

**SUMMARY OF THE
ENVIRONMENTAL LABORATORY ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
Teleconference
June 20, 2007; 1:00 – 3:00 PM EDT**

The Environmental Laboratory Advisory Board (ELAB) meeting was held via regular teleconference on June 20, 2007 from 1:00 – 3:00 PM EDT. The original agenda for this meeting is provided as Attachment A. A list of participants is given in Attachment B. Action items are included in Attachment C. The official signature of the Chair or Vice-Chair is included in Attachment E.

INTRODUCTION

Ms. Lara Autry (USEPA/ORD) welcomed Board members. Ms. Autry then handed the meeting over to the ELAB chair, Mr. Robert Wyeth, who took a roll call of the Board. Mr. Wyeth indicated that his affiliation had changed. His new contact information will appear in the minutes from future meetings.

There were no guests that participated in the call.

AGENDA ITEMS

APPROVAL OF OR CHANGES TO PREVIOUS MEETING/CALL MINUTES

Minutes from April 18, 2007 Meeting – Mr. Wyeth noted that he had sent the final minutes from the April 18 meeting to ELAB members.

Minutes from May 16, 2007 Meeting—Mr. Wyeth noted that the minutes have been provided to the group. He asked ELAB members to provide comments/changes to the minutes.

WORK GROUP CORRESPONDENCE TO FEM/RESPONSE FORM EPA

Ms. Autry noted that the FEM had a meeting on June 19. Part of the discussion focused on the meeting ELAB had with Ms. Bradley regarding the methods index. She noted that the issue is that there is not a single portal of information for people to get answers to questions or copies of methods. At the meeting, it was clear that, because of the current budgetary climate, the creation of something new or the expansion of an existing system is a remote possibility. She stated that the FEM agreed that the Agency is not going to be expanding the MICE line, putting any new funding into NEMI or creating a new database. Individual Program Offices that operate existing tools such as hotlines, web sites, and databases are going to make a concerted effort to make sure they are providing the information that the public needs. Within six months, an information portal will be created on the FEM Web site. This portal will provide access to every single facet of information for methods and monitoring work across the Agency. It will have contact information for specific issues, a listing of all the Agency's hotlines, e-mail addresses for Program Offices, and direct web links to every test method available in the Agency. The Program Offices know that there are improvements that they all can make within their systems to make sure that they are more visible, more responsive, and more in touch with the issues of concern to stakeholders. The Program Offices understand that part of the reason for all of this is the need to document the institutional knowledge that the Agency may lose as people retire. Ms. Autry noted that Ms. Bradley will have a meeting with her team in two weeks to establish a timeline for the creation of the portal. Ms. Autry will let ELAB know the results of that meeting.

Regarding the Performance Approach, Ms. Autry noted that ELAB will have an opportunity to meet with her and Mr. Shapiro during the Boston meeting to discuss ELAB's input regarding the Performance Approach. Ms. Autry noted that the new name for this effort is "Framework for Flexibility and Quality in

Environmental Measurement (FFQEM).” She noted that there will be a FEM meeting on July 19 to discuss implementation issues and materials that have been developed since the April meeting. Ms. Autry will let ELAB members know via e-mail the results of that meeting.

Mr. Dechant asked if the new name means just a re-naming of the existing system or a re-design of the existing system. Ms. Autry noted that the Agency is moving towards a one-size-does-not-fit all approach, so there will be some modifications to the current system. Ms. Autry will provide ELAB with a draft of the new concept/definition being developed for the new system. The Agency recognizes that the one-size-fits-all approach does not work. It was obvious from the discussions at the April meeting that there are significant differences among the various regulatory requirements under which the Program Offices operate. This makes the implementation of a one-size-fits-all system impossible. The FEM has drafted a one-pager with attached summaries of each Office’s approach. This will be the foundation of the July meeting when the FEM will discuss the timeline and implementation process. She noted that the FEM intends to involve the whole community in the implementation process. Ms. Autry indicated that she will be presenting the new conceptual summary at the August meeting. Ms. Autry also noted that at the April meeting it was agreed that everything that can be done in short order will be done, but a maximum of 2 years will be put on the whole process. There will a series of milestones to be accomplished within 2 years but the FEM hopes to have visible changes within 6 months.

Ms. Autry also stated that the Agency will be issuing a new Federal Register Notice to acknowledge the original Federal Register Notice from 10 years ago. This will happen shortly before or after the Boston meeting.

It was suggested that the topic of Performance Approach be included as one of the agenda items for the face-to-face meeting in Boston. ELAB members agreed with this suggestion.

WORK GROUP REPORTS – DEFINITIONS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Ms. Judy Morgan and Dr. Jeff Flowers were not present at the meeting, so discussion on the activities of the Monitoring Work Group and the Laboratory Management Work Group was tabled until next meeting

Mr. Jeff Lowry noted that the Measurement and Technology Work Group did not have a meeting. He noted that at last meeting the workgroup has requested ELAB to suggest topics for the workgroup to work on. Mr. Wyeth suggested that ELAB members review the general goals and objectives from the mission statement to determine a list of action items for each of the workgroups.

PENDING AND NEW BUSINESS

Report on meeting with Dr. Gray

Mr. Wyeth thanked Ms. Autry for arranging the meeting with Dr. Grey. He stated that he had sent a thank you letter to Dr. Grey. He indicated that the meeting was very good and Dr. Grey was very engaging and knowledgeable on the topics discussed. Dr. Grey was also very interested in ELAB’s concerns. Mr. Wyeth suggested that the workgroup leaders review the presentation to Dr. Grey to identify workgroup tasks.

Ms. Autry noted that the Agency is grateful for ELAB’s services to the Agency. She also stated that Dr. Grey is very thankful to the ELAB members for their work. Ms. Autry noted that it appears that the Agency may be able to provide some travel funding for face-to-face meetings in the future. She had supplied Dr. Grey with all the data that he had requested. She noted that there are examples of how various FACAs are handled in this regard across the Agency. There are a couple of good examples that allow for funding of certain classifications of people’s employment. She will let them know as soon as

she can about this issue. Ms. Autry noted that she is trying to work on this as fast as possible so that funding may be available for some people to travel to the meeting in August.

Ms. Autry stated that she is also following up on a couple of things that were discussed during the meeting with Dr. Grey. She asked ELAB members if they were interested in having a Homeland Security briefing in July. She noted that the presentation is a 45 minute-presentation on what is happening right now in regards to methods and measurements. Ms. Autry indicated that she can also gather some materials that ELAB members can look at and then have a session of questions/answers about these materials. Mr. Dechant and Mr. Wyeth agreed that having this information beforehand would be a good idea. Mr. Wyeth noted that he has a copy of the presentation that he can forward to ELAB members. Ms. Autry also noted that Mr. Oba Vincent will be at the Boston meeting so if ELAB members are interested she can arrange to have him meet ELAB members at that time. ELAB members agreed that it would be good to have a short teleconference with Mr. Vincent prior to the Boston meeting for the benefit of those not attending the meeting. At the Boston meeting, those ELAB members in attendance can meet again with Mr. Vincent for follow up questions.

Regarding attendance of FEM members at the Boston meeting, Ms. Autry noted that Mr. Mike Shapiro will be giving a presentation on the activities of the FEM. Ms. Autry will give a presentation on the Performance Approach. If ELAB is interested, Ms. Autry can ask Mr. Shapiro to participate in the ELAB face-to-face session. Mr. Wyeth and other ELAB members agreed that this was a good idea.

TNI update(s)

Ms. Autry stated that TNI had a session at the Quality Assurance Annual Conference in Cleveland, Ohio. She noted that at the meeting, the Ambient Air Quality Program expressed interest in participating in TNI.

Ms. Autry also noted that TNI gave a presentation to the FEM at the April meeting. There was a specific request that the Agency designate a liaison to the TNI Board of Directors. Barbara Finazzo from Region 2 was chosen for that role to ensure the Regional involvement is this community continues.

Web Site Work Group

Ms. Autry noted that there have been some problems setting up the ELAB Web site but that she made sure that senior people at the Agency are aware of these problems. She noted that Mr. Shapiro will help in getting the Web site issue resolved. She hopes to have some information to share before the next meeting in July.

FAC on Detection and Quantification

Ms. Autry stated that their charter was renewed through December. Two weeks ago, the FAC on Detection and Quantification had a face-to-face meeting. It seems that the detection piece was solidified, but discussions continued on the quantitation issue. She noted that the minutes from the meeting are posted online.

Method Update Rule

Mr. Wyeth noted that the concern remains that commercial laboratories are forced to continue to offer two methods because of the requirements of various Programs. Ms. Autry noted that this issue has not been presented to the FEM for discussion since there are other issues regarding the Office of Water that are currently being discussed by the FEM.

It was suggested that this issue be included in the agenda for the Boston meeting. Ms. Autry stated that there will be a lot of people from the Office of Water at the Boston meeting. She suggested including the topic in the agenda and she will make sure that these people are aware that this issue is being discussed by ELAB. ELAB members agreed with Ms. Autry's suggestion.

COMMENTS AND/OR ADDITIONAL ISSUES

Ms. Autry suggested that ELAB prioritize the topics to be discussed at the Boston meeting. Mr. Dechant suggested that specific examples of issues be included in the discussions. Mr. Wyeth agreed with these suggestions.

Ms. Autry asked ELAB members to let her know of any changes to their contact information for updating the (DFO) Federal Advisory Committee database.

Ms. Autry noted that Dr. Grey signed the ELAB charter. However, because of the way things are processed it won't be officially logged until close to the end of the current charter (mid July). She will send a draft copy of the charter to ELAB members. She noted that there were minor changes to the charter.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Wyeth adjourned the Board meeting at 3:00 p.m. EST.

**AGENDA
for
ENVIRONMENTAL LABORATORY ADVISORY BOARD MEETING**

June 20, 2007: 1:00 – 3:00 PM EDT

**Conference Call
Call in number: 1-866-299-3188; code 9195415544#**

	Topic	Individual Responsible
1	Opening Remarks	DFO
2	Role Call for ELAB Member Introduction of Guests	Chair
3	Approval of or changes to Previous Meeting/Call Minutes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May 16, 2007 • April 18, 2007 	Chair
4	Work Group Correspondence to FEM/Response form EPA <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Approach - FEM Meeting in July 	Chair All
5	Work Group Reports – Definitions and assignments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring Work Group • Laboratory Management Work Group • Measurement and Technology Work Group 	Chair Morgan Flowers Lowry
6	Pending and New Business <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report on meeting with Dr. Gray • TNI update(s) • Web Site Work Group • FAC on Detection and Quantification • Method Update Rule • Issues Spreadsheet <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Corrections and/or updates to spreadsheet 2. New issues 	All DFO Banfer/DFO Pletl/Thomey Chair/Pletl All
7	Comments and/or Additional Issues	All
8	Open Discussion and Comments from Guests	All
9	Adjourn/Closing Remarks	Chair/DFO

**MEMBERSHIP LISTING AND GUESTS
ELAB MEETING
June 20, 2007; 1:00 – 3:00 PM EDT**

Attendance (Y/N)	Name	Affiliation
Y	Mr. Robert (Bob) K. Wyeth (Chair)	Severn Trent Laboratories Representing: ACIL
Y	Ms. Lara P. Autry, DFO	US Environmental Protection Agency Representing: EPA
Y	Mr. Gerald (Gary) Dechant	Analytical Quality Associates, Inc. Representing: DOE Analy. Mgmt. Pgm.
N	Mr. Paul Banfer	EISC (Environnemental Info. Sys. Corp.) Representing: Information Systems
Y	Mr. James (Jimmy) Jordan	Bechtel Jacobs, Inc. Representing: Large Go's Contractors
N	Ms. Nan Thomey	Environmental Chemistry, Inc. Representing: Small Laboratories
N	Mr. Rock Vitale	Environmental Standards, Inc. Representing: Third Party Assessors
Y	Mr. Eddie Clemons	Golden Specialty Laboratory Representing: INELA
Y	Mr. Scot Cocanour	Promium Representing: Lab. Customers of Information Technology
N	Dr. Jeff Flowers	Flowers Chemical Laboratories, Inc. Representing: Elected Officials for Local Gvt
Y	Dr. Reza Karimi	Southwest Research Institute Representing: Non-profit Research and Development Organizations with Academia
Y	Mr. Jeff Lowry	Environmental Resource Associates Representing: Proficiency Testing Providers
N	Ms. Judy Morgan	Environmental Science Corp. Representing: Commercial Env. Lab.
Y	Mr. Joe Pardue	Parallax, Inc. Representing: Clients of QS Services
N	Dr. Jim Pletl	Hampton Roads Sanitation District Representing: Municipal Env. Lab.
N	Dr. Albrecht Schwalm	Oglala Lakota College Representing: Academic & Indian Nations

ACTION ITEMS

1. Ms. Autry will get materials from Mr. Vincent and send them to ELAB members. She will also ask him about his availability to participate in the July 18 teleconference and to meet with ELAB at the Boston meeting.
2. Ms. Autry will ask Mr. Shapiro to participate in the ELAB face-to-face session.
3. Ms. Autry will ask people from the Office of Water attending the Boston meeting to meet with ELAB members to discuss the Methods Update rule.

Attachment D

Attachment E

I hereby certify that these are the final version of minutes for the Environmental Laboratory Advisory Board Meeting held on June 20, 2007.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert K. Wyeth". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "R".

Signature Chairman

Robert K. Wyeth

Print Name Chairman