

**Summary of the NELAP Accreditation Council Meeting
Monday, May 6, 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 after a motion by Millie, seconded by Taryn, and the minutes of April 1 were approved unanimously with two edits as described by Windsor, to clarify MN's positions on remote assessments, after a motion by Millie seconded by Brian.

2. Discussion of Technical Specialist with Debbie Bond, QMS Expert Committee

Debbie requested to discuss this topic and brought five specific questions to the Council.

Can a Technical Specialist (TS) work for two different laboratory locations?

One comment from earlier discussion had recommended that "one location is preferable" but the Standard sets requirements, not preferred practices. This issue would most likely occur during personnel turnover, while the departed TS needs at least an interim replacement until a new person can be hired. The consensus of the group was that the option of having a TS work for more than one lab should remain without attempts to qualify, leaving that up to the ABs.

How to determine TS qualifications and what about waivers of stated requirements?

The general criteria for a qualified TS will be stated in the QS module, V1M2, but the question remains about whether and under what conditions a waiver could (or should) be granted. In general, it is up to the laboratory to determine that a TS candidate meets the stated requirements, as ABs do not wish to have to evaluate every TS in every lab to determine that the requirements are met. However, in cases where a qualified TS candidate is not available, consensus was that waivers should be state-specific (as in, for labs not seeking secondary accreditations elsewhere) and granted for a defined but renewable timeline (one year was suggested). Discussion explained that such a waiver would most likely be needed in underserved or rural areas, and that the renewable timeline for waiver would offer an opportunity for cooperation between the lab and the AB, to allow the lab to show that the waived candidate can perform the TS role satisfactorily.

What about TS staff who move to new labs, if qualified by waiver of criteria?

The proposal offered was that a TS qualified by waiver would be eligible for hire as a technical specialist for the same fields of accreditation in another accredited laboratory, pending approval from the AB. The consensus of the AB representatives is that such waivers are available for as long as records are retained, so the new AB could simply contact the former AB for verification. This is often done now with Technical Managers/Directors.

Is it necessary to distinguish between semesters and quarters when counting required courses in a degree field?

Participants had no objections to considering that there is no significant difference

between semester and quarter courses.

Are there any objections to draft proposed language in V1M2 that a TS must have technical specialist must have one of the following to qualify: a bachelor's of science degree in any discipline and 2 years of experience in the analytical disciplines for which he/she is technical specialist; an associates and 4 years' experience; 4 college level science courses and 5 years' experience; plant operators' certificate appropriate for the facility; or TNI credentials? Any additional discipline-specific requirements would be in the relevant technical module.

This question provoked extensive discussion around several aspects.

- Should ABs need to review resumes to determine compliance with those requirements, or should that be the responsibility of the employing laboratory? If the review is up to the AB, it would be essential to know that such reviews are consistent among all ABs (for secondary accreditations). Such review would also be very time-consuming for ABs.
- If the technical modules go in different directions with their specific requirements, should it fall to CSDEC to coordinate those?
- How should "2 years of experience in the analytical discipline" be interpreted when a TS is to oversee, for instance, both chem and micro? Would they need 4 years or 2? The term "relevant lab experience" is vague but potentially useful, as an alternative.
- The use of "analytical disciplines" terminology is questionable, when TNI itself does not have a good working definition for the term, and current workgroup drafts are far too specific to apply to the TS role(s).
- Some AB representatives would prefer a more general and broader set of qualifications, while others would prefer clearly defined requirements that can be easily determined from a resume or transcript (such as using a checklist for TS qualifications).
- If TNI credential is acceptable as a qualification, QMS Expert Committee needs liaison with the Credentials Committee, which is presently focusing on "analytical disciplines" as the basis for credentialing.

Debbie stated that she needs a clear answer from the Council about whether to use the term "analytical discipline" or to use "analytical experience" or "relevant analytical experience". *Kristin asked that any state having regulations that might rule out one of these choices to please send that rule language to Debbie.*

One additional issue was raised by the Council, about how many labs a TS could oversee, and could that oversight be virtual or must the TS be on-site? Debbie noted that there are no plans to address the specifics of presence in the module, but that LAB Expert Committee will be requested to evaluate that issue as part of its assessment requirements.

Kristin thanked Debbie for all of the QMS Committee's work on this issue, so far, and asked that AB representatives communicate directly with Debbie if they have additional thoughts to share. Debbie thanked the group for their time and feedback.

4. LAMS Discussion

One Council member had previously asked to discuss the difficulties of verifying scopes for secondary accreditation requests using LAMS, as the information there is not completely reliable due to many factors. Every AB is supposed to upload information at least monthly

and some upload every two weeks, but extraneous and occasionally outdated information persist. Additionally, it often happens that when a lab applies for secondary accreditation (or for additional methods on its secondary scope), there is often related activity going on with the lab's primary AB, but due to the time lag in reporting, the scope from the primary AB as reflected in LAMS may not be current.

Participants noted that most ABs have state-specific databases that are publicly available, and most of those are updated in real-time as changes are made in the program. Several states indicated that their database is not especially user-friendly. A few states do not have publicly available databases, but those states can send a spreadsheet or pdf of a lab's scope in response to a request.

Lynn will collect the URLs for state databases, and contact information for states using only LAMS but willing to provide lab-specific information upon request. All NELAP ABs have provided that information and the list has been distributed to the Council email list, as of May 10. Additionally, she sent a request to update the web page listing all NELAP ABs to include state-specific publicly available databases, and those ABs not having a public listing will show LAMS as their public database.

5. New Business

Kristin reminded everyone to please review the new PFAS FoPT table. The link is in News on the TNI home page.

Time was expired, so the discussion of assessor training is postponed until the June meeting.

6. Next Meeting

The next teleconference meeting of the NELAP AC is scheduled for **Monday, June 3, 2024, at 1:30 pm Eastern**. An agenda and documents will be provided in advance.

Attachment 1

| STATE | REPRESENTATIVE | PRESENT |
|-----------|--|---------|
| FL | Carl Kircher 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 | No |
| LA DEQ | Tramecha Rankins E: tramecha.rankins@la.gov 225-219-3247 | Yes |
| | 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 | Yes |
| 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 |

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| 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 | No |
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| | 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 |

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| | 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 | Yes |
| NV | Michael Antoine mantoine@ndep.nv.gov | No |
| Guests: | Debbie Bond, Chair, QMS Expert Committee DBond@southernco.com | |

Attachment 2 – Agenda for May 6, 2024, Meeting

- Welcome and Roll Call
- Approval of Agenda
- Approval of Minutes (April minutes attached)
- Discussion of Technical Specialist with Debbie Bond, QMS Chair (see attached spreadsheet and draft language)
- LAMS Discussion (see attached pdf of email from Bill Hall)
- Discussion of Potential Assessor Training Calls (from December AC meeting)
- Reminder to Review PFAS PT Table (see <https://nelac-institute.org/news.php?id=5450>)
- New Business, if any
- Adjourn