

Summary of the Laboratory Accreditation Body Expert Committee Meeting

May 26, 2026
1:00 pm Eastern

1. Welcome and Roll Call

Aaren Alger, Chair, called the meeting to order at 1pm Eastern and welcomed everyone to the meeting. Attendance is recorded in Attachment 1 – 7 Voting Members and 4 Associate members. A quorum was met.

There were no changes to the agenda and it was approved by unanimous consent.

The March and April minutes were reviewed. A motion was made by Ryan to approve the March 20, 2026, and April 17, 2026, minutes as written with a change to the April meeting date and inclusion of editorial changes to the italicized language regarding a vote on the Response to Comments. The motion was seconded by Amy and unanimously approved.

2. Response to Comments

As noted in the April minutes, there was not a vote for approval of the Response to Comments table.

Amy noted that she went through all the notes and made updates to the Table, but did not think it was ready for voting. There were several issues with definitions. An example is the definition of Extraordinary Assessment. Amy requested additional assistance to complete the review of the table. Ryan, Carol and Aaren volunteered to review sections and Ilona offered to review the overall table to ensure the format was followed and it was complete.

Ilona noted that the Response to Comments document should be completed and posted before or when the Revised Draft Standard is posted. Commenters will receive a response advising them how their comments were handled and then they have a window of time to file an appeal if they disagree with how the comment was handled. The response to the commenters includes sending them the portion of the table where their comments are so it is important that the table be complete and include the justification for how the Committee handled the comment.

Aaren noted that it is critical that the entire Committee review this table individually so this can be finished up and not just count on the work done by other Committee members. The Revised Draft Standard will need to be reviewed to confirm that all Persuasive comments have been addressed in the revision.

The Committee discussed other ways to handle the Response to Comments document in the future. Comments received should reviewed by the Committee and editorial changes can be made by the Program Administrator to save Committee meeting time.

The Committee will also need to prepare a Summary of Changes table to be posted with the Revised Draft Standard that includes all changes made since it was last posted.

3. Volume 1 Module 2 Language Review

Assessor Qualifications

A concern was raised by Paul Bergeron regarding whether the proposed assessor qualification language aligns with Louisiana's regulatory requirements. Paul clarified that the requirement is embedded in the Louisiana Administrative Code, which specifies that accreditation criteria include a bachelor's degree requirement for assessors:

LAC 33:I.4709.B: "Inspectors shall conform to appropriate safety procedures during an on-site inspection. The authorized representatives of the department who perform the on-site evaluation must be experienced professionals and hold at least a bachelor's degree in a science-related field with technical experience in a laboratory. The representative(s) must successfully complete a laboratory certification course presented by the United States Environmental Protection Agency, the National Institute of Standards and Technology, or other department-approved training group."

It was noted that the current standard does not require a bachelor's degree, and it was questioned how the revised language in this Draft is different? Paul thought all ABs were requiring a bachelor's degree and this may stem back from the 2003 Standard.

Aaren outlined three concerns: (1) whether Louisiana can maintain stricter requirements, (2) whether stricter rules affect acceptance of secondary accreditation, and (3) whether the standard unintentionally creates enforceability conflicts across states.

Paul noted that Louisiana's regulatory framework includes reciprocity provisions requiring that external accreditation be "no less stringent" than Louisiana's requirements. This raised concern about how to reconcile differing assessor qualification standards between states.

Cathy and others noted that states like New York already maintain stricter civil service hiring requirements, including bachelor's degree mandates, while still participating in reciprocity agreements. This reinforced the idea that stricter internal hiring rules can coexist with acceptance of external accreditation. There was general agreement that reciprocity assumes trust in other states' systems, even when individual requirements differ.

The group discussed whether the bachelor's degree requirement should be reinstated as a firm requirement. Aaren Alger questioned whether removing flexibility would be overly restrictive and potentially exclude qualified assessors. She emphasized that the issue had been debated extensively and should now proceed to public comment for broader input.

There was general agreement that:

- States may impose stricter requirements internally
- Reciprocity assumes acceptance of differing state standards
- The key unresolved issue is whether assessor qualifications affect recognition of secondary accreditation

Paul indicated he may need legal review from state attorneys due to interpretive uncertainty regarding enforcement and reciprocity implications. He also noted that the state has a dual program and this might help with these concerns. He will report back.

The group agreed that public comment would be the appropriate next step to test acceptability.

Revised Draft Review Process

The committee continued to review additional Revised Draft standard language and editorial changes. Ilona noted that several sets of written comments were received from Committee members this last month for consideration. She will incorporate editorial comments directly into the Revised Draft where appropriate and will include more substantive issues into Comments within the document.

Ilona will also merge the two versions of the Revised Draft Standards to ensure the work done on the Foreword, Preface, Introductions and Definitions are included in the version now being used to finalize the Revised Draft. She will also do some additional editorial work as described above. She will complete this before the next meeting.

4. New Business

None.

5. Next Meeting

The next planned teleconference meeting will be June 12, 2026, at 1pm Eastern to accommodate the holiday. *(Addition: The meeting was rescheduled to June 15, 2026, at 10:30am Eastern.)*

Aaren adjourned the meeting at 2:36pm Eastern.

Attachment 1 LAB Expert Committee Roster

Name/Email		Affiliation	Present 7/9 - Quorum
Aaren Alger, Chair Aaren.s.alger@gmail.com		Other – Alger Consulting & Training	Yes
Socorro Baldonado sbaldonado@mwdeh2o.com		Lab – Metropolitan Water District, La Verne, CA	Yes
Kathryn Chang Kathryn.chang@et.eurofins.us		LAB – Eurofins	Yes
Sviatlana Haubner Sviatlana.Haubner@cincinnati-oh.gov		LAB – Cincinnati Metropolitan Sewer District	No
Michella Karapondo Karapondo.michella@epa.gov		Other – EPA OGWDW TSC/Cincinnati	No
Ryan Lerch Ryan.lerch@deq.ok.gov		AB – OK DEQ	Yes
Michael Perry mperry@labworks.com		Other - Labworks, Inc.	Yes
Millie Rose Mille.Rose@illinois.gov		AB – IL EPA	Yes
Amy Steuerwald amy.steuerswald@health.ny.gov		AB – NY DOH	Yes
Program Administrator: Ilona Taunton Ilona.taunton@nelac-institute.org	N/A	TNI	Yes **
** - Started meeting, but missed first 20 minutes. Notes pulled from transcript of meeting.			
Associate Members:			
Paul Bergeron Paul.bergeron@la.gov		AB – LDEQ	Yes
Debbie Bond dbond@southernco.com		LAB – Alabama Power	Yes
Nilda Cox nilda.cox@et.eurofinsus.com		Lab – Eurofins Eaton Analytical LLC	No
Yumi Creason ycreason@pa.gov		Other	No
Taryn Hurley taryn.hurley@deq.ok.gov		AB – OK DEQ	No
Paul Junio paul.junio@pacelabs.com		LAB – Pace Labs, Inc.	No
LeeAnn Kline lkline@mjureider.com		M J Reider Associates	No
Jasmina Kuljanac Jasmina.Kuljanac@stpete.org		City of St. Petersburg Water Resources Department (Florida)	Yes
Marlene Moore mmore@advancedsys.com		Other – Advanced Systems, Inc., Newark, DE	No
Zaneta Popovska zpopovska@anab.org		AB – ANAB	No

Mei Beth Shepherd mbshep@sheptechserv.com		Other – Shepherd Technical Services	No
Nicholas Slawson nslawson@a2la.org		AB – A2LA	No
Carl Kircher		AB - Florida	No
Cathy Westerman cathy.westerman@dgs.virginia.gov		AB – VA DCLS	Yes
Carol Gebhart carol.gebhart@alsglobal.com		ALS	Yes