Summary of the Laboratory Accreditation Body Expert Committee Meeting
Friday, September 19, 2025 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 – 5 Voting Members and 3 Associate members. A quorum was not met but the Committee will still meet but not do any voting. There were no changes to the agenda (Attachment 2) and it was approved by unanimous consent.

The August meeting minutes were sent out for review and will be voted on at the next meeting.

2. Non-SIR Review (SIR-515)

Aaren sent a Draft letter to the Committee to express concerns raised at the last meeting regarding the handling of SIR 515. She requested comments and other than a comment about a typo, there were no additional comments. The Committee cannot vote on this today, but it can be sent out for email approval.

DRAFT letter:

Dear LASEC Chair and AC Chair,

The LAB Expert Committee discussed the not valid SIR 515 on its 8/22/2025 call. The Expert Committee is concerned with the statement provided in the attached response to the requestor that "a definition cannot be treated as a requirement" was part of the rationale for invalidating the SIR request. It is the LAB Expert Committee's position that definitions written in the published, adopted, and implemented TNI Standards are regulatory in nature and are to be used as requirements as they apply to understanding, interpreting, and implementing the standard requirements.

The LAB Expert Committee is requesting that the process to invalidate SIRs based on definitions and the rational that 'a definition cannot be treated as a requirement' be amended. The LAB Expert Committee further requests that any SIRs that were invalidated based on definitions also be reconsidered for validity.

It is important to note that there are SIRs published to the TNI website where the definitions are explicitly included in the responses to the questions. Additionally, there are other SIR responses that specifically state that a particular definition is not provided in the TNI Standard and therefore, the laboratory is responsible for defining the term within its management system.

Thank you,
LAB Expert Committee)

3. Response to Comment Table

There are three comments that need to be looked at. The Committee will vote on these today but will vote on them when the complete table is reviewed and voted on before posting.

Comment 11:
There is a reference to Comment 81 that is noted as not yet determined. This is related to the previous response to comments document in 2022. The previous response to comment document was looked at. The response was related to a comment or a memo from the Officer of Drinking Water saying they did not support remote assessments. This concern has been addressed in the current DRAFT Standard. Aaren updated the current table to state the Committee removed the allowance for remote assessments. This comment is now marked as Persuasive.

Comment 18: Lynn made a note that the on 9/19/23 the comment was withdrawn by oral statement. This does not need to be considered because it was withdrawn.

Comment 67: It is a comment about removing the Knowledge and Skills table in Annex A. Ryan and Cathy expressed support for keeping the table because it does clearly lay out what each role does. It includes references to the Standard and makes it easy to understand. The table will be kept so the comment is Non-Persuasive.

Comments are now complete, so people need to review the table in detail over the month.

Com-ment #	Persuasive /Non-Persuasive	Edit orial	Section	Discussion/ Justification	Motion and Vote	Assignment to Revise, if persuasive
11	Persuasive			Committee decided to remove allowance for remote re-assessments and keep required onsite reassessments every 2.5 years. - ASA 9/19/25		
18	Withdrawn		V2M1	9/19/23: Comment withdrawn by oral statement from Lynn Boysen during conversation.		
67	NP		Annex A	We have talked about it twice and recommend that Annex A be maintained ASA 9-19-25		

4. Review Comments from St. Louis

The Committee began review of the DRAFT Standard at Section 6.1.2.10 (Assessor Requirements) to review comments that Aaren inserted from St. Louis.

Discussion:

- Cathy and Ilona asked about bachelor's degree requirements at the last meeting. It was also suggested that we look at how Module 2 is handling Technical Specialist with options for education and experience to meet assessor requirements.

- Commensurate experience can come from other things – not just having done assessments.

- Cathy noted that someone with experience as a Technical Director/Technical Specialist in a laboratory would meet assessor requirements too. When she sees someone this experience, she moves their application to the top for consideration. She advocates for the degree, but someone meeting the Technical Specialist requirements (where there are some options other than a bachelor's or higher degree) would be acceptable.

  Ilona asked if the person would have had to actually be a Technical Specialist or just meet the requirements of a Technical Specialist as outlined in Module 2. Cathy noted that the experience in that role is important, but this is worth discussing. Module 2 does require more experience where a degree is not required, so this may still work.

  Ryan would like to see that if this is considered that the person has actual laboratory experience. Currently, it would just be required that applicant participates in two assessments, and they are now qualified to be an assessor with no other experience in the field or a degree. The Technical Specialist credential does require experience in Module 2 to meet the requirements, so this worth considering when discussing assessor requirements.

  If you weren't designated as a technical manager/Technical Specialist at a laboratory, you may have all the experience necessary to be one, and that is still as valuable where you would have analytical experience, you might have education. Maybe meeting the qualifications is is what's necessary, not performing the role. If the role were required, would it be an issue of how to people prove they were in the role previously. This is where something in LAMS could help.

  An assessor role should not be an entry level role. Experience is needed.

- Ilona noted that if these types of requirements are put in place, the Committee will also need to think about grandfathering current assessors. There was general agreement.

- Commensurate experience should be removed from the language because it is not defined.

- Ilona reminded the group of a previous conversation. One thing to consider is that this Standard may go into effect before Module 2 does, so referring to Technical Specialist could be an issue. Do you take language from Module 2 and insert it or is the group OK with the current language for Technical Directors and it will just transition to the new language as the new Standard is finalized and implemented? Use a term like “however named”. Or “technical manager or its successor”. It would be difficult to refer to specific section of one of our other standards because all the standards are being updated and the numbers could change.

- One other comment to consider in the DRAFT Standard related to this is how do you handle a new assessor who has expertise in one area and now they need to be trained to have expertise in other areas. The DRAFT language currently discusses the AB defining how training is done and whether a test is needed. Someone who meets the assessor requirements in one area is easier to train to meet them in another area. Assessors continue to develop while in their positions and may not come in with all the experience to assess everything. Someone’s degree may not reflect all areas either. The credentialing option may help with some this as another option? The AB must have a procedure to determine competency – testing, shadowing, etc …

  If shadowing is used, need to be aware of situations where there might only be one or two WETT labs and it might take a while before some can shadow two assessments. Perhaps it should be one observation in each technical area? If you have experience in metals, you only need one observation in Organics as you expand. If you have no experience, you will need two observations before starting to assess alone. ABs would determine what their technical areas are.

  Is there a need to consider extenuating circumstances?

- Next topic of discussion was whether an Assessor can transfer their assessment experience between one AB to another. Would all the observations need to be re-done? This would be related to technical since an assessor transferring to another AB would still need to learn all the procedures a new AB follows. There was general agreement that the experience could transfer. The question was raised is this level of detail really needed? Is it broken now? There were comments that it has been seen to be an issue with contract/third party assessors.

- Technical experts do not have all the same requirements as an assessor. technical expert are someone assigned by the AB working under the responsibility of an assessor who provides specific knowledge or expertise with respect to the scope of accreditation to be assessed.

- The Committee looked through the DRAFT Standard to decide where the language for some these thoughts \\and would need to be approved for a third term if they need to stay on the Committee. Need to reach out to people to add membership too.

- Aaren asked Michella she could provide any information on EPA's view related to remote assessments. Michella noted that the preference is to not do remote assessments, but that it might be OK to do every other audit remotely. There was concern expressed that not all ABs are approaching this the same.

5. Next Meeting

   The next planned teleconference meeting will be October 17, 2025, at 1pm Eastern. *(Addition: The meeting was rescheduled for October 24, 2025, at 1pm Eastern.)*

   Aaren adjourned the meeting at xx pm Eastern.

Attachment 1 LAB Expert Committee Roster

Name/Email	Term ends	Affiliation	Present 5/10 - Quorum
Aaren Alger, Chair Aaren.s.alger@gmail.com	1/30/2026 (2nd term)	Other – Alger Consulting & Training	Yes
Socorro Baldonado sbaldonado@mwdh2o.com	1/30/2026 (2nd term)	Lab – Metropolitan Water District, La Verne, CA	Yes
Kathryn Chang Kathryn.chang@et.eurofins.us	1/30/2028 (1st term)	LAB – Eurofins	Yes
Sviatlana Haubner Sviatlana.Haubner@cincinnati-oh.gov	1/30/2025 (1st term)	LAB – Cincinnati Metropolitan Sewer District	No
Michella Karapondo Karapondo.michella@epa.gov	1/30/2025 (1st term)	Other – EPA OGWDW TSC/Cincinnati	Yes
Jody Koehler Jody.koehler@tceq.texas.gov	1/30/2028 (1st term)	AB – TCEQ	No
Ryan Lerch Ryan.lerch@deq.ok.gov	1/30/2028 (1st term)	AB – OK DEQ	Yes
Michael Perry mperry@labworks.com	1/30/2026 (2nd term)	Other - Labworks, Inc.	No
Millie Rose Millie.Rose@illinois.gov	1/30/2028 (1st term)	AB – IL EPA	No
Amy Steuerwald amy.steuerwald@health.ny.gov	1/30/27 (1st term)	AB – NY DOH	No
Program Administrator: Ilona Taunton Ilona.taunton@nelac-institute.org	N/A		Yes
Associate Members:			
Paul Bergeron Paul.bergeron@la.gov		AB – LDEQ	No
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	Yes
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	Yes
Cathy Westerman cathy.westerman@dgs.virginia.gov		AB – VA DCLS	Yes

Attachment 2 – LAB Expert Committee Meeting Agenda - 9-19-25

1. Welcome and Roll Call

2. Approval of Agenda

3. Approval of Minutes (August minutes attached)

4. LASEC Letter Regarding SIR-515

5. Response to Comment Table.
    - Status of Comment Table.
    - Ensure all columns are complete.
    - Send to Committee for thorough review before Super Majority vote.
    - After approval, send responses to commenters and post on TNI Website (Ilona).

6. Continue St. Louis Conference Comments and Review of Standard

    - Review notes and comments added from Conference
    - Review removed ISO/IEC language – Standard is for both Gov't ABs and NGABs
    - QMS request to add language to support DRAFT Technical Specialist Language QMS is putting language into Vol 1 Mod 2:

        5.6.6 When a designated alternate assumes the responsibilities of a Technical Specialist, the laboratory must notify the primary accreditation body within sixty (60) days if a qualified Technical Specialist does not resume the responsibilities. The notification must be in writing for accreditation body approval and must include a plan with a timeline for appointing a qualified Technical Specialist. If approval is not granted the laboratory accreditation may be suspended.

        When we met with the NELAP AC, they discussed that there needs to be an AB requirement that the AB must respond within 30 days of receipt of the notification.

        Do we add procedures to V2M1 to cover the concerns about handling secondary accreditation approval of the plan? Does the lab apply to each secondary for approval? Or can they apply to Primary and the secondaries accept the decision?

        What happens if the plan is not approved? (QMS added the last sentence in language above.)

        QMS made the following change at their 9/8/25 meeting:

        An accrediting body may provide an exemption other than those listed in a) and b). The laboratory must receive the exemption from each of its accrediting bodies. The laboratory must retain the record of the exemption for the same time period as required for the data generated during the employment of that technical specialist.

7. Discuss and Resolve Items from Jacksonville Conference Session (See Meeting Summary, https://apps.nelac-institute.org/TNI/docs/minutes/lab/LAB-minutes-2-5-25Rv1.pdf)

8. Preparation of Change Summary to post with Revised DRAFT Standard. Table format.

9. New Business, if any

10. Adjourn