

Summary of the TNI Credentials Committee Meeting
Wednesday, August 23, 2023 1:00 pm Eastern

1. Welcome and Presentation of the Agenda

Ken explained that he would be presenting an overview of the Committee's transition from its origins as a Task Force and then go into more details about the Quality Manager digital badges and credential. He asked for AB representatives to identify themselves by show of hands and explained that the committee would benefit greatly from having additional AB stakeholder representation.

2. The Presentation

Ken talked through the information on the slides (see attachment 2), explaining the origins and the Task Force's (and now the Committee's) relationship with the Training Committee. He noted the progression from assessor competency (put on hold while V2M1 revision is underway), the Technical Manager role (handed off to QMS Expert Committee after getting general consensus on a concept), and now the Quality Manager (QM) role, with additional roles to come in the future.

The details of the KSA concept used to characterize various roles was presented, then Ken explained the two-tier plan for the QM role – digital badges to be implemented first, then a “full credential” exam based on education and experience to be implemented later (using the exam questions employed for all digital badges). Audience discussion included some ways in which an individual could use any of the digital badges for career enhancement.

Then, the full credential test was explained, along with the triennial recertification process and some examples of ways to fulfill the required Professional Development Hours.

Ken asked for suggestions for additional roles to be considered for credentialing, and received several – product (or project) manager and specific types of analysts. He closed by offering up four of a set of five lottery tickets, available to participants for remaining until the end of the TNI meetings, and reminded them to remember TNI if they won – all five tickets had the same number, so the prize (if any) would need to be shared among all ticket holders.

3. Next Meeting

The next video/teleconference will be on **Wednesday, August 23, 2023, at 1 pm Eastern**. The agenda, a Teams meeting link, and any necessary documents will be sent in advance.

Attachment 1

Competency Task Force Roster

NAME		EMAIL	AFFILIATION	STAKE-HOLDER CATEGORY	Present?
Paul	Banfer	paul.banfer@eisc.net	EISC	Other	
Kenneth	Brown	kbrown@escondido.org	City of Escondido	Lab	Yes
Patricia	Carvajal	pmcarvajal@sara-tx.org	San Antonio River Authority	Lab	
Steve	Drielak	drielak-associates@usa.net	Drielak & Associates	Other	
Amanda	Dutko	adutko@fairway-laboratories.com	Fairway Laboratories	Lab	
Stacey	Fry	sfry456@aol.com	CA Dept. of Cannabis Control	Other	
Salima	Haniff	Salima.haniff@bvlabs.com	Bureau Veritas Labs	Lab	
Harold	Longbaugh	Harold.Longbaugh@houstontx.gov	City of Houston	Lab	Yes
Theresa	Johnson	Theresa.Johnson@mccampbell.com	McCampbell Analytical, Inc.	Lab	
Joann	Slavin	joann.slavin@health.ny.gov	NY DOH	AB	
Scott	Siders	siders6six@yahoo.com	Retired	Other	
Alfredo	Sotomayor	asotomayor@mmsd.com	MMSD	Lab	Yes
Elizabeth	Turner	Elizabeth.turner@pacelabs.com	Pace Labs, Inc.	Lab	Yes
Associate Members:					
Jerry	Thao	Jerry.thao@pacelabs.com	Pace Labs, Inc.	Lab	
Staff:					
Jerry	Parr	Jerry.parr@nelac-institute.org	TNI Executive Director		Yes
Lynn	Bradley	Lynn.bradley@nelac-institute.org	TNI Program Administrator		No

Attachment 2 – the PowerPoint Presentation

TNI's Credentials Committee

Environmental Measurement Symposium
 Minneapolis, MN August 3, 2023

Ken Brown, City of Escondido, CA, Chair

Today's Agenda – Update on the Credentialing Initiative

- From TNI Task Competency Force to TNI Credentials Committee
- Credentials Committee Charter and Membership Needs
- Update on Digital Badges Option for Quality Management System Professional
- Update on Exam Option for Quality Management Systems Professional
- TNI Certified Professional Handbook
- Upcoming Competency Professional

Session ends at 4:00 pm

Committee Roster

Paul Banfer	ESIC	Selma Haniff	Bureau Veritas
Kenneth Brown	City of Escondido	Theresa Johnson	Luke McCampbell
Patricia Carvajal	San Antonio River Authority	Harold Longbaugh	City of Houston
Steve Driskel	Driskel & Associates	Scott Slavin	NY DDM
Amanda Dufflo	Fairway Laboratories	Joann Swain	Milwaukee
Stacy Fry	CA Dept. of Cannabis Control	Alfredo Sotomayer	Metropolitan Sewer District
		Elizabeth Turner	Pace Analytical

From the Competency Task Force to the Credentials Committee

- Competency Task Force formed by TNI Board
 - February 2020, 20 volunteers
 - TNI 2020 Strategic Plan Goal 4.1: Explore the feasibility of developing systems to document individual competency
- Task Force Charter
 - Define the types of groups that this program would apply to.
 - Define what skill sets each group should have.
 - Explore how training courses and/or on-the-job experience contribute to skill set sets.
 - Consider establishing a curriculum for each group.
 - Research credentialing and digital badging to see if either would be a good fit for this program.
 - Develop recommendations, including an implementation plan, to present to the TNI Board of Directors.

From the Competency Task Force to the Credentials Committee, cont'd.


- 2020 – First addressed assessor competency, set this aside as comments on VZM1 Draft Standard (2020) suggested likely changes to initial proposal. Efforts halted in spring 2021
- 2021 – Technical Manager competency. Proposed change in terminology (now Technical Specialist); drafted competency criteria, handed off to Quality Management Systems Expert Committee in early 2022.
- 2022 – Quality Manager competency. Began with draft KSA document prepared by a subcommittee of the Task Force and Training Committee.
 - KSA is Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

From the Competency Task Force to the Credentials Committee, cont'd.

- Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (KSAs)
- Knowledge – “Know What?”
 - Knowledge focuses on the understanding of concepts. It is theoretical and has no experience. For example, someone might have read hundreds of articles on health and nutrition, many of them by experts, but that doesn't make that person qualified to dispense advice on nutrition.
- Skills – “Know How?”
 - Skills are the capabilities developed through training or hands-on experience that lead to practical application of theoretical knowledge.
- Abilities – “Know Why?”
 - Often confused with skills, we think it is a subtle but important difference. Abilities are the innate talents a person brings to a task. Every person has some capacity for every task. Knowledge, skills and abilities are the things that a person acquires through training and practice that make them more able to perform.

From the Competency Task Force to the Credentials Committee, cont'd.


- Chose binary approach for QM Credential
 - Digital Badges for particular specialty areas (from the Standard's Committee) and
 - Full Credentials to encompass all aspects of Quality Management in an Environmental Laboratory
- KGAs readily fit into twelve Specialist areas:
 - Basic Quality Management > Corrective Action
 - Proficiency Testing (PT) > Internal Audit
 - Data Integrity > Method Validation
 - Document Control and Records > Sample Handling
 - Customer Service > Quality Control
 - Measurement Traceability > Data Review and Reporting



From the Competency Task Force to the Credentials Committee, cont'd.


Example KGAs for Digital Badge – Internal Audit Specialist

- Requirements to perform and the requirements of an annual internal audit to verify that laboratory activities conform to each of the requirements of the quality management system and to determine necessary changes or improvements
- Importance of the internal audit of the laboratory management system to ensure that compliance is achieved and that the laboratory maintains necessary changes of its structure, the responsibilities and accountability for meeting the standard requirements and procedures for conducting these activities
- How to implement effective procedures and tools to facilitate management of records and documents
- How to use the findings and results from these tools to not only react to problems, but also to drive quality improvement and innovation
- That when audit findings cast doubt on the effectiveness of the operations or on the ability of a facility to meet its obligations, the laboratory must take timely corrective action, and that corrective action findings from investigations show that the corrective action is effective
- That the area of activity audited, the audit findings and corrective actions that arise from these areas to be audited.




From the Competency Task Force to the Credentials Committee, cont'd.

- As the concept took shape, TNI Executive Director prepared a Business Plan for the TNI Board to consider launching a Credentialing Initiative
- Draft Charter for Credentials Committee accompanied the Business Plan
- At its May 2022 meeting, TNI Board approved the Business Plan and Committee Charter
- It's a GO!
- NOTE: TNI has no plans to make credentialing a requirement for any position in any AS, Lab, FSMO, or PT provider. This is a VOLUNTARY activity.



The Credentials Committee

- The Credentials Committee Charter
 - Define the types of professional positions to which this mission would apply
 - Define the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KGAs) each type of position should have
 - Establish generic competencies for each group
 - Coordinate with TNI Training Committee to ensure training courses exist to support credentialing
 - Recommend to the Board new types of credentials to be added




The Credentials Committee

- Paul Barker, EIBC
- Kenneth Brown, City of Elcomids, Chair
- Patricia Canajit, San Antonio River Authority
- Steve Dinkel, Dinkel & Associates
- Amanda Oufro, Fairway Laboratories
- Shirley Fry
- Harold Longbeugh, City of Houston
- Joann Slavin, NY Department of Health
- Scott Siders
- Alfredo Sotomayor, Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewer District, Vice Chair



Additional Committee Members are welcome

Staff support – Jerry Parr and Lynn Bradley



Update on Digital Badges for Environmental Lab QMS Professionals

- For each digital badge
 - Complete required courses (several to choose from)
 - Four 4-hour/longer (some courses apply to more badges)
 - Coursework and cover all KGA's referenced for all KGAs levels in the digital QM document
 - Course materials for self-paced learning
 - Course materials previously issued records are available
 - Pass exam for that badge (different than course quizzes)
 - 30 questions randomly selected from 60 total, catfish from both 2018-2022 and previous (approximately 60:20 historical/current)
 - QCM Specialist will have 5 sub-specialties, for each Module 1-7 plus possibly General (may have additional cost for 7 sub-specialty)
 - \$50 fee for digital badge and inclusion in TNI database of certified professionals

Update on Digital Badges for Environmental Lab QMS Professionals

- An individual with all twelve badges may apply to become a Certified Environmental Laboratory QMS Professional
 - Pay \$110 fee for 5-year certificate, renewable as stated below and inclusion in the database of credentialed professionals.
- Total fee for Certified Environmental Laboratory QMS Professional is 12 x \$95 plus \$110 for a total of \$1250
- Badges may be upgraded to new standard by completing an additional training course on the changes to the standard and passing the course test.




Update on Exam Option for Environmental Laboratory QMS Professional Credential

Education and Experience Requirements


- High School – Five years working in a laboratory, including at least one year in a position in quality.
- Associate's in related field¹ – Four years working in a laboratory, including at least one year in a position in quality.
- Bachelor's in related field² – Three years working in a laboratory, including at least one year in a position in quality.
- Master's or higher degree in related field² – Two years working in a laboratory, including at least one year in a position in quality.

¹ Focus specialty in the area of quality control, quality assurance, or quality management.
² Related fields are chemistry, environmental science, biological sciences, physical sciences, chemical engineering, or equivalent scientific disciplines.




Update on Exam Option for Environmental Laboratory QMS Professional Credential

- Applicants meeting the education and experience requirements may apply to take the exam for this "full Credential"
 - Practical exam is open book, 150 hard but not "tricky" questions from a book. Passing score is 70% (105 questions)
 - \$275 fee for testing and award of credential plus listing in the database of certified professionals
 - Exam questions grouped by topic, with feedback provided on areas for improvement for those that fail. Those who pass may request information about which areas need improvement.
 - Credential valid for three years
 - Six months' notice given when recertification is required



Update on Exam Option for Environmental Laboratory QMS Professional Credential


- Renewal Requirements for Recertification of Credential
- Evidence of twenty-four professional development hours (PDH) over three years
- Payment of \$225 renewal fee



Update on Exam Option for Environmental Laboratory QMS Professional Credential


Example Professional Development Hours

- Training (no limit)
 - Course attendee – 1 PDH/hour
 - Course instructor – 2 PDH/hour
- Meetings/Conferences (limit 15 PDH)
 - 1 day
- Continuing Activities (limit 10/6/10/10, 6/10/10/10)
 - Conferences/seminars – 0.1 PDH per meeting attended
 - Conferences/seminars – 2/10/10
- Proficiency exams (no limit)
 - 4/10/10/10/10
- Professional society membership (limit 4)
 - Member – 0.5 hour






THE NELAQ INSTITUTE
 for Environmental Laboratory Quality Assurance
 10000 N. 10th Street, Suite 100, Phoenix, AZ 85020
 Phone: 602.998.1111 | Email: info@nelaq.org
 Website: www.nelaq.org




 **TNI Certified Professional Handbook**


- In development, will be posted on Credentials Committee website once committee review is complete
- Will cover all aspects of credentialing initiative, including testing procedures, timelines, ID requirements and much more
- Specific credentials (e.g., QMS Professional) will have separate resource for details of requirements to be met, as each credential role will differ in those details



 **Upcoming Competency Professional?**

- To be determined once committee support for TNI launch of credentialing initiative is met
- Roles to be considered, will likely choose next credential from these
 - > Laboratory assessor
 - > Technical experts/specialists (formerly Technical Managers)
 - > Analysts
 - > Samples
 - > Others as they are identified
- Additional suggestions?



 **Digital Badges are coming soon!**

For more information, see
<https://tni.ac.chatham.edu/committee/credentials/>

Kan Brown, Chair, Credentials Committee
kanb@tni.ac.edu

Alfredo Solomayor, Vice Chair, Credentials Committee
asolomay@tni.ac.edu

Jerry Parr, TNI Executive Director
jerry.parr@tni.ac.edu

Lynn Bradley, Program Administrator
lyn.bradley@tni.ac.edu

