in his initial draft revision, in March of 2018, and Rami commented that we have come full circle through multiple iterations and variations but still cannot reach agreement on the fundamental principles of how to accomplish a demonstration of competency for an individual analyst.

3. Updates

SETAC Workshop – for this November 1 event in Toronto, Teresa and Stephen reported that they had 22 people present plus 44 attending remotely via WebEx. Mark O'Neil was present for the workshop as well as Teresa and Stephen. The Canadian Association for Laboratory Accreditation (www.cala.ca) is a nationally consistent program, while the US system is state-by-state, with even the NELAP states offering different fields of accreditation and different application processes. Teresa will circulate summaries of the discussions during the workshop, and SETAC intends to prepare a summary document for the record.

SETAC Meeting – a session on effluent topic had VelRey, Stephen and Teresa presenting, with Chris Burbage, Mike Chanov and Katie present. SETAC is forming an ad hoc interest group for WET testing, and Teresa offered to include this WET committee in that group. This WET session is becoming a regular occurrence at the meetings, and another is planned for the conference in Ft. Worth, TX, November, 2020.

Outline for Training – Natalie and Teresa are revising and polishing their draft outline for training to address data interpretation, and will distribute that to the committee for input, once they are satisfied with it. Teresa recommends that we avoid the basic statistical part of the program due to issues involving EPA, but all other aspects will be included in the syllabus.

PT Issues – this remains a work in progress. Ginger, Katie and Rami will draft a request for data out of TNI's PT database (in its early stages, but will have a year's worth of data for us, at least). Additional volunteers are still welcome.

Issue from CSDEC Meeting – Rami discussed an issue that was addressed on the monthly Consensus Standards Development Executive Committee teleconference, where all of the expert committee (aka, standards writing committees) chairs meet, that arose out of the WET Assessor Training delivered by Marlene Moore, Advanced Systems, in early November. The Quality Systems Expert Committee is being asked to address definitions for quarterly and annual, since different NELAP states are imposing different requirements. For some, quarterly means every 3 months and annual means every 12 months, while for others, quarterly means “sometime within the subsequent 3 months” and annual means “sometime within the following year”. Teresa noted that for requirements pertaining to the WET methods, labs are expected to follow the definitions in 40 CFR 136.

ACTION ITEM: Rami, Pete and Lynn expect to participate in a teleconference with Marlene and Ilona (TNI’s Training Coordinator) to discuss this and other issues from the WET Assessor course, sometime soon.

Related to this discussion, and following it, Michele noted that the support chemistry measurements in the WET Method Manuals are outdated, and that New Jersey is revising its regulations to require following 40 CFR 136 for those methods. VelRey noted that support chemistry measurements for the NPDES permit-required methods, the outdated methods fall back to the NPDES specifications.

ACTION ITEM: Rami asked that Michele and John revisit the previously approved chemistry language to determine whether the CFR reference should be included.

Technical Director Qualifications – These were also discussed during the November CSDEC meeting (and also at the November NELAP Accreditation Council meeting). Rami posed the question to WET of whether we should add additional requirements for experience in WET methods to the previously drafted language. In response, VelRey noted that the EPA Manual for the Evaluation of Laboratories Performing Aquatic Toxicity Tests (EPA/600/4-90/031, January 1991) has language addressing those qualifications, and Rami requested that she identify pieces of the manual that would be appropriate to move into the TNI standard, so that he can share them with Jessica Jensen (Chair of Quality Systems, that “owns” the module where these qualifications will reside) and the CSDEC Chair and Program Administrator.

ACTION ITEM: VelRey to provide Rami with language about EPA’s requirements for Technical Director qualifications.

4. Revising the Standard

As noted in the October minutes, Rami had reached out to the AB representatives on the committee, asking whether they could support the paradigm that grew out of the WET session in Jacksonville. Further feedback since the October meeting was that it would not be acceptable for at least one NELAP AB to have laboratories define the tasks and skills for which individual analysts would need to be trained and then demonstrate competency. Since the Pennsylvania representative on the committee could not be present, another assessor from PA joined the call to represent that AB’s position.

Rami summarized the current concept being discussed (see language in October 2019 minutes), and how the committee had reached that stage in seeking a less resource-intensive way of demonstrating individual competence than the currently accepted participation in five standard reference toxicant (SRT) tests. This 5-test/method criteria is not explicitly specified in the standard but is commonly used by NELAP assessors as the proof of demonstrated competence for a new analyst. He explained that the current concept being discussed is a hybrid of training in generally used skill sets with a required observation of successful performance of each skill to be

documented. The committee seeks to provide guidance in how labs accomplish this but yet leave some flexibility, since each lab's workload (staffing and variety of tests being conducted) will be somewhat different.

From earlier discussions, some ABs would be satisfied with laboratory-defined skill sets, but at least one AB wants to see that each analyst demonstrate successful results for the method, *i.e.*, a successful SRT test, and is unwilling to accept that the "piecemeal" approach will demonstrate that the entire test has been mastered, from setup through transfers to termination.

Clearly, further discussion will be required to reach consensus on how to implement the concept that has developed. The committee will continue "gnawing" on the issue, and Rami will talk with Pennsylvania representatives to explore other possibilities for demonstrating individual competence that are equally or more effective and efficient than the now-used criteria of 5 SRTs for each WET method. The current 5 SRTs per method typically means that a new employee is probably unable to work independently for half a year or longer, since the chronic tests can last a week or longer each.

ACTION ITEM: Rami, Pete and Lynn talk offline with Amy and Dwayne Burkholder of PA. This call is scheduled for Wednesday, December 4.

5. Next Meeting

The next teleconference meeting will be on Wednesday, December 18, 2019, at 1 pm Eastern. An agenda and any needed documents will be sent in advance.

Attachment 1

WET Expert Committee Membership

Member	Affiliation	Email	Category	Term Expiration	Present
Ginger Briggs	Bio-Analytical Laboratories	bal@bioanalyticallabs.com	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)	Yes
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)	No
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 (Affiliate)	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)	Yes
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)	Yes
Steven Rewa	Environmental Resources Management	steven.rewa@erm.com	Lab	Dec. 2020 (2)	No
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					
Silvia Bogdan	EPA R6	Bogdan.silvia@epa.gov	Other (Assoc.)		No
Steve Boggs	CA ELAP	steve.boggs@waterboards.ca.gov	Other (Assoc.)		Yes
Dwayne Burkholder	PA DEP	dburkholde@pa.gov	AB (assoc.)	Only this meeting	Yes

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.)		Yes
Erin Consuegra	ERA LAB	econsuegra@eralab.com	Lab (Assoc.)		No
Kevin Dischler	Element Materials Technology	Kevin.dischler@element.com	Lab (Assoc.)	---	Yes
Monica Eues	CK Associates	Monica.eues@c-ka.com	Lab (Assoc.)		No
Nicole Fortin	Honolulu City Lab	nfortin@honolulu.gov	Lab (Assoc.)		Yes
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
Natalie Love	GEI Consultants	nlove@geiconsultants.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.)	---	No
Katie Payne	Nautilus Environmental	katie@nautilusenvironmental.com	Lab (Assoc.)		no
Christina Pottios	Los Angeles Cty Sanitation Districts	cpottios@lacs.org	Lab (Assoc.)		No
Greg Savitske	US EPA OECA	Savitske.gregory@epa.gov	Other (Assoc.)		No
Justin Scott	Cove Sciences	justin@covesciences.com	Lab (Assoc.)		No
Jordan Thorngren	Eurofins (Horsham, PA)	jordanthorngren@eurofinsUS.com	Lab (Assoc.)		No
Lem Walker	USEPA OW/OST	Walker.lemuel@epa.gov	Other (Assoc.)		No
Craig Watts	Hydrosphere Research	cwatts@hydrosphere.net	Lab (Assoc.)		Yes
Bruce Weckworth	HRSD	Bruce.weckworth@hrsd.com	Lab (Assoc.)		Yes
Tom Widera	ERA	twidera@eraqc.com	Other (Assoc.)		Yes
Lynn Bradley	TNI Program Administrator	Lynn.Bradley@nelac-institute.org			Yes