

**SUMMARY OF THE
ENVIRONMENTAL LABORATORY ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
Teleconference
September 17, 2008; 1:00 – 3:00 PM EDT**

The Environmental Laboratory Advisory Board (ELAB) regular teleconference was held on September 17, 2008 from 1:00 – 3:00 PM EDT. The original agenda for this meeting is provided as Attachment A. A list of ELAB 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 D.

INTRODUCTION

Given some feedback was being experienced during the opening of the teleconference, Ms. Autry welcomed everyone until we got the connection settled and could conduct a roll call of the Board members. One item of note was this being the first teleconference of the newly constituted Board membership. Dr. Pletl confirmed that there were enough members present for a quorum and the meeting began with everyone introducing themselves to one another in addition to our guests to kick-off the meeting. A participant listing is captured in Attachment B.

AGENDA ITEMS:

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Dr. Pletl received only one comment of change to the August minutes, which was the contact information for Dr. Karimi. Minutes were passed by the Board with the one change made.

ORIENTATION FOR NEW MEMBERS

Dr. Pletl called to the attention of the new members that the August Minutes that had just been approved contained a summary of the topics that had been and were currently under discussion by the Board. The Board maintains three workgroups to help facilitate information gathering and initial recommendations for the entire Board's consideration as new issues arise for ELAB's to discuss. Each Board member needs to review the descriptions of the groups, which Ms. Autry will send to everyone, and make their first and second choice for membership. Dr. Flowers will be the primary contact for this information on workgroup choices in addition to future agenda items, as he will be taking over as Chair at the conclusion of this teleconference.

On that note, Ms. Autry sent out an e-mail that explained the Chair and Vice Chair policy that was established last year by the Board. Two nominations have currently been made and Ms. Autry will be contacting those nominees prior to sending out a ballot for voting, which should be directed in response only to her.

Dr. Flowers made one last note that, although there was a tradition of practice of how things often functioned or got passed down from Board to Board across the existence of ELAB, there is no reason to believe that changes will not continue to be made and to speak-up anytime to suggest an improvement to function/operation of the Board.

PROFICIENCY TEST FREQUENCY DISCUSSION

Dr. Pletl asked if any of the ELAB members who participated in The NELAC Institute (TNI) subcommittee meeting would like to share any updates. With Mr. Lowry and Ms. Morgan not able to join the meeting, Dr. Pletl asked if any other participants had information to share and Dr. Karimi noted that he had been unable to attend the last meeting. Dr. Wichman shared with everyone that, as the up-coming editor for the TNI newsletter, he could summarize a few points from an article written by Ms. McCracken and Dr. Tholen to update folks on the work being done. Please look for this article in the up-coming issue of the TNI Newsletter that can be found at <http://www.nelac-institute.org> for the full up-date.

Dr. Flowers then shared a few thoughts from his participation regarding the plan for the group to do another study using the data that has been supplied to the workgroup by Environmental Resource Associates (ERA). They are continuing to look at the data sets and analyze them given the variety of ways the information can be considered. Mr. Farrell noted that the Forum on Laboratory Accreditation Meeting in Miami, FL in January 2009 was targeted for an update to the community in addition to a timeline for offering a recommendation regarding frequency by the Environmental Measurement Symposium in August 2009 in San Antonio, TX. Dr. Wichman noted that cost impacts would need to be considered. Dr. Flowers agreed that all entities could see cost implications that needed to be kept in mind.

Mr. Speis expressed concern that the data was only being used to make this decision without quality implications being considered as well, which are very important. Mr. Farrell agreed with a note that during assessments it is important to have the proficiency testing packages to view with valuable information being obtained. Dr. Flowers wrapped-up the discussion noting that the workgroup does plan to conduct an economic analysis with the information from Ms. Morgan's study, but it had not been 100% determined as of yet.

METHOD IDENTIFICATION

Dr. Pletl reminded everyone about the discussion generated during the ELAB face-to-face meeting in August regarding SW-846, although the letter written to the Agency was about having unique identification for all Agency methods with this as a specific example. Prior to the Board call there were also several e-mail messages that continued this discussion and a message from Ms. Kirkland in OSW to provide a few additional details as well. Dr. Pletl kicked off the discussion with a point in one of the messages by Mr. Vital about there not being any promulgation. Dr. Burrows and Mr. Speis immediately chimed in that there was not anymore, which is what created part of the

issues faced today without there being more of a detail process for method use. Dr. Pamuku, one of the guests, stated that it would be nice if they even defined promulgation versus publication without it having to be interpreted. Dr. Flowers noted that he believed the issue of legal adoption of what you “must do” was the biggest difference between the two.

This causes problems with the States on what they then chose to do versus have to do before. Dr. Wichman added that the individual State codes caused some of these differences and most methods are performance based, which should have made it easier. Mr. Speis said the States interpreting them literally, though, created part of the problem. Dr. Karimi thought the problem was the change of “the newest version” without knowing when that “new version” took effect and needed to be implemented. Mr. Farrell pointed out that one state could make you adhere to the method strictly versus another not and allowing you flexibility, which creates a real problem in a national program with reciprocity expected among states.

Mr. Pardue indicated that during the additional sidebar session that a couple ELAB members held for those that wanted to bring additional issues to the table for the Board’s consideration that there was no consistency among the states in the room. Dr. Burrow’s agreed. If there were even some guidance from OSW to give a date to implement, there would be improvement. Mr. Speis said that ELAB cannot recommend to States, but we could at least make a very solid, specific recommendation to OSW. Dr. Karimi concurred, but cautioned there would be some holes of things that the recommendation would not cover. Dr. Pletl agreed that there was not a way to touch on everything, but can certainly give some solid information. Mr. Farrell asked if the Board even knew OSW’s process and having that information would be a good starting point.

After some continued discussion about the details, the group agreed that getting together some questions to share with OSW and having Ms. Autry invite them to the next teleconference with the materials about 7 – 10 days in advance of the discussion was the best next step for the Board to take. Dr. Flowers agreed to be the facilitator of this special session and collect information in addition to setting-up an ad hoc call for a few folks to hammer out the questions to send OSW.

NEMC NOTES

Dr. Pletl called everyone’s attention to an e-mail that he forwarded from Mr. Dechant regarding the extra discussion with a couple ELAB members at the NEMC meeting. Mr. Dechant briefly walked thru the topics and Dr. Flowers suggested that each of the subject areas be assigned to workgroups to pull together additional detail. The group agreed this was a positive approach. Mr. Dechant and Mr. Pardue, who co-chaired the discussion, said that it was a valuable opportunity for them to consider offering folks again at future meetings.

Although the workgroup membership would be determined by the next meeting, the group agreed to walk thru the list of topics for assignment into groups. With the first

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issue being the OSW discussion on SW-846, the group agreed to table this until later for a long-term location, but let the smaller initial effort run this topic for the time being until we get past discussions with OSW at the next meeting. The second topic folks felt fit nicely in the work of the Monitoring workgroups. The holding time issue should remain with the Measurement and Technology workgroup and outreach issue part of the Laboratory Management workgroup initiatives.

CHAIR ROTATION

Dr. Pletl thanked the group and indicated that Dr. Flowers would now be taking over as Chair of the Board. Dr. Flowers then expressed his and the entire Board's sincere thanks for all his hard work over the last year in keeping them on track and organized. Ms. Autry reminded the group that the election of Vice Chair would be coming via e-mail.

REVIEW ELAB ACTION ITEMS AND ASSIGNMENTS

As a matter of follow-up, Dr. Pletl reminded everyone of a few items. Ms. Autry would be sending out the workgroup descriptions and first/second choices should be made to Dr. Flowers. Ms. Autry would also be taking any additional nominations for Vice Chair with a follow-up vote to select the next Vice Chair of the Board. Thoughts/questions for the OSW discussion should be sent to Dr. Flowers by September 24th and Dr. Flowers will be setting up a meeting the week of September 29th for those interested. Everyone should look over the August meeting notes and e-mail to make sure that all new topics are assigned to workgroups during the next call.

ADJOURN/CLOSING REMARKS

Dr. Pletl thanked everyone for their participation and terrific input before adjourning the Board meeting at 3:00 p.m. EST.

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Attachment A

**AGENDA
for
ENVIRONMENTAL LABORATORY ADVISORY BOARD MEETING**

September 17, 2008; 1:00 – 3:00 PM EDT

Conference Call

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

	Topic	Individuals Responsible
1	Opening Remarks	DFO/Chair
2	Roll Call for ELAB Members	Chair
3	Introduction of new ELAB members	Chair
4	Review and approval of meeting minutes <ul style="list-style-type: none">• August, 2008	All
5	Orientation for new members	Chair
6	Proficiency Test Frequency Discussions	All
7	Method Identification	Chair
8	NEMC notes	Dechant
9	Chair rotation	Chair
10	Review ELAB Action Items and Assignments	Chair
11	Adjourn/Closing Remarks	Chair/DFO

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Attachment B

MEMBERSHIP LISTING AND GUESTS

ELAB MEETING

September 17, 2008; 1:00 – 3:00 PM EDT

Attendance (Y/N)	Name	Affiliation
Y	Dr. Jim Pletl (Chair)	Hampton Roads Sanitation District Representing: Municipal Env. Lab.
Y	Dr. Jeff Flowers (Vice Chair)	City of Maitland Florida Representing: Elected Officials of Local Government
Y	Ms. Lara P. Autry, DFO	US Environmental Protection Agency Representing: EPA
Y	Dr. Richard Burrows	Test America Inc. Representing: Commercial Lab Industry
Y	Mr. Gerald (Gary) Dechant	Analytical Quality Associates, Inc. Representing: DOE Analy. Mgmt. Pgm.
Y	Mr. John (Jack) E. Farrell, III	Analytical Excellence, Inc. Representing: The NELAC Institute (TNI)
Y	Dr. Reza Karimi	Battelle Memorial Institute Representing: Non-profit Research and Development Organizations
Y	Dr. H. M. (Skip) Kingston	Duquesne University Representing: Government Consortiums, Native Americans, and Academia
N	Mr. Jeffrey (Jeff) C. Lowry	Environmental Resource Associates Representing: Proficiency Testing Providers
N	Ms. Judith (Judy) R. Morgan	Environmental Science Corp. Representing: Commercial Env. Lab.
N	Mr. Orval Osborne	Creek Environmental Laboratories, Inc. Representing: Sm Laboratories/Native Americans
Y	Mr. Glenn (Joe) J. Pardue, Jr.	Pro2Serve Representing: Clients of QS Services
Y	Mr. David (Dave) N. Speis	Accutest Laboratories Representing: ACIL
N	Ms. Nan Thomey	Environmental Chemistry, Inc. Representing: Owners Full Service Labs
N	Mr. Rock Vitale	Environmental Standards, Inc. Representing: Third Party Assessors
Y	Dr. Michael D. Wichman	University of Iowa Hygienic Laboratory Representing: APHL
Y (Guest)	Mr. Michael Blades	Environmental Resource Associates

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Y (Guest)	Dr. Matt Pamuku	Applied Isotope Technology
Y (Guest)	Paula Hog	HRSC
Y (Guest)	Josh Kathrinus	American???
Y (Guest)	Lynn Bradley	EPA

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Attachment C

ACTION ITEMS

ELAB will review the minutes and identify next steps targets during their next teleconference.

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Attachment D

I hereby certify that these are the final version of minutes for the Environmental Laboratory Advisory Board Meeting held on September 17, 2008.

Signature Chairman

Jim Pletl

Print Name Chairman