

Summary of the Laboratory Accreditation Body Expert Committee Meeting
Friday, December 19, 2023 1:00 pm Eastern

1. Welcome and Roll Call

Aaren welcomed everyone to the meeting. Aaren offered an amendment to the agenda, to add an announcement from her after the minutes, and with that amendment, the agenda was approved by unanimous consent. The minutes of October 20 and November 21 were approved unanimously after a motion by Nilda, seconded by Sviatlana. Attendance is noted in Attachment 1 and the agenda as distributed is in Attachment 2.

2. Announcement

Aaren notified the committee that she will be stepping down from the Chair position for 2024. She explained that she is overwhelmed with other work and simply cannot continue as Chair. She also advised the committee that Yumi, the current Vice Chair, is not a candidate for Chair, as they have discussed the possibility prior to Aaren’s announcement.

Aaren will remain as a voting member of LAB, but a new Chair will need to be elected at the January 16, 2024, meeting, to take over immediately after conference.

Aaren also offered several additional announcements. First, she has cancelled the LAB conference session, for two reasons – primarily, we have not made sufficient progress to even be able to report on comments provided from the Draft Standard Revision 1, but also that a revision to the draft program schedule for conference has created a conflict with the Assessment Forum, where Aaren is on the agenda.

She also noted that, from the most recent NELAP Evaluator call, a small group of evaluators has agreed to contribute a new aspect to LAB’s proposal for revising the evaluation process. Because of extensive delays in some accreditations from the previous cycle – some due to pandemic emergency and some for other reasons – several ABs are facing their next evaluations within a few months of having completed the previous (delayed) evaluation. This is untenable and thus some adaptation of scheduling needs to be created, and this small group will provide a proposal early in 2024.

She also asked for help in recruiting additional members for LAB, in hopes that having more members will help with the recurring problem of failure to attain a quorum for scheduled meetings.

3. Discussion of Marlene Moore’s Comments

Marlene was able to join this meeting to discuss the comments she submitted on the Draft Standard Revision 1. The following comments were addressed and a summary of the discussion is included.

Comment	Section #	Additional Detail of Comment
71	7.14.3	There was some confusion about the 3-year NELAP evaluation cycle and the 2-year lab assessment cycle underlying this comment, but the Standard does not address evaluations. After discussion, the consensus seemed to be to remove the phrase “from the end of the accreditation cycle” and retain the 5-year records retention requirement; possibly changing the time to 6 years to accommodate the 2±6month assessment timeline. One AB noted that while paper records were typically destroyed after 5 years, electronic records are routinely retained indefinitely, but another AB has a regulation requiring records destruction after a specified time without respect to

		their format. This comment was vote persuasive (see below) but no new language was drafted.
69	7.6.3.5	Remove the “all caps” from text that should not have been in the DS. Feedback should be in writing, as labs are required to do with feedback from their clients/customers; could be verbal, written, and even anonymous. AB should define how feedback is required, how it is recorded and how it will be (and was) responded to. This comment was ruled persuasive (see below) but no new language was drafted.
70	7.7.2.1	<p>Marlene recommends deleting the TNI language, as there is always a higher manager who can sign the accreditation decision. The standard requires only responsibility, not technical competence – this is about avoiding the appearance of impropriety. “When possible” is not a requirement, language is not suitable for a standard. The larger point here is that government agencies (and most ABs are governmental) are required to provide adequate resources.</p> <p><u>Question arose: why is 7.7.2.1 needed when 7.7.2 itself is clear?</u></p> <p><u>The history is that at the 1/17/23 meeting, in response to a comment from a committee member, the requirement of this clause that a different person than the assessor make the accreditation decision, that may be impossible for a small AB (one or two staff).</u></p> <p><u>Participants agreed that an exception similar to that used in the internal audit section should be added.</u></p> <p>A decision on the persuasiveness of this comment was deferred until the January meeting.</p>
72	9.7.3.1	The comment was that “may” should be “shall”, but now that we are aware that clauses may be removed from the ISO text, we could simply delete the ISO clause, and then the TNI language overriding it would be unnecessary. This comment was ruled persuasive (see below) but no decision was made about how to proceed.

4. Persuasive/Non-persuasive Determinations for Comments

As Marlene was not present to discuss her comments, participants began to consider selected comments from the Response-to-comments file. The following table documents the decisions made during this meeting of the LAB committee about the comments indicated. A quorum was present and a simple majority vote was taken for each row of the table.

Com-ment #	Row #	Section	Per sua-sive/ Non	Motion and Vote	Discussion	Assignment to Revise, if persuasive
71	43	7.14.3	P	Bill/Nilda – unanimous	Remove reference to accreditation cycle, retention time either 5 or 6 years	NA
69 & also 8	54	7.6.3.5	P	Bill/Nilda – unanimous	Feedback can be verbal or written and even anonymous – AB should define how it is required, recorded and responded to	NA

72	72	9.7.3.1	P	Bill/Nilda – unanimous	Clause can be removed or else “may” needs to become “shall”	NA
64	41	7.11.1.2.8	P	Bill/Mike – unanimous		

5. SIR 477

This SIR asks whether an AB is financially responsible for subcontracted assessments, with respect to the 2016 Standard V2M1 §7.4.2. After a brief discussion, participants agreed that the answer is “no”. The context of this section is about responsibility for conclusions, and does not mention money or finances. Additionally, nowhere in ISO/IEC 17011 are the costs of operations or assessments addressed, making it clear that the ISO Standard never intended to make statements about financial responsibility. Bill moved and Mike seconded that a committee comment reflecting that context and a response of “no, the AB is not financially responsible for subcontracted assessments” be approved, and the vote is shown in the following table:

Name	<u>Vote</u>		Name	<u>Vote</u>
Aaren	Yes		Sviatlana	Yes
Socorro	Yes		Michella	Absent
Nilda	Yes		Mike	Yes
Yumi	Absent		Zaneta	Absent
Bill	Yes			
Supermajority approval met? Yes (6 of 9 in favor)				

The SIR response will be forwarded to LASEC for its review and further processing.

6. Next Meeting

The next planned teleconference meeting is tentatively scheduled for **Tuesday, January 16, 2024, at 1:00 pm Eastern.**

Aaren asks that committee members unable to attend please notify her and Lynn prior to the meeting date. An agenda and documents will be distributed prior to the meeting.

Attachment 1 LAB Expert Committee Roster

Name/Email	Term ends	Affiliation	Present?
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
Nilda Cox nilda.cox@et.eurofinsus.com	1/30/2025 (2nd term)	Lab – Eurofins Eaton Analytical LLC	Yes
Yumi Creason, Vice Chair ycreason@pa.gov	1/30/2025 (1 st term)	AB – Pennsylvania	No
Bill Hall george.w.hall@des.nh.gov	1/30/2026 (1st term)	AB – NH DES	Yes
Sviatlana Haubner Sviatlana.Haubner@cincinnati-oh.gov	1/30/2025 (1 st term)	LAB – Cincinnati Metropolitan Sewer District	Yes
Michella Karapondo Karapondo.michella@epa.gov	1/30/2025 (1st term)	Other – EPA OGWDW TSC/Cincinnati	No
Michael Perry michael.perry@lvvwd.com	1/30/2026 (2nd term)	Lab – Southern Nevada Water Authority	Yes
Zaneta Popovska zpopovska@anab.org	1/30/2025 (2nd term)	AB – ANAB	No
Program Administrator: Lynn Bradley Lynn.Bradley@nelac-institute.org	N/A		Yes
Associate Members:			
Paul Bergeron Paul.bergeron@la.gov		AB – LDEQ	No
Scott Haas shaas@etilab.com		Lab – Environmental Testing, Inc., and Chair, FAC	No
Taryn Hurley taryn.hurley@deq.ok.gov		AB – OK DEQ	Yes
Paul Junio paul.junio@pacelabs.com		LAB – Pace Labs, Inc.	No
Carl Kircher, Chair carl_kircher@flhealth.gov		AB – Florida Department of Health	No
LeeAnn Kline lkline@mjreider.com		M J Reider Associates	Yes
Ryan Lerch Ryan.lerch@deq.ok.gov		AB – OK DEQ	Yes
Marlene Moore mmoore@advancedsys.com		Other – Advanced Systems, Inc., Newark, DE	Yes
Mei Beth Shepherd, Vice Chair mbshep@sheptechserv.com		Other – Shepherd Technical Services	No
Nicholas Slawson nslawson@a2la.org		AB – A2LA	No
Ilona Taunton Ilona.taunton@nelac-institute.org		Other – TNI Program Administrator	No
Cathy Westerman cathy.westerman@dgs.virginia.gov		AB – VA DCLS	No

Attachment 2 – LAB Expert Committee Meeting Agenda, as amended, December 19, 2023

- Welcome and Roll Call
- Approval of Agenda
- Approval of Minutes (November minutes attached)
- Announcement
- Discuss Marlene Moore's Comments (see annotated draft module and Response-to-comments files, attached)
- Consider Response to SIR 477 (attached)
- Vote on Editorial Comments (refer to pdf of Aaren's email, attached – please be prepared to vote on these)
- Consider Florida's Comments (refer to October minutes, attached, and Response-to-comment file)
- New Business, if any
- Adjourn