

Microbiology Expert Committee (MEC) Meeting Summary

March 12, 2024

I Welcome and Roll Call:

Cody, Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:34pm Eastern on March 12, 2024, by teleconference. Attendance is recorded in Attachment A – there were 14 members present. Associates present: Nigel Allison, Debbie Bond, Tiffany Carey, Antoine Chamsi, Stacey Chmura, Bryan Disch, Joe Guzman, Sviatlana Haubner, Morgan Koelliker, and Christabel Monteiro. Paul Junio attended in the absence of Ilona Taunton as the scribe for minutes.

II Approval of Agenda

Cody asked for approval of the Agenda. Hearing no objections, she declared the agenda approved.

III Discussion on Definition of ‘Test Item’

V1M2 Proposed Definition: Test Item (e.g., sample): The original field sample, subsamples and any leachates, extracts and/or digestates that is subjected to testing.

Old V1M2 5.8.5.1 Language ... Test items may include samples, sample containers, sub-samples, and subsequent extracts and/or digestates.

MEC Input:

In the terms and definitions section of the current V1M2, the definition of “batch” includes the terms “environmental samples” and “prepared environmental samples (extracts, digestates or concentrates)”. I would add “concentrates” and call it a day.

Personally, I’ve always used ‘sample’ (aka field sample, test sample) to mean something that requires an analytical test for targets of interest. I’ve never used the term ‘test item’.

Would an option be instead of section 5.8 of V1M5 being reworked/reworded, could we suggest additional language to the QMS folks to add to the definition so that it fits what is intended for section 5.8?

For example, when we use the language “test item” are we meaning a single article or item intended for use with testing (or calibration for calibration item)? If so, could we suggest that the definition be revised to:

Test Item (e.g., sample): The original field sample, subsamples and any leachates, extracts and/or digestates that is subjected to testing or a single article or item intended for use with testing

“e.g.” means for example a sample, not i.e. meaning sample – could the test item definition be expanded to fit our use too?

Paul asked if there was anything in the realm of microbiology that isn't captured by this definition of 'test item'? Patsy said no, and Cody agreed. Tina asked about 'isolates', indicating that it may not apply. Robin agreed, but that it is still part of the test process. The committee agreed with Cody's assessment that we should ask to have 'concentrates' added to the definition.

IV Review of Non-valid SIR

Non-valid SIR 478 was rejected due to it being a question of 'does this process comply with the Standard'. The request was 'Our laboratory would like to complete volumetric equipment verifications using a method that employs dual dye photometry (which is acceptable by ISO and NYS CLEP), but would like to confirm the appropriateness of this methodology as per TNI. TNI states "This verification can be volumetric as compared to Class A or gravimetric". I believe the language of can vs. shall allows for additional calibration methods to be utilized, provided the new calibration methods fulfill [sic] requirements listed in VIM2 5.4.4 and 5.4.5. Can you please confirm this is an appropriate interpretation?'

The Committee discussed the SIR to see if anything needed to or could be changed in the language to address this. It was noted that changing 'can' to 'shall' makes those items requirements rather than examples. Robin said that verification seems to be in the wrong place. Patsy would prefer the use of shall. Cody asked if the intent was to either be volumetric or gravimetric for verification (i.e., nothing other than that)? Tina commented that this technique is something that environmental laboratories don't use, but that it is an easier solution for verifying low volumes. Robin asked if we could use language similar to what's in the DOC by stating 'where appropriate'. Paul said that if it works it should be allowed. Liz asked what the expected volume was in a case like this. Paul wondered if the section on support equipment would already cover this. Robin said that neither Module 2 nor Module 5 tell you how something must be done. Either this should be removed completely or maybe moved higher up in the listing of items. Jessica agreed that it should be moved higher. Patsy asked if this would allow the use of Class B glassware? Paul thought that Module 2 wouldn't allow it but may be that the wording isn't strong enough. Robin asked if we should say Class A gravimetric or other demonstrated manner, again going back to the DOC language. Silky asked if we really want to remove the ability to use something else? Robin thought it must be validated against either Class A or gravimetrically. Patsy said that removing examples can be problematic and Liz agreed, adding especially for smaller laboratories. Patsy suggested moving it up so that this verification begins the part before item iii d, and secondly that the volume must be compared to either Class A or gravimetric verification. Liz liked it better that way. Robin said if something wasn't appropriate, then you would have to justify that something was better or at least equivalent and Liz agreed. Paul commented that much of part iii regarding volumetric equipment is duplicative of Module 2. Cody asked if we should just cite the support equipment section of Module 2 and there was general agreement on this point. Part iii a will be deleted. Tina pointed out that Module 2 requires verification of volume if quantitative results are achieved, but that presence absence testing isn't quantitative results. Liz thought you would still have to verify for presence absence because of the volume required. Revised part b to address reusable volumetrics and part c to address disposable volumetrics. Liz asked would that cover non disposable pipettes?

Robin thought that would be covered under non Class A glassware. There was general agreement on that point. Section 7.3.6 b iii now reads:

iii. Volumetric Equipment

The laboratory must verify equipment used for measuring volume. Verification must be either volumetric as compared to Class A or gravimetric. When neither of these methods are appropriate, it is the responsibility of the laboratory to document that other approaches to verification are at least equivalent.

a. Reusable volumetric equipment, such as filter funnels, bottles, and non-Class A glassware, must be verified prior to first use.

b. Disposable volumetric equipment, such as filter funnels, sample bottles, sample analysis vessels, and disposable pipettes must be checked once per lot prior to first use.

c. Verification of volume must be considered acceptable if the accuracy is within 2.5% of expected volume.

Next Meeting and Close

With 5 minutes left before the meeting time was up, Cody stated that the Autoclave discussion will be continued via email, as well as taking a look at Module 5 for how it stands as a complete document. *[EDIT – This email was sent to all members on 3/13/24]* The next meeting will be on April 9, 2024 at 1:30 PM Eastern by Teams. Meeting invitations through the end of the year will be sent in advance of the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 2:59 Eastern.

A summary of action items and backburner/reminder items can be found in Attachment B and C.

Attachment A - Participants

Microbiology Expert Committee (MEC)

Members	Affiliation	Balance	Contact Information
Hunter Adams 2026 Present	City of Wichita Falls	Lab	hunter.adams@wichitafallstx.gov
Tina Buttermore 2027* Present	Pace Analytical	Lab	tina.buttermore@pacelabs.com
Robin Cook (Vice Chair) 2024* Present	City of Daytona Beach	Lab	cookr@codb.us
Cody Danielson (Chair) 2025 Present	Oklahoma DEQ	Lab	Cody.Danielson@deq.ok.gov
Maria Fayard 2026* Present	ORELAP	AB	maria.j.fayard@oha.oregon.gov
Maria Friedman 2025* Absent	California ELAP	AB	qamfriedman@gmail.com
Matt Graves 2025* Present (1:57PM)	ERA	Other	matt_graves@waters.com
Jessica Hoch 2025 Present	Texas Comm. on Env. Quality	Other	jessica.hoch@tceq.texas.gov
Silky Labie 2026* Present	ELCAT, LLC	Other	elcatllc@centurylink.net
Ashley Larssen 2024* Present	KC Water	Lab	ashley.larssen@kcmo.org
Elizabeth Lesold 2027* Present	NYSDOH ELAP	AB	elizabeth.lesold@health.ny.gov
Brian Mercer 2027* Present (2:15PM)	City of Plantation	Lab	bmercerc@plantation.org
Patsy Root 2027* Present	IDEXX	Other	Patsy-Root@IDEXX.com
Robert Royce 2025* Present	New Jersey DEP	AB	Robert.Royce@dep.nj.gov
Elisa Snyder 2026 Present	City of Austin - Austin Water	Lab	elisa.snyder@austintexas.gov
Ilona Taunton Program Administrator Absent	The NELAC Institute	NA	ilona.taunton@nelac-institute.org
Paul Junio TNI Scribe Present	The NELAC Institute	NA	paul.junio@nelac-institute.org

* - eligible to serve another term

**Attachment B
Action Items – MEC**

	Action Item	Who	Expected Completion	Actual Completion
104	Implementation Guidance for Temperature Distribution and Equilibrium.	Committee	TBD	See note in 5/11/21 minutes. 4/11/23: Working on Temperature Distribution. 7/11/23: Working on Equilibrium; Anticipated January 2024
112	Develop Understanding Microbiology Course	Cody Committee	2023	7/12/22: Ready for first class in VA. 5/9/23: Webinar Series has started. 5 Parts. Completed
113	Complete Response to Draft Comments Process	All	Voting is complete.	5/10/22: Voted on Comments: 2, 3, 7, 8, 9 and 10 6/14/22: Voted on Comments 5 and 6. 2/14/23: Final vote on 1, 4 and 11. 4/11/23: Need to post the document.
114	Work on Questions for the Credentialing Exam	Cody		Get to Jerry as soon as possible.
115	Committee motions, minutes, and votes as needed	Cody	Ongoing	Captured in meeting minutes whether in meeting or via email

Attachment C

Backburner / Reminders – MEC

	Item	Meeting Reference	Comments
1	Update charter (if needed) every 5 years.	n/a	Ongoing
2	Review Method codes and send comments to Robin for Paul Junio.		Moved to back-burner on 6/9/20.
3	Provide an update on what has been done with the method codes and database after Jennifer's review and internal EPA meetings.		This was moved from the Action Items table. Notes: 6/9/20: Ask Jennifer for a follow-up. 11/9/20 – Not available for a follow-up.