



Assessment Forum on Consistency The Forum – Summer 2009 Summary Discussion and Feedback

TNI Assessment Forum
January 26, 2010
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Objectives

- ❑ **Summarize Past Discussions**
- ❑ **List Past Recommendations**
- ❑ **Best Practices**

Ultimate Objective...
Consistency in Assessments





San Antonio Forum

- August 2009**
- Assessment Forum – Perspectives**
 - Data Users**
 - 3rd Party Assessors**
- Audience Input**
- Consistency Discussions**

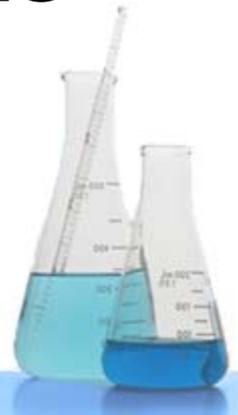




Discussion Summary

3rd Party Accreditation Organizations Consistency Strategies

- ❑ **2-Day Training on the Relevant Standard**
- ❑ **Annual Face-to Face and Webinars**
- ❑ **Assessors must Review Methods being Performed**
 - **Must be Familiar with Lab**



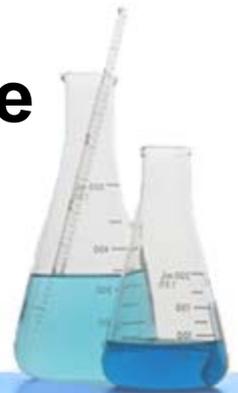


Discussion Summary

cont.

3rd Party Accreditation Organizations Consistency Strategies

- **Team Leaders**
 - **Crucial in Keeping Assessments on Track**
 - **Oversight Necessary**
- **Cost to Lab for On-Site Visit should not Drive Assessment Length**
 - **Upfront Preparation Minimizes On-Site Visit Time**



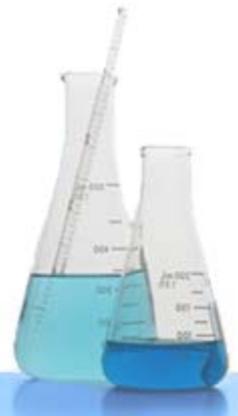


Discussion Summary

cont.

3rd Party Accreditation Organizations Consistency Strategies

- Report must be Clear & Concise**
 - Factual Information**
- Assessment Evaluations from lab are crucial**
 - No Repercussions**





Discussion Summary

cont.

3rd Party Accreditation Organizations Consistency Strategies

- ❑ **Disclose Findings immediately**
 - Document with Records
- ❑ **No CARs Allowed During Audit**
 - Root Cause Analysis Needed
- ❑ **Require Lab to Provide Proof of Correction**
 - Avoids Repeats



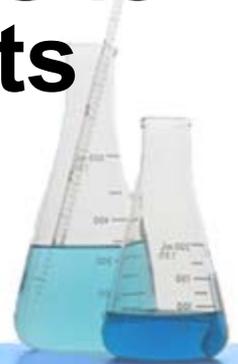


Discussion Summary

cont.

Data Users

- Accreditation/Certification = Meeting Standards**
 - Does not mean that lab always follows the audited process and procedures
- Auditor must Determine how QS is Working not Simply that it Exists**
- Data must be Reviewed!**
- Working QS \neq Usable Data**





Recommendations

Train Assessors:

- ❑ **Interviewing Techniques**
- ❑ **Assessing multiple versions of the same method**
- ❑ **Method Interpretation**
 - **Flexibility allowances**
- ❑ **Data Review**





Recommendations

cont.

Provide Resources:

- ❑ **TNI interpretation webpage,**

<http://www.nelac-institute.org/interpret.php>

- ❑ **EPA CWA communication process, through their webpage and forwarded information through the State Assessor's Forum,**

<http://www.epa.gov/waterscience/methods/>





Recommendations

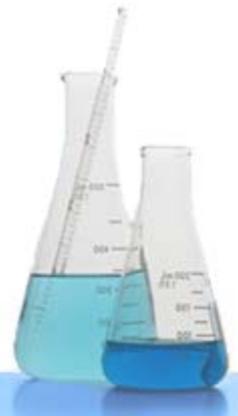
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Don't:

- ❑ **Cite General Standards for a Specific Issue/Finding**
- ❑ **Let “pet problems” Dominate Audit**

Do:

- ❑ **Make Reports Concise**
- ❑ **Look at the Whole Picture**
 - **Be a Renaissance Person**



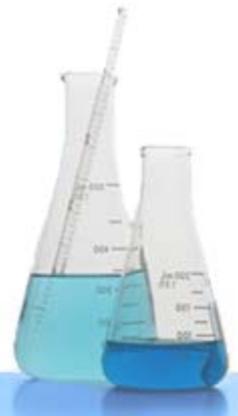


Recommendations

cont.

Avoid Repeat Findings:

- ❑ Require Root Cause Analysis, not Instant Fixes**
- ❑ Schedule Teleconference to Discuss Audit Report**
- ❑ Require Proof of Correction**





Recommendations

cont.

□ Peer Review

- Share Audit Reports Among ABs
- Compile Common Findings & Post

□ Actively Seek Laboratory Feedback

- Report Card or Score Card





Cloning the Ideal Assessor

- Technically Competent**
- Knowledgeable in Policies**
- Great Interpersonal & Organizational Skills**
- Efficient Communication & Interviewing Skills**
- Being Prepared, Thorough & Efficient**
- Free!!!**



Best Practices for Consistency

Let's Share Ideas...

