

Summary of the NELAP Accreditation Council Meeting
Tuesday, November 4, 2024 1:30 pm Eastern

1. Welcome and Introductions

Kristin welcomed everyone to the meeting. Attendance is recorded in Attachment 1. The agenda is included in Attachment 2. The agenda was approved by unanimous consent, and the minutes of October 7 were approved unanimously after a motion by Millie, seconded by Carissa.

2. LAB Discussion

Kristin invited Aaren Alger, LAB Committee Chair, to lead this part of the meeting's discussion. Aaren explained that LAB is revising V2M1 and has asked LAB members to review the draft module for ISO language that should be removed as not applicable or clarified to explain how an environmental lab AB can meet the requirement. She presented two issues and ask the Council members to review the previously published Revision 1 for two purposes:

- 1) Review the ISO language in terms of "what does it mean to me" and "how will I know I'm in compliance", and
- 2) Specifically consider the ISO definition of assessor, which is "*Person assigned by an accreditation body to perform, alone or as part of an assessment team, an assessment of a conformity assessment body*".

For the first item, an example of language to be considered for deletion would be the clause about flexible scopes, as those are not permitted in TNI ABs.

For the second, assessor definition, at least two NELAP ABs use a system where the lab chooses and contracts with the third party assessor, rather than having the assessor assigned by the AB.

Carl, as former Chair of LAB, offered his thoughts on the assessor assignments, that each lab must have an assessment plan established by the AB, and the provider must submit any proposed changes to that plan for AB approval before the assessment begins, and that process should meet the definition. He noted that ISO/IEC 17011 is written for all types of ABs (not just analytical lab ABs), and suggested that the ISO language be retained but clarified to state that the assessment plan is approved by the AB rather than that the assessor is assigned.

Kristin asked that all Council members commit to reviewing the ISO language, by the end of calendar 2024. Aaren requested that, as Council members review the Draft Standard for ISO text that might require deletion or clarification, they check the Response-to-Comments spreadsheet to see if that section has already been addressed. Both the Draft Standard V2M1 Revision 1 and the most recent Response-to-Comments spreadsheet are distributed with these minutes for Council members' use.

3. LASEC Issue about Annual Issuance of Certificates

Lynn explained that, at the October LASEC meeting, she had presented a draft revision of POL 3-102, Relationship of NELAP AB Certificates of Recognition and the NELAP Evaluation Process. A concern arose during LASEC's discussion that with repeat evaluations beginning three years after the previous site report was delivered to the AB (the

new process beginning when the evaluation schedule was adjusted earlier in 2024), but certificates being issued annually, that conceivably an AB could go for multiple years without its evaluation completed (site report delivered) but still continuing to receive updated Certificates of Recognition annually. LASEC proposes that each AB self-certify its conformance to the Standard as well as NELAP policies and procedures, prior to receiving the updated certificate. No discussion about what might constitute self-certification occurred.

Lynn asked how the Council would like to proceed in addressing this concern with LASEC. One suggestion was to invite the LASEC Chair, Maria Friedman, to an upcoming Council meeting, but if strong opposition exists, that could put Maria in an awkward position.

Multiple participants offered comments on the need, or lack thereof, for self-certification:

- Timelines for steps in the evaluation are in the Evaluation SOP 3-102.
- ABs are required to perform both annual internal audits and management reviews.
- All ABs accrediting drinking water are required to submit an annual survey to EPA's drinking water program.
- Evaluations teams should have additional members, but all options that don't include additional workload for AB staff bring potential/likely conflicts of interest.
- One AB sometimes uses "short-dated" certificates as a way of putting pressure on a lab to cooperate in completing its assessment – this could be used for ABs as well.
- NGABs also receive annually updated certificates.
- Labs are assessed every two years but receive annual certificates without self-certification.

The outcome of the discussion was that Kristin will reach out to Maria and ask for a written rationale for implementing such self-certification, and Kristin will report back at the December Council meeting. The next LASEC meeting is November 21 (rescheduled due to Thanksgiving holiday).

4. Assessor Training

This discussion was continued from October. Cathy explained that, upon further consideration and looking at the number of assessors potentially involved, she thought that it might be better to start small – giving individual assessors a better opportunity to contribute and much easier to organize. She proposed a pilot, to begin in January 2025, with two ABs of similar size (or more than two smaller ABs, so that the maximum participation would be about 20 people) meeting at a mutually acceptable time, with different pairings for each of two quarters. After two meetings, the Council can evaluate whether to continue the effort, with possible changes from experience.

Cathy proposed sending out a draft of a proposed grouping of ABs (for feedback or changes), and leave it up to the AB whether to include its third party assessors, but perhaps including non-assessor managers as well. The ABs participating in Council calls (CA, NV, and WV) are included unless they decline.

5. New Business

Kristin noted that registration is open for the Jacksonville conference, and she asked that each AB verify its information on the website's AB listing and send any corrections, as well as current addresses, to Lynn for updating, by November 18.

Lynn explained that a free training course about applying for the Certified Environmental Laboratory Quality Management Systems Credential will be offered on Thursday after conference, in Jacksonville.

While it is unclear whether TNI will provide remote access for Council members unable to attend conference, Kristin committed to using cell phone access if nothing else is available.

Lynn noted that the Advocacy Committee will discuss sending some form of comments on a C&EN article about “lab-shopping” for cannabis labs, and asked if ORELAP wished to participate, and whether NY could reach out to its cannabis program director about participating. Representatives from both of these programs did participate and made valuable contributions to the Advocacy discussion, and an initial draft of comments is being prepared.

There was no other new business, and the meeting adjourned.

5. Next Meeting

The next teleconference meeting of the NELAP AC is scheduled for **Monday, December 2, 2024, at 1:30 pm Eastern**. An agenda and documents will be provided in advance.

Attachment 1

STATE	REPRESENTATIVE	PRESENT
FL	Carl Kircher T: 904-791-1574 E: carl.kircher@flhealth.gov	Yes
	Alternate: Vanessa Soto E: Vanessa.sotocontreras@flhealth.gov	No
IL	Millie Rose T: 217-557-0220 E: mildred.rose@illinois.gov	Yes
KS	Carissa Robertson Carissa.Robertson@ks.gov (785) 291-3162	Yes
	Alternate: Paul Harrison paul.harrison@ks.gov (785) 296-1656	No
	For information purposes: Amy Suggitt Amy.Suggitt@ks.gov	No
	For information purposes: Matthew Jones Matthew.jones@ks.gov	Yes
LA DEQ	Tramecha Rankins E: tramecha.rankins@la.gov 225-219-3247	No
	Paul Bergeron E: paul.bergeron@la.gov	No
MN	Windsor Molnar Windsor.Molnar@state.mn.us 651-201-3702	Yes
	Alternate: Lynn Boysen E: lynn.boysen@state.mn.us	Yes
	For Information only: Stephanie Drier T: 651-201-5326 E: stephanie.drier@state.mn.us	No
NH	Brian Lamarsh (603) 271-2998 F: (603) 271-5171 Brian.M.Lamarsh@des.nh.gov	Yes
	Alternate: Bill Hall T: (603) 271-2998 E: george.hall@des.nh.gov	No

NJ	Michele Potter T: (609) 984-3870 F: (609) 777-1774 E: michele.potter@dep.nj.gov	Yes
	Alternate : Rachel Ellis E: rachel.ellis@dep.nj.gov	No
NY	Amy Steuerwald 518-473-0748 E: amy.steuerwald@health.ny.gov	Yes
	Alternate: Gretchen Welfinger Gretchen.Welfinger@health.ny.gov	Yes
	For Information only: Derek Symula derek.symula@health.ny.gov	No
OK	Taryn Hurley Taryn.hurley@deq.ok.gov (405) 702-1006	Yes
	Alternate: Ryan Lerch Ryan.Lerch@deq.ok.gov (405) 702-1020	No
OR	Steve Jetter T: 503-505-2672 E: steven.jetter@oha.oregon.gov	Yes
	Alternate: Lizbeth Garcia 971 865 0443 E: Lizbeth.garcia@dhsoha.state.or.us	No
	Included for information purposes: Ryan Pangelinan E: Ryan.pangelinan@dhsoha.state.or.us	No
PA	Annmarie Beach E: anbeach@pa.gov T: 717-346-8212	Yes
TX	Jody Koehler (512) 239-1990 Jody.Koehler@tceq.texas.gov	Yes
	Steve Gibson (512) 239-1316 Steve.Gibson@tceq.texas.gov	Yes
UT	Kristin Brown T: (801) 965-2540 F: (801) 965-2544 E: kristinbrown@utah.gov	Yes
VA	Cathy Westerman T: 804-648-4480 ext.391 E: cathy.westerman@dgs.virginia.gov	Yes

	Alternate: Shane Wyatt shane.wyatt@dgs.virginia.gov	No
NELAP AC PA and EC	Lynn Bradley T: 540-885-5736 E: lynn.bradley@nelac-institute.org	Yes
EPA Liaison	Michella Karapondo Karapondo.michella@epa.gov	Yes
CA	Christine Sotelo Christine.Sotelo@waterboards.ca.gov	No
	Christopher Hand Christopher.Hand@Waterboards.ca.gov	No
NV	Jasmine Curiel jcuriel@ndep.nv.gov	No
WV	Justin Carpenter justin.d.carpenter@wv.gov	Yes
Guest	Aaren Alger, Chair, LAB Expert Committee Aaren.s.alger@gmail.com	Yes

Attachment 2 – Agenda for November 4, 2024, Meeting

- Welcome and Roll Call
- Approval of Agenda
- Approval of Minutes (October minutes attached)
- LAB Committee Requested Discussion of ISO/IEC Language in Revised V2M1 (please review attached Draft Standard V2M1 Revision 1 with ISO/IEC 17025:2017 text in italics for potential implementation uncertainties that might need clarification)
- Presentation of LASEC Issue About Annual Issuance of Certificates of Recognition and Relationship with Evaluation Cycle
- Resume Discussion of Assessor Training Sessions
- New Business, if any
- Adjourn