

**Laboratory Accreditation System Executive Committee Meeting Minutes**  
**Thursday, October 26, 2023 1:30 pm Eastern**

1) Welcome and Roll Call

Maria opened the meeting. Attendance is recorded in Attachment A. With no quorum present, Maria requested that the minutes of September 28 be approved by an email vote. In response to the email vote request, Harold moved and Shari seconded that both the September be approved, and as of November 3, there were six (6) votes in favor of approval plus two abstentions (due to absence from that meeting) – a clear majority approval.

2) Internal Audit for LASEC

Lynn provided a copy of the internal audit results and briefly reviewed the corrective actions with those present. The items requiring corrective actions and the proposed correction are shown below.

<b>Checklist Item #</b>	<b>Requirement Not Met</b>	<b>Proposed Corrective Action</b>
21 SOP 1-101: 8.1	The Committee has elected a Chair that should have been part of the committee for at least one year.	This was beyond the control of LASEC, as the previous chair was reassigned to manage a new group and an experienced chair was proposed by TNI management. Will endeavor to comply in the future.
36 SOP 1-116: 5.2.2	All Provisional Policies and SOPs are clearly marked as "Provisional" in parentheses after the effective date on the cover page and header of each page.	This requirement was overlooked in the past but will be followed in the future.
38 SOP 1-124: 5.2.1	Internal audit checklists are updated as committee procedures in the lower portion of the checklist are updated.	Internal audit checklists will continue to be updated upon request from Policy Committee. There is no mechanism in place to access the checklists otherwise, as they are stored in an access-controlled database.
43 SOP 1-125: 5.1.2	With the exception of affiliate members, all committee members have completed an electronic application. Affiliate members have provided application information by email to the Committee Chair and PA.	Committee member applications are not accessible to PA or Chair, so that there is no way to know if this item even requires a corrective action.
55 SOP 3-113: 5.3	When LASEC votes on a non-routine matter, the Chair asked individual committee members to declare any potential, perceived or actual conflict of interest	SOP language has been revised to place the burden of conflict identification on the committee member, at the request of Policy Committee.

3) SIR Subcommittee Recommendations

The SIR Subcommittee meeting on October 19 did not have a quorum, so the four SIR responses awaiting review could not be addressed.

#### 4) Discussion of Handling SIR Requests for Modified Versions of the TNI Standard

A recent SIR referencing a dispute that arose during an assessment was from a non-NELAP lab in California, using the modified version of the TNI Standard adopted by California ELAP that is commonly referred to as "T minus 2", or "T-2". This SIR was not valid because it clearly stated that it concerned a dispute, but it raised an issue that had not previously been considered, of whether TNI (and NELAP/LASEC in particular) should accept SIRs pertaining to modified standards.

This issue does not appear to be urgent but does need a decision as it is likely to arise again as more California labs are state-accredited. Additionally, some other non-NELAP state certification bodies may use modifications of the TNI Standard. Discussion points were as follows:

- Modified standards are not the TNI EL Standard.
- TNI has no business interpreting the modifications made by a non-NELAP AB.
- If it were a NELAP-accredited lab (or a lab seeking NELAP accreditation) in a non-NELAP state, then yes, it should be a valid SIR (if not a dispute).
- LASEC could determine whether the SIR is about the modified language or not. In this particular case, the question was not about modified language. (The implication being that we would NEVER interpret the modified language.)
- It may not make sense to invest TNI volunteer time to create and approve a SIR response when we have not assurance that the non-NELAP accreditation body would even recognize or enforce the response.
- A brief conversation with CSDEC members indicated that the expert committee chairs seemed willing to accept such SIRs.
- Having TNI accept SIRs about modified standards removes a potential incentive for non-NELAP ABs to join NELAP.
- We could interpret the TNI language but not the modification; this could involve a lot of work for a possibly unused answer.
- Would TNI have any liability to labs accredited to modified standards from providing SIR responses to their questions?
- This might encourage modifications of other TNI standards (NEFAP, for instance?).

Lynn was assigned to check with Bob Wyeth, who manages most of TNI's interactions with ANSI, about whether there are any ANSI implications of TNI becoming involved with interpretations of presumably non-ANS modified standards. Follow-Up Note: the response from Bob was "My thoughts on the SIR issue are that if the language is from the TNI Standard and not the Modified TNI standard, ANSI would expect a response consistent with our normal processes and time lines. If the SIR is based upon language from or the result of language in the Modified TNI standard, [sic] they should be considered non-Valid from our perspective and returned to the appropriate AB for resolution; a resolution that shall not change the TNI Standard and/or apply new requirements on the accredited (or applicant) laboratories."

#### 5) New Business

Lynn asked to discuss the transfer of the Mentor Session and Assessment Forum to the Training Committee again. No progress has been made since the September meeting, where several participants raised concerns about moving the Assessment Forum, as that is not just “training” but was intended to provide a venue for assessors to discuss their roles and challenges encountered, and also about the fact that each of the individuals now leading both sessions is a Pace Labs employee, which could be perceived as either favoritism on the part of TNI or possibly bias in the content of the sessions.

Lynn’s concern is that, if LASEC retains either or both of these functions, we will need LASEC member involvement in the planning aspects of them. In recent years, as the leaders of both sessions have become increasingly removed from LASEC, that aspect has diminished dramatically. If the current leadership were to become associate members of LASEC, they would need to be active associates or voting members, or else currently active LASEC members will need to step into active roles with the two sessions.

We could set it up as an LASEC subcommittee, or possibly a joint subcommittee of Training and LASEC – this would give LASEC some oversight without full ownership. Lynn agreed to check with Jerry Parr about the possibility of such a joint subcommittee. (Note: that conversation is on-going, but not a definite “no” at this point.)

#### 6) Next Meeting

Because of the Thanksgiving holiday, the next LASEC teleconference will be on **Thursday, November 30, at 1:30 pm Eastern.** An agenda and any needed documents will be provided in advance.

The next **SIR Subcommittee teleconference will be on Thursday, November 30, 2023, at 12:30 Eastern.**

**Attachment A TNI LABORATORY ACCREDITATION SYSTEMS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ROSTER**

	NAME	EMAIL	Term End Date	INTEREST	AFFILIATION	S/H CATEGORY	PRESENT
1	Maria Friedman, Chair	<a href="mailto:gamfriedman@gmail.com">gamfriedman@gmail.com</a>	1/23 (first term)	SIRs	CA ELAP	AB	Yes
2	Harold Longbaugh, Vice Chair	<a href="mailto:harold.longbaugh@houstontx.gov">harold.longbaugh@houstontx.gov</a>	1/25 (3rd term)	SIRs	Houston Lab	Lab	Yes
3	Aaren Alger	<a href="mailto:Aaren.s.alger@gmail.com">Aaren.s.alger@gmail.com</a>	1/23 (first term)	SIRs, Assessment Forum	Alger Consulting & Training	Other	No
4	Patty Carvajal	<a href="mailto:pmcarvajal@sara-tx.org">pmcarvajal@sara-tx.org</a>	1/25 (first term)		San Antonio River Authority	Lab	No
5	Stacie Crandall	<a href="mailto:scrandall@hrsd.com">scrandall@hrsd.com</a>	1/24 (first term)	SIRs	Hampton Roads Sanitation Distr.	Lab	No
6	Mike Delaney	<a href="mailto:mike@mikedelaney.org">mike@mikedelaney.org</a>	1/23 (first term)		Retired (MWRA)	Other	No
7	Brian Hulme	<a href="mailto:Hulme.brian@epa.gov">Hulme.brian@epa.gov</a>	1/26 (first term)		EPA R2	Other	No
8	Silky Labie	<a href="mailto:elcatllc@centurylink.net">elcatllc@centurylink.net</a>	1/25 (second term)	SIRs	ELCAT	Other	Yes
9	Bill Hall	<a href="mailto:George.W.Hall@des.nh.gov">George.W.Hall@des.nh.gov</a>	1/25 (second term)	SIRs	NH ELAP	NELAP AB	No
10	Shari Pfalmer	<a href="mailto:Shari.pfalmer@pacelabs.com">Shari.pfalmer@pacelabs.com</a>	1/25 (first term)		Pace Analytical	Lab/FSMO	Yes
11	Michele Potter	<a href="mailto:michele.potter@dep.nj.gov">michele.potter@dep.nj.gov</a>	1/24 (second term)		NJ DEP	NELAP AB	Yes

**Associate Members**

	Debbie Bond	<a href="mailto:DBOND@southernco.com">DBOND@southernco.com</a>		SIRs	Alabama Power	Lab	Yes
	Jack Farrell	<a href="mailto:aex@ix.netcom.com">aex@ix.netcom.com</a>		Mentor Session	Analytical Excellence	Other	
	Dorothy Love	<a href="mailto:dorothylove@ET.eurofinsus.com">dorothylove@ET.eurofinsus.com</a>		Mentor Session	Eurofins Environmental	Lab	No
	Mitzi Miller	<a href="mailto:mitzi.mqc@gmail.com">mitzi.mqc@gmail.com</a>		Mentor Session & Assmt Forum	Retired	Other	No
	Judy Morgan	<a href="mailto:Judy.Morgan@pacelabs.com">Judy.Morgan@pacelabs.com</a>		Assessment Forum	Pace Analytical	Lab/FSMO	No
	Mohan Sabaratnam	<a href="mailto:msabaratnam@iasonline.org">msabaratnam@iasonline.org</a>			IAS	AB (non-gov.)	No
	Nick Straccione	<a href="mailto:nstraccione@emsl.com">nstraccione@emsl.com</a>		Mentor Session	EMSL	Lab	No
	Katie Strothman	<a href="mailto:katie@sanderslabs.net">katie@sanderslabs.net</a>			Sanders Labs	Lab	No
	Program Admin. Lynn Bradley	<a href="mailto:Lynn.bradley@nelac-institute.org">Lynn.bradley@nelac-institute.org</a>					Yes