



<b>SOP TITLE</b>	<b>NELAP Accreditation Bodies Standards Review and Acceptance</b>
<b>SOP NO.</b>	<b>3-103</b>
<b>REVISION NO.</b>	<b>2.1</b>

	<b>Initial Approval</b>	<b>Revision Date</b>	<b>Review Date</b>
<b>Program LASEC</b>		06/25/2020	
<b>Program NELAP</b>	3/3/2008	10/6/2020	
<b>Policy Committee Review</b>		5/7/2021	
<b>TNI Board of Directors Endorsement</b>		NA (5/12/2021)	
<b>SOP Effective Date</b>	3/3/2008	10/6/2020	

## 1.0 Purpose and Applicability

This SOP describes the process for review and acceptance of accreditation standards for use by the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program (NELAP) Accreditation Council (AC).

## 2.0 Summary

This SOP details the steps in the review process and the elements that must be considered for an accreditation standard to be accepted for implementation by NELAP.

The TNI Standard for the Environmental Laboratory Sector is a four-volume document containing multiple modules within each volume. Various Expert Committees are responsible for periodic review and revision of each module. The NELAP AC is responsible for review and acceptance of Volume 1 (for laboratories) and Volume 2 (for ABs), while the Proficiency Testing Program Executive Committee is responsible for review and acceptance of Volumes 3 and 4, which pertain solely to Proficiency Testing Providers and their Accreditation Bodies. During a review cycle, an entire module or portion thereof may undergo revision and be submitted for review to include in the final updated Standard. This procedure applies to review of the Standard, all or in part, and final approval and adoption by the AC.

## 3.0 Related Documents

SOP 2-100: Procedures Governing Standards Development  
SOP 3-106: LASEC Review of Standards for Suitability

## 4.0 Definitions

- 4.1 Expert Committee – A committee whose duties include the development and maintenance of standards. The number and scope of Expert Committees is not limited and will be determined by the TNI Consensus Standards Development Executive Committee with the approval of the TNI Board of Directors. The Expert Committees are consensus bodies for TNI's standards development activities.
- 4.2 Laboratory Accreditation System Executive Committee (LASEC) – A group within the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program of TNI, with balanced representation whose purpose is to manage TNI's efforts in support of a national program for the accreditation of environmental laboratories. Activities include requesting, developing, and establishing policies and procedures, interpretations of standards, overseeing development of guidance documents and the creation of Implementation Guidance, and any related tools used to implement the NELAP Standard.
- 4.3 NELAP Accreditation Council (NELAP AC) – The body within TNI's NELAP program comprised of representatives of each NELAP AB and holding final authority for implementation of the program for the accreditation of environmental laboratories.

## 5.0 Procedure

- 5.1 It is the responsibility of the NELAP AC to determine whether a Standard or a portion within a Standard is acceptable for implementation by NELAP recognized ABs in their accreditation programs.
- 5.2 The NELAP AC will review each individual section, module, or standard received from the LASEC for consistency with governmental and regulatory requirements. Each AB is responsible to perform the review with respect to their individual program requirements to confirm that there are no barriers to implementation. The review should be completed within 60 days from the date of receipt of the LASEC's recommendation to the AC concerning that item.

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- 5.3 Each document being considered for acceptance will be discussed at a meeting of the NELAP AC. The AC will discuss how the new version differs from the current version, if one exists, and the advantages and disadvantage of the new document.
- 5.3.1 The NELAP AC may request the Chair of the Expert Committee that developed the document or a member of the LASEC to make a presentation of the changes.
- 5.3.2 The NELAP AC Chair may appoint a subcommittee to review the document.
- 5.4 Any identified issues should be brought to the attention of the entire AC for discussion. Issues that cannot be resolved will be summarized to include concerns and potential solutions. The summary will be sent to the Chair and the Program Administrator (PA) for the LASEC and to the Chair and PA of the Expert Committee responsible for developing the standard. The committees will work together to determine a suitable solution. The solution must be acknowledged and accepted by all members of the AC.
- 5.5 Upon resolution of any identified issues, the NELAP AC Chair or designee will present the document for voting to the NELAP AC membership. Voting will be conducted in accordance with SOP 3-101 Voting Procedure for General Business and Laboratory Accreditation Matters.
- 5.6 Criteria for acceptance of revisions to any portion of the standard are that:
- 5.6.1 It represents an improvement over the current standard, and
- 5.6.2 There are no obstacles to implementation by the accreditation bodies.
- 5.7 Once the AC completes the review of all revisions and modules and response to comments, then each AB should review the standard as a whole following the same procedure. The final AC vote will be to accept the entire standard.
- 5.8 Upon acceptance of the revised Standard, the NELAP AC will set an implementation date for the new standard in accordance with the voting process in SOP 3-101. Decisions regarding individual AB adoption and implementation schedules will be made within 60 days after a vote that adopts the new standard.

## 6.0 References

SOP 3-101, Voting Procedure for General Business and Laboratory Accreditation Matters

## 7.0 SOP Approved Changes

Revision No.	Effective Date	Description of Change
0.1	3/3/08	Update terms: NELAP Board = NELAP Accreditation Council; LASC = LAS EC; accrediting authorities = accrediting bodies
1.0	1/9/15	Editorial revisions upon completion of Policy Committee review
2.0	8/3/20	Revisions to accommodate changes to SOPs 2-100 and 3-106
2.1	10/6/20	Editorial revisions per Policy Committee review