Summary of the Laboratory Accreditation Body Expert Committee Meeting

Friday, April 17, 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 3 Associate members. A quorum was met.

The Module 2 request will be added to the agenda. There were no other changes to the agenda and it was approved by unanimous consent.

2. Response to Comments

The committee discussed the Response to Comments table that Amy prepared. There was general agreement that the document was well organized and comprehensive, although not everyone had completed a full review prior to the meeting. Aaren suggested that voting occur by email to allow members additional time to carefully review the material before casting votes.

Ryan moved to conduct the vote on the Response to Comments document by email, with all votes to be submitted by May 1, 2026. The motion was seconded by Socorro.
Vote:
For – Ryan, Socorro, Amy, Kathryn, Michella, Aaren
Against – Sviatlana
Abstain – None

(Addition: Following the meeting, it was clarified that the motion approved only the process of conducting a vote by email and was not a motion to approve the Response to Comments document itself. It was also noted that votes related to the Standard must be conducted by roll call, and this vote was not taken by roll call. Accordingly, the approval vote may either be conducted by email following a formal motion to approve the Response to Comments document or deferred to the May meeting for consideration.)

3. Volume 1 Module 2 Language Review

<u>Assessor Qualifications and Observation Requirements</u>

The Committee reviewed revisions clarifying that ABs must maintain a documented assessor qualification process. There was general agreement to avoid unnecessary wording changes where the intent was already clear.

The next concern was observation requirements for assessors qualified through another AB. There was discussion on whether observations must be conducted by a qualified assessor or whether broader language referencing the accreditation body itself would allow greater flexibility. Observations could be performed by program managers, quality assurance personnel, or other authorized representatives.

Cathy raised concerns that requiring every accreditation body to independently observe assessors could create unnecessary duplication, particularly for contractors working across multiple states. She noted that ABs already rely heavily on reciprocal trust regarding accreditation decisions and assessor competence.

Aaren argued that while reciprocity is important, each AB still has responsibility for ensuring assessors follow that AB's own procedures and expectations. Examples were provided showing how assessors may inadvertently apply another AB's procedures during assessments if oversight is insufficient. Paul Bergeron described Louisiana's current use of contract assessors and explained that his program monitors assessor performance primarily through work products and periodic side-by-side assessments rather than formal repeated observations.

It was agreed that the Accreditation Council (AC) should be consulted before finalizing the language. Ilona offered to add the topic to an upcoming AC agenda for broader discussion. Cathy and Amy could help with this discussion

Scope and Method Discussions

Ryan raised a question regarding matrix-method-analyte language and how accreditation scopes are interpreted, specifically referencing microbiological methods such as Colilert, Colisure, and Colitag under Method 9223. He described inconsistencies between ABs regarding whether those are treated as separate technologies or simply variants under the same method.

The discussion clarified that the intent of the revised language was to simplify accreditation scope structure while still allowing ABs flexibility in interpreting methods and technologies internally. Aaren emphasized that the language was intended to prevent accreditation solely by broad technology categories without method specificity.

Review of ISO Language Removal and Document Cleanup

The committee began reviewing sections of the standard to identify proposed deletions and modifications to ISO language. Ilona referenced a document sent in November by Jody Koehler and Nicholas Slawson that tracked comments regarding removed language. The document was located, and it did not provide a sufficient summary of removed ISO/IEC language. This will still need to be done since this will need to be clearly noted in the Draft Standard.

Several notes and redundant provisions were deleted, especially where revised definitions or accreditation scheme language already provided clarification.

The group reviewed language related to "accreditation schemes" and agreed that retaining explanatory notes was beneficial because the term continues to cause confusion.

New Accreditation Body Provisions

The committee reviewed proposed grandfathering language for newly recognized ABs entering the NELAP program. The proposed language would exempt existing staff from newly adopted educational and experience requirements while still requiring completion

of training and observation requirements. The group generally agreed that the provision was intended to encourage participation by new states and avoid requiring existing staff to be replaced solely because they did not meet newly established educational criteria. Cathy noted that new ABs already undergo rigorous evaluations and corrective action processes before recognition, providing assurance that any staff competency issues would still be identified and addressed.

The group agreed to retain the proposed language with additional clarification specifying that only Section 6.1.2.10 educational and experience requirements would be exempted.

Corrective Action Timeline Discussion

The committee reviewed proposed timelines associated with corrective action responses and accreditation body review periods. The draft had standardized all timelines to 45 calendar days, but several members expressed concern that this unnecessarily prolonged the overall process. After extended discussion, the Committee generally supported reverting second-round review timelines back to 30 days while leaving initial timelines at 45 days. The revised language will be included in the next draft for additional review and comment.\

The Committee ended their review on page 27 of the DRAFT Standard.

Next Steps

The Committee completed their review through page 27 of the Draft standard.
Ilona offered to create a standardized comment table so members could submit concerns and suggested edits in a consistent format. The group agreed to proceed with email review for the time being instead of meeting more frequently.

The regularly scheduled May 15 meeting conflicted with Aaren's travel schedule, so the Committee agreed to move the next meeting to May 22, 2026.

4. New Business

None.

5. Next Meeting

The next planned teleconference meeting will be May 22, 2026, at 1pm Eastern.
(Addition: The meeting was rescheduled to May 26, 2026, at 1pm Eastern.)

Aaren adjourned the meeting at 2:33pm 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@mwdh2o.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	Yes
Michella Karapondo Karapondo.michella@epa.gov		Other – EPA OGWDW TSC/Cincinnati	Yes
Ryan Lerch Ryan.lerch@deq.ok.gov		AB – OK DEQ	Yes
Michael Perry mperry@labworks.com		Other - Labworks, Inc.	No
Millie Rose Mille.Rose@illinois.gov		AB – IL EPA	No
Amy Steuerwald amy.steuerwald@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@mjreider.com		M J Reider Associates	No
Jasmina Kuljanac Jasmina.Kuljanac@stpete.org		City of St. Petersburg Water Resources Department (Florida)	No
Marlene Moore mmoore@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